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National standardization

STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN JAPAN

Paper presented by Japan

1. Collection of geographical names

As no government agency makes the centralization of collection, registration and administration of geographical names in Japan, data which are required to determine appropriate names for the preparation of a map are collected from local public bodies. In collecting such data, Form 1 is in use by the Geographical Survey Institute of the Ministry of Construction, which is in charge of topographic maps, while Form 2, by the Hydrographic Department of the Maritime Safety Agency, which is in charge of nautical charts.

Both organizations are independently engaged in collecting geographical names, because the way of naming of places on the land is different in nature from the way of naming of places in the sea and along the seacoast, and because the users of the maps prepared by the respective organizations are of different categories. Consequently, it may happen that the names of a given place, particularly one located on the seacoast, collected by the respective organizations, turn out to be different. For this reason, the geographical name of a place given in a topographic map is found to be different in a number of cases from the name given to the same place in a nautical chart. Such being the case, the Geographical Survey Institute and the Hydrographic Department established in 1960 a Joint Committee on Standardization of Geographical Names.

When a need arises for naming a geographical feature on the sea bottom in an area newly surveyed within the Japanese territorial waters, the Hydrographic Department will seek counsel from the fisheries experimental stations, fisheries co-operative associations, universities and other interested organizations in the neighbourhood of the area surveyed. In the process of the naming in such cases, those names which have been traditionally used by the local residents, particularly the ones in use by the local fishermen for many years, and those given by scientists, will be recorded. These names will be discussed, and a name will be adopted for the geographical feature on the sea bottom by the Assembly on Geographical Names of Oceans.

2. Treatment of geographical names

(1) Names of local public bodies, etc.

In Japan, the way of dealing with geographical names is different, depending on types of places. With regard to local public bodies - "aza" (subvillage), mura (village), "machi" (town), "shi" (city), the names of these communities are stipulated by laws and regulations. As for natural places, which cover wide areas, such as mountain ranges and plains their naming is dealt with semi-officially, while names of individual mountains, rivers, capes, etc. which are traditionally used are not subject to official treatment.

(2) Map of geographical names of natural regions

Mountain ranges, plains and groups of islands had such a variety of names, traditional or otherwise, that it was difficult to decide which name should be

indicated on maps. In order to overcome this difficulty, names which appeared in various literature were collected, and in 1954, the "Map of Geographical Names of Natural Regions" was compiled, getting advice from the Japan Science Council, mapping institutions and geographers at universities. The names standardized in this map are used in 1:200,000 scale topographic maps, 1:500,000 scale regional maps, 1:1,000,000 scale map of Japan, which are prepared by the Geographical Survey Institute, Ministry of Construction. Some of these maps have been revised for use in elementary and secondary education.

The compilation of the "Map of Geographical Names of Natural Regions" was carried out in accordance with the following guideline:

(a) Kinds and definition of natural regions

Santi (mountains): Represents any part of a land mass which projects conspicuously. It has a generalized implication.

Sanmyaku (mountain range): Represents a chain of Santi which conspicuously takes on a veinlike shape.

Koti (Highland): Represents a kind of Santi with small undulations, significantly developed valleys and a generally flat surface. Topographically, Koti comes in between Santi and Kogen. In terms of human geography, Koti represents an area where the valleys are heavily populated.

Kogen (plateau): Represents a kind of Santi with a flat surface, relatively small undulations, and inconspicuously developed valleys that are heavily populated.

Kyuryō (hill): Represents a natural elevation lower than Santi with insignificant undulations.

Heiya (plain): Represents a flat land which fronts on a sea.

Bonti (basin): Represents a flat land hemmed in by mountains.

Daiti (upland): A higher elevation of land, shaped like a platform, on Heiya or Bonti.

Hantō (peninsula): Represents an area jutting out of the land into the water.

Syotō (islands, archipelago): Represents a group of more than one island. Specifically, a group of more than one island in a row is called Retto (chain of islands).

In addition to the aforementioned names, the conventional usages are maintained in case a given area is called by the name of "Gen'ya" (wasteland), "No" (plain), "Hara" (field), "Dai" (plateau) or "Tani" (valley). The name of "Kazangun" or "Kazantai" (group or chain of volcanoes) is not treated as falling under the category of natural regions. This does not hold true, however, in the case where the name of Santi is conventionally used as a regional unit in referring to a volcano.

(b) Standards for names of natural regions

The giving of a name to a given natural region is done according to the following standard:

(a) In respect of names which have been conventionally used on a national scale for many years and therefore accepted commonly in broad segments of society, it is common practice to maintain the usages (e.g., Ōu Sanmyaku and Kantō Heiya).

