

## 1. CHOICES AND CONSTRAINTS - C) COMPOUND NAMES

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Compound names (see glossary) are names that consist of more than one elements, one of which usually is a generic one. The issue here, about which a decision or rule should be formulated, is whether to translate generic elements of geographical names, or leave them as they are in their endonymic form?

*Should it be Golfo de Valencia or Gulf of Valencia (Dutch: Golf van Valencia)? Noordhoff chooses the latter for its atlases. Why? As it is a marine hydronym, and as the seas are international waters (beyond a single sovereignty) we want to have Dutch name versions here. We thus translate 'golfo' wherever it occurs (except in place names!) into golf (Dutch for 'gulf').*

Should we include *Montes de Toledo* or *Mountains of Toledo* (Dutch: *Gebergte van Toledo*) on our atlas map? Noordhoff chooses the former for its atlases. As the montes are clearly within Spain, we leave them Spanish.

*Mont Blanc* (literally 'The White Mountain') we leave *Mont Blanc*... simply because all Dutch know it as *Mont Blanc*, none would call it *Witte Berg* ("White Mountain" in Dutch). Likewise, *Costa del Sol* is never translated into *Kust van de Zon* ("Coast of the Sun"), not even by the least educated of the Dutch mass tourists.

To systematize this kind of decisions, it is advisable for atlas editors to compose their own internal toponymic guidelines, organized per country.

For an exercise on this topic see issue 2 of exercise "[Some editorial issues to solve](#)"

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