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**Names collection, office treatment, national authorities,
features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation**

***Publication of the Guidelines for the Standardization of
Geographical Names, Third Edition***

Submitted by Republic of Korea**

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Summary:

The National Geographic Information Institute (NGII) of the Republic of Korea published the Third Edition of the Guidelines for the Standardization of Geographical Names (지명 표준화 편람, Jimyeong Pyojunhwa Pyeollam) in 2018. This third edition was prepared to tackle the problems found in implementing the guidelines of the second edition which had been in use since 2012, and thus provide local municipalities with more clearly applicable principles of standardization and procedures of proposing geographical names. The principles of standardization consist of three basic principles, two priorities of name choice, seven types of names to be avoided, two rules of commemorative naming, and three procedural recommendations. Special emphasis is placed on the procedures of agreement on names by local municipalities for inter-municipality features, so as to prevent any form of controversy. There continues to be a need to enhance the practicality of the guidelines by expanding the applicability of principles to various types of geographical names and securing a legally binding mechanism.

Publication of the *Guidelines for the Standardization of Geographical Names*, Third Edition¹

Guidelines for the Standardization of Geographical Names

The National Geographic Information Institute (NGII) of the Republic of Korea published the Third Edition of the *Guidelines for the Standardization of Geographical Names* (지명 표준화 편람, *Jimyeong Pyojunhwa Pyeollam*) in December 2018, which replaces its second edition published in 2012. This book, of which the first edition appeared in 2005, has provided local municipalities with guidelines to name geographical features with reasonable principles and consistent procedures. Although its main purpose is to give applicable directions for the standardization in the local level, the book has also functioned as a comprehensive tutorial for the standardization of geographical names, including concept, definition and typology of geographical names, meaning and necessity of geographical names standardization, domestic and international bodies of the standardization, history of managing geographical names in Korea, and ways of romanizing Korean geographical names.

The third edition was prepared to tackle the problems found in operating the second edition. There has been high demand for revising the principles of standardization, given the recent trends in both the global and local levels. The following points were specifically noted:

- Principles of standardizing geographical names need to be restructured, in order to be more clearly referenced, e.g., grand principal and detailed principles, names to be prioritized and avoided.
- Supplementary principles should be provided in order to prevent inappropriate names in the global society with cultural diversity from being proposed, e.g., names with meanings of social exclusion or commercialization, names evoking conflicts or confusion, etc.
- As there are a growing number of conflicts or disputes between local municipalities, clear guidelines are necessary to prevent further conflicts in advance.
- There is a clear need to accommodate the global trend of standardization principles which is represented in the resolutions of the United Nations Conferences of the Standardization of Geographical Names.

Principles of Standardization

The principles of standardization in the third edition consist of three grand principles, two priorities of name choice, seven types of names to be avoided, two rules of commemorative naming, and three procedural recommendations. Special emphasis is placed on the procedures of agreeing on a common name between local municipalities for inter-municipality features, so as to prevent any form of controversy. Each principle is accompanied by explanatory notes including its background, related legal

¹ This working paper pertains to the UNCSGN resolutions I/4 (National standardization), V/6 (Promotion of national and international geographical names standardization programmes), VIII/2 (Commemorative naming practices for geographical features), and X/4 (Discouraging the commercialization of geographical names).

or procedural bases, and reference examples. Principles are listed as follows:

I. Basic principles of the standardization of geographical names

1. One standardized name shall be given for each geographical feature. Allonyms shall be managed separately.
2. Current names shall not be modified or discarded without valid reasons. When it comes to changing or discarding, it shall be recognized that those principles listed in section II have been fully considered by the names committees of each level.
3. The participation of local residents shall be guaranteed. Opinions of local members and experts of geographical names shall be reflected appropriately.

II. Detailed principles of standardization

4. Names with the following nature shall be prioritized;
 - (1) Names currently in local use;
 - (2) Names reflecting local identity, history, cultural heritage, or sense of place
5. Names with the following nature shall be avoided in principle and subject to further consideration of other names;
 - (1) Names deviated from the practices of modern use of Korean, e.g., foreign terms, incorrect orthography;
 - (2) Names with derogative meanings, including those with meanings of social exclusion;
 - (3) Names motivated by the context of commercialization;
 - (4) Names exclusively using elements of natural features common to two or more areas;
 - (5) Names having the probability of causing confusion by the existence of the same name in a near distance;
 - (6) Names which are long enough to encroach on users' convenience;
 - (7) Names using a series of numbers.
6. The following considerations shall be made when names of persons are used.
 - (1) Names of living persons shall be avoided.
 - (2) Names of persons associated with the area and deceased at least ten years prior to the use of their names may be used when local residents favor the use of such names and no strong objection is raised.

III. Procedures of decision of names

7. Names decided by the city/county level authorities shall be deliberated and decided by the metropolitan/provincial level authorities of the area. Names decided by metropolitan/provincial authorities shall be deliberated and finally decided by the Korea Committee on Geographical Names.
8. Names of features belonging to the jurisdiction of more than one local municipality shall be decided upon agreement between the relevant municipalities. When seeking for an agreement, the following elements shall be taken into account;
 - (1) Above mentioned principles 4, 5 and 6;
 - (2) Attempts shall be made to find a name representing elements common to relevant local municipalities;
 - (3) Names which can cause disputes by applying local elements exclusively belonging to just

- one local area shall be avoided;
- (4) In case of artificial features, names used temporarily during the construction period are not admitted as names currently in local use regulated in principle 4(1) above.
9. When an agreement cannot be reached, the decision shall be made by the higher level committee on geographical names.

Operation of the Guidelines

The Guidelines for the Standardization of Geographical Names is applicable to those names managed by the NGII, including natural feature names and a part of artificial feature names. Names of maritime features, administrative units, roads, cultural properties and other artificial features abide by the principles and procedures of the respective agencies. It is thus necessary to expand the general applicability of principles to various types of geographical names. Establishing a systematic framework of cross-referencing the principles of each agency will be constructive.

The Guidelines have the nature of a manual referenced by the geographical names committees of each level and thus has no legal effect. The fact that the guidelines are not legally binding is considered to be an obstacle to the effective standardization of geographical names. In the long run, there is a need to establish legislation that encompasses the management of all types of geographical names.