

**Ninth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of
geographical names since the Eighth Conference**

**Report on the Work on the Standardization of Geographical Names
in the Republic of Korea Between 2002 and 2006**

Submitted by the Republic of Korea**

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Summary

It was in 1958 that the Republic of Korea carried out its first modern-day adjustment of geographical names, which encompassed about 20,000 designations of administrative units, 100,000 designations of natural geographical features and some marine geographical designations

The Korean Committee on Geographical Names (KCGN) continues to fulfill the same function. Attached to the National Geographical Information Institute of the Ministry of Construction and Transportation, as the national mapping authority, it is the decision-making and advisory body primarily responsible for official geographical names in the Republic of Korea. Rulings that have been made during the 12 sessions between 2002 and 2006 are detailed below.

These geographical names are entered into the database and renewed annually by the National Geographical Information Institute (hereafter referred to as “the NGII”), which provides on-line services through its homepage. The on-line services are provided in such a way that users can view the three-dimensional topography surrounding these names.

1. National Standardization

The standardizing organizations and procedures in the Republic of Korea for the designation of geographical names span three categories: i) Natural Geographical Names; ii) Marine Geographical Names; and iii) Administrative Geographical Names. The NGII, National Oceanographic Research Institute, Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, and local autonomous bodies are responsible for these respectively.

Above all, as of April 2007, the NGII has put on Public Notice 151,781 natural geographical names, such as of naturally formed features, mountains, hills, villages, etc, following deliberations by the Korean Committee on Geographical Names (KCGN) under the Land Survey Act since 1958.

The KCGN is under the authority of the NGII and the Committee comprises nineteen members who are representatives of related organizations, including experts from the academic world. The KCGN deliberates and decides upon matters submitted by the Local Geographical Names Committee.

The geographical names thus revised are marked on the National Basic Map designed for everyday use. The basic principle in this process is that the actual names used by local residents are adopted through a process of consultations with local autonomous bodies which includes the conducting of on-site surveys. Local residents' requests for the designation or changing of a name for a specific area are also taken into account in the process of deliberations by the Central Geographical Names Committee.

The Committee on Geographic Names meets once or twice a year, and since the last year has rendered decisions on a total of 5,828 proposed names, 4,096 new names, 1,256 amended names, 303 abolished names, and 173 others. Details of the decisions are as follows:

<Table 1> Developments since the 8th Conference

Year of Public Notice	Area	Number of Geographic Names				
		Total	Created	Change d	Abolishe d	Others
2002	Jeollanam-do, Kangwon-do	1,775	1,316	339	120	-
2003	Jeollanam-do, Daegu, Jeju-do	2,910	2,074	700	114	22
2004	Jeollanam-do, Kangwon-do	437	303	17	13	4
2005	Jeollanam-do, Kangwon-do, Busan, Gyeongsangbuk-do	352	105	104	30	113
2006	Ulsan, Daegu, Jeollanam-do, Gyeonggi-do, Gangwon-do	354	198	96	26	34
	Total	5,828	4,096	1,256	303	173

2. Toponymic Guidelines and Gazetteers for Map Editors

Marking of geographical names on topographical maps is conducted using such scales as 1/1,000, 1/5,000, 1/10,000, 1/25,000, 1/50,000, 1/250,000 and 1/1,000,000.

Names of all administrative units (Dongs) are indicated. Names of all residential areas, streams, lakes, ponds, seas, mountains, and islets are shown except in those cases in which it is difficult to do so. Names of landmarks are indicated in light of their public, historical, social, and academic importance. The public, historical, social, and academic importance of landmarks is taken into account when indicating the Names of landmarks.

In particular, in 2007, the Korea Geographical Names will be published to provide guidance on the correct form of Romanization and other information on types of geographical names and matters related to geographical names such as addresses and geographical coordinates.

3. Automated Data Processing System

Recently, the NGII has been developing the system for the management of geographical names in order to effectively modify geographical names, in line with the updating of national base maps conducted on a regular basis since 2003.

The official website for geographic names in the Republic of Korea is known as the Geographic Names Services System, which has been operational since 2000. The URL address is <http://www.ngii.go.kr/>. In the last year there have been a number of significant improvements to the website based upon user comments and continued analysis by staff. Some of these include enhanced techniques for searching, additional data fields, and additional graphic display capability. This process has involved a complete redesign and modernization of the system whereby users will have access to the capability to search by spatial definition

4. Proposals and recommendations

Standardization of geographical names is now an important part of the work of a state administration. The Republic of Korea places great value on this issue, as testified to by the work of the Commission on Geographical Names.

When programs of the most urgent tasks are drawn up, the aim is to achieve the future goal which is to be a national gazetteer, a publication encompassing a list of, possibly, all basic geographical names in a country.

And it is the hope of the NGII that the system of employing maps of a scale of 1:25,000 for geographical names used so far will be changed to one of using maps of a scale of 1:5,000 in the near future.