(b) For Santi, the name of its main peak is used (e.g., Mahiru Santi and Ryōhaku Santi).

(c) For Heiya or Bonti, the name of its main community is used (e.g. Osaka Heiya and Yamagata Bonti).

(d) In case the names determined in accordance with the above standards are considered inappropriate, the name of Kuni (old name of province) or Gun (county) or their compound name or the name of some other area is used (e.g., Iwami Kōgen, Uonuma Kyūryō, Tikuhi Santi and Kuzyūkuri Heiya).

(e) For a name ending with No, Dai, Hara or any other suffix which represents the name of a natural region, Daiti, Kogen or similar appellation is not used (e.g., Musasino and Makinohara).

(3) Joint Committee on the Standardization of Geographical Names

It happened that many mountains, rivers, capes, etc., had different names which were conventionally used and, therefore, there was a difficulty in standardizing the names. As mentioned earlier, the Geographical Survey Institute and the Hydrographic Department established the Joint Committee on the Standardization of Geographical Names, which has met two or three times a year since 1960 and standardized about 6,000 geographical names.

The guidelines for standardization by this Committee are as follows:

a. Locally used geographical names are respected;

b. In case a district stretches over more than one Si, Mati and Mura and there are more than one name for it, a survey is carried out and literature referred to before an appropriate name is determined;

c. The names of territorial waters, international waters and other wide sea areas are determined by the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) under an international consensus. In principle, its decisions are adhered to.

3. Administrative agencies dealing with geographical names

As mentioned earlier, there is no centralized government agency dealing with

geographical names. Wherever necessary, the following administrative agencies deal with geographical names:

Development Division, Administration Bureau, Autonomy Agency, Prime Minister's Office: Names of To, Dō, Iu, Ken, Si, Mati (town) and Mura.

As for Chō and Aza, their names are dealt with by respective Shi, Mati and Mura.

National Polar Research Institute, Ministry of Education: Names for places in the Antarctic.

Geographical Survey Institute, Ministry of Construction: Names of natural regions covering wide areas.

Hydrographic Department, Maritime Safety Agency: Names of places on the sea bottom features.

[注] 通称を記載する場合は、(3)(4)欄のうちいずれかの該当欄に記入し、摘要欄に通称と記入する。

関係地形図:

関係地形図:

都道府県	市	特別区	郡	区	町	村	1	2	3	4	5	6
							昭和 年	昭和 年	昭和 年	昭和 年	昭和 年	昭和 年
大阪府	泉	南	郡	岬	町							
集落(居住地)の名称							5. 摘要					
ふりがな(2) 総称を総括する名称							ふりがな(3) 個々の名称(町、大字)					
ふりがな(1) 総称を総括する名称							ふりがな(4) 個々の名称(字、小字)					
たんのわ							(4)欄は通称送り仮名不要					
1 淡 輪							2 淡 輪					
ひかし							むら					
3 東 村							通 称					
くろ							さき					
4 黒 崎							"					
べつ							しよ					
5 別 所							"					
やま							だ					
6 山 田							"					
みね							じそ					
7 峯 地 蔵							通称、蓋は慣用漢字使用					
はたけ							8 畑 通 称					
ゆう							えんち					
9 遊 園 地							愛宕遊園と呼ばれる、通称					
ふ							け					
10 深 日												
きょう							し					
11 孝 子							12 下 孝 子 (4)欄は通称					
							13 中 孝 子 通 称					
							14 上 孝 子 "					
た							な					
15 多 奈 川							16 多 奈 川 谷 川 小 田 平 (2)(4)欄は通称					
							18 ひかし (4)欄は通称					
							19 しん 新 湊 通 称					
							20 ひら 平 野 "					

空欄電年 数字

照合者

区分	ふりがな 名称	所在その他の説明	補足事項	1	2	3	4	5	6
山	100 寺	淡 輪							
岳	101 桶 荷 山	淡 輪							
峠	102 中 ノ 峠	小 多 奈 川 谷 島 川							
	103 申 阪 峠	多 奈 川 西 畑							
	104 尾 白 峠	多 奈 川 東 畑							
	105 孝 子 峠	孝 子							
	106 平 井 峠	孝 子							
	107 白 峠	淡 輪							
	108 木 本 峠	多 奈 川 東 畑							
	109 犬 飼 谷	多 奈 川 谷 川							
	110 粉 谷	多 奈 川 谷 川							
	111 大 阪 湾								
112 関西電力火力発電所	多 奈 川 谷 川								
113 孝 子 トンネル	孝 子								

地名調査 三号用紙

照合者

