THE OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

- The National Geographic Information Institute (NGII) of the Republic of Korea aims to provide information on geographical names and enhance public awareness of geographical names.
- Geographical names reflect the history of places and the cultural traits of groups who have occupied them.
- The importance of geographical names has been increasing with the advent of information technology (IT), such as commercial mapping services for mobile electronic devices.
- The Korean zodiac has been used in the daily lives of people and associated with diverse symbolic meanings.
- The NGII has released media coverage about place names that are related to the Korean zodiac of the year since 2010, which has received much resonance and increased public awareness of geographical names.

EXAMPLES OF NEWS COVERAGE

TV (▲ Channel A, Dec. 29, 2015) and Newspaper (▼ The Kyunghyang, Dec. 30, 2015): “There are only 8 geographical names related to monkey all over the country.”

THE PROCESS OF PROJECT

- Since 2010, the NGII has researched and released geographical names that originated from the zodiacs, such as tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, and monkey through major broadcasting systems and newspapers.

Scope and Period of Survey

- SCOPE: geographical names associated with a zodiac of next year
- PERIOD: every September to December

Process of Project

STEP 1. Baseline data gathering

- Using the Geographical Names Database
- Considering different expressions of the zodiacs (e.g., Native Korean words, Chinese characters, and variants)
- Pilot survey to find an area for fieldwork
- Review of books and other materials

STEP 2. Identifying geographical names: 1st round

- List of names associated with a zodiac
- Using all possible search words
- Focusing on etymology section in the database

STEP 3. Identifying geographical names: 2nd round

- Line-by-line re-examination
- Using supplementary materials to minimize the possibility of omission
- Removing duplications

STEP 4. Field survey

- Visiting areas with the identified geographical names
- Finding good cases for eliciting public interest
- Taking photos and searching historical data and maps

STEP 5. Making a press release

- Succinct and informative press release
- Aerial photos are used if necessary
THE DISTRIBUTION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES ASSOCIATED WITH ZODIACS

Tiger (2010): Hoyeongdong (호영동, Tiger valley)  
- The name Hoyeongdong originated from the fact that tigers frequently appeared in the past. Although this area is an urbanized district with many apartment complexes, we can imagine the past of the place through the place name.

Horse (2014): Maisan (마이산, 馬耳山: horse ear mountain)  
- When we look at the picture of these two peaks, it is difficult not to think about the ears of a horse.

Sheep (2015): Naejangsan (내장산, 麻孏山: mountain that hold many things in it)  
- The name of this mountain means that it hides beautiful landscapes. However, other folklore etymology is based on the similarity in pronunciation. Naejang (內腸) refers to internal organs. People say that the winding valleys and ridges look like an intestine of sheep.

Snake (2013): Gimnyeongsagul (김녕시굴, 金寧蛇谷: snake cave at Gimnyeong)  
- This cave is long and winding like a snake. According to a legend, there was a huge snake with a mysterious power in the cave. Every year a girl had to be offered as a sacrifice to the snake. But 19 year old new brave governor Seorin killed the snake.

The name Hoyeongdong originated from the fact that tigers frequently appeared in the past. Although this area is an urbanized district with many apartment complexes, we can imagine the past of the place through the place name.

According to a legend, a monster serpent swam up Hangang. The serpent transformed into a dragon when it reached the place and left a pond after it soared into the sky.

The name originated from a legend that a golden monkey was imprisoned in a rock in the mountain. A village of golden monkey was established at the entrance of the mountain.

Two competing etymologies exist about the name of the island. One explains that the shape of the island looks like a flying rabbit while the other relates the name to the folk tale of rabbit and turtle. It is possible to find similar folklore throughout East Asia. According to the story, a turtle deceived a rabbit to get his liver for the sick Dragon King. He escaped the crisis by fooling the Dragon King with a lie that he left his liver on a rock.

THE KOREAN ZODIAC

- Korean Zodiac is the classification scheme that assigns an animal to each year in a repeating 12-year cycle.
- Twelve animals are Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig.
- Each animal represents time and direction, and is regarded as guards against misfortune.

- Rat: November / 11 p.m. - 1 a.m. / North  
  - Intelligent, quick-witted, adaptable, diligence, fecundity

- Ox: December / 1 - 3 a.m. / North-North-East  
  - Loyal, reliable, thorough, strong, reasonable, steady, determined

- Tiger: January / 3 - 5 a.m. / East-East-North  
  - Enthusiastic, courageous, ambitious, leadership, confidence, charismatic

- Rabbit: February / 5 - 7 a.m. / East  
  - Trustworthy, empathic, modest, diplomatic, sincere, sociable, caretaking

- Dragon: March / 7 - 9 a.m. / East-East-South  
  - Dignity, charismatic, lucky, flexible, artistic, spiritual

- Snake: April / 9 - 11 a.m. / South-South-East  
  - Philosophical, organized, intelligent, intuitive, elegant, attentive, decisive

- Horse: May / 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. / South  
  - Adaptable, loyal, courageous, strong, ambitious, intelligent, adventurous

- Sheep: June / 1 - 3 p.m. / South-South-West  
  - Calm, tasteful, crafty, warm, elegant, charming, intuitive, sensitive

- Monkey: July / 3 - 5 p.m. / West-West-South  
  - Creative, hope, energetic, intelligent, flamboyant, flexible, diverse, confident

- Rooster: August / 5 - 7 p.m. / West  
  - Creative, hope, energetic, intelligent, flamboyant, flexible, diverse, confident

- Dog: September / 7 - 9 p.m. / West-West-North  
  - Loyal, sociable, courageous, diligent, steady, lively, adaptable, smart

- Pig: October / 9 - 11 p.m. / North-North-West  
  - Richness, fortune, optimistic, philanthropic, honorable, sociable