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Exonyms

Exonym Use in Austria

Submitted by Austria**

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1 Introduction

Place names are politically and culturally sensitive. This is very true for endonyms in the sense of names for geographical features at the community's own territory ('names from within')[1], since they are symbolic markers of possession, responsibility and space-related identity: Endonyms relate people to 'their' place (HELLELAND 2009; JORDAN 2009). But it is also true for exonyms in the sense of names for geographical features outside a community's own territory and differing from the endonym[2], since they are sometimes suspected to relate people to a place in the same way as endonyms: in the sense of appropriation or territorial claim. And it is not a claim at a place on the community's own territory, but on the territory belonging to somebody else. This suspicion is based on historical evidence: It happened indeed that communities used exonyms to express political claims.

Thus, also exonyms are all but politically innocent. They can be misused. Their proper function, however, is politically neutral: Exonyms are needed by a community to address features important for them outside their own territory in a comfortable way, i.e. easily pronounceable and easy to communicate (see JORDAN 2000). Exonyms help to integrate foreign features into the cultural sphere of a community, to avoid exclusion and alienation (BACK 2002). They have usually been derived from already existing endonyms and adopted by the receiver community through translation into their own language or through morphological or phonetical adaptation. In contrast to endonyms, exonyms are in principal <u>not</u> symbols of appropriation and do in principal <u>not</u> express claims, instead, they indicate the importance of a feature for this community and the relations it has with it, i.e. its network of external relations.

Another political aspect that makes exonyms heatedly debated is the fact that their use reflects political power, domination and prestige of a certain community and their language. (Language prestige is always related to the prestige of its community of speakers. A language without a politically or economically powerful community of speakers will not have prestige.)

The German language and its exonyms are a very telling example in this context, and the ups and downs of German exonym use from the late 19th century up to present – to be sketched in the next few paragraphs – do not only illustrate the correspondence between power, prestige and exonym use, but will also help to better understand current exonym use in Austria.

2 The ups and downs of German exonym use

The remarks to follow apply to all German-speaking countries (Austria, Germany, Switzerland) with only slight modifications.

In the late 19th century and in the period up to World War I, when Germany (the German Reich, founded in 1871) and the Habsburg Empire – both dominantly German-speaking and with German as their official languages (in the Hungarian part of the Empire only up to 1867) – were major powers on the continent, German was a prestigeous language,

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[1] For practical reasons the author uses his own comprehensive definitions of the endonym and the exonym and not the UNGEGN Glossary definitions (UNGEGN 2007). Also for the Austrian "Recommendations" (AKO 2012) the UNGEGN Glossary definitions could not be applied.

[2] See Foot Note 2.

the language of sciences (especially of philosophy) and a major trade language in Europe – on the continent only second to French. Many German exonyms were used also for the Anglophone sphere, e.g. *Felsengebirge* for Rocky Mountains, *Neu York* for New York, and of course *Pensylvanien* [Pensylvania]*, Nordkarolina* [North Carolina]*, Süddakota* [South Dakota] a.s.o.

The defeat of the 'Axis Powers' in WWI caused already a significant decline in German exonym use, especially related to features in the Anglophone world: The powers behind the German language had declined (the Habsburg Empire had even been dissolved); the prestige of their communities had weakened. By their engagement in WWI the United States had become a global power, and accordingly English was on the way to the first position as a global trade language. To replace English endonyms by German exonyms seemed not to be appropriate anymore (as it was with French endonyms before).

The later interwar period and WWII saw an inflated German nationalism culminating in all kinds of atrocities during the War. It artificially tried to re-establish the former prestige of the German language, also by an excessive use of German exonyms, first and foremost for features in the eastern part of Europe – here indeed as an expression of political claims. For this purpose, even new German names were created: e.g. *Litzmannsstadt* for *Łódź*. But German maps of this period also re-introduced German exonyms for the Anglosphere.

The defeat of the German Reich in WWII and the split of Europe into two antagonistic political blocs including the division of Germany resulted in the fact that the German language lost its prestige almost completely. Austria was for this reason near to codify its own standard language (see THALER 2001). In Austrian schools of the 1950s, German was not called 'German' anymore, but 'language of tuition', not to use a stigmatized word. In consequence, German exonyms were to a high extent avoided on all maps and in atlases published in German-speaking countries.

This was also a reaction to the Communist bloc, who appeared as a dangerous threat to the central part of Europe and especially to the German-speaking countries so near to the Iron Curtain and who conducted an a-national, internationalist policy as regards place names, banning exonyms. The German Democratic Republic (GDR) as a part this Communist bloc practised this policy to the extreme.

Another aspect contributing to the avoiding of German exonyms was that (now Communist) East-Central Europe had up to the end of WWII been settled by many Germans and the use of their former German endonyms (now as exonyms) could have been conceived as a political claim or nostalgia.

The fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 initiated the transformation period with a renaissance of German exonyms. Factors contributing to this renaissance were:
- The fading impact of National Socialism, who had stigmatized the German-speaking community, its language and exonyms for decades.
- The re-unification of Germany enforcing its political and economic position.
- The rise of Germany to one of the (if not the) leading nation(s) of the EU.
- The fall of Communism that had been conceived as a threat.
- The recovery of East-Central Europe as sphere of economic activities and interests of German-speaking countries – mainly Germany, but also Austria.

This renaissance of exonyms after 1989 did, however, not return to the excessive use of German names as it was practised in the era of National Socialism.

It deserves also to be remarked that the renaissance of German exonyms in the post-1989 period is no exception in Central and Eastern (former Communist) Europe. We can observe similar developments with Polish, Hungarian, Slovene, Croatian, Romanian and other exonyms. Compared to some of them the recovery of German exonyms is even moderate – for good reasons:

- Germany and Austria are on the background of their history well-advised to be restrictive in everything that could be conceived as nationalism.
- German exonyms sprout – of course – again in the areas of the small languages (of Central and South-East Europe), while 'they do not dare' to replace the endonyms of the large and prestigious Western languages like English, French or Spanish.

3 Recommendations for the use of exonyms in Austria (as of 1994 and 2012)

In this new political environment, the Austrian Board on Geographical Names (AKO) elaborated and published in 1994 "Proposals for the rendering of geographical names in Austrian school atlases" ["Vorschläge zur Schreibung geographischer Namen in österreichischen Schulatlanten"] (AKO 1994) and in 2012 "Recommendations for the rendering of geographical names in Austrian educational media" ["Empfehlungen zur Schreibung geographischer Namen in österreichischen Bildungsmedien"] (AKO 2012). The second edition of 2012 is a revised, updated and (mainly by explanatory texts) significantly amended version of the earlier publication. As regards the recommended use of exonyms, differences are rather marginal.

Both publications claim to be normative (for school atlases or educational media in general, respectively), but are at the same time receptive in the sense that they document exonyms and recommend them for further use that are well-known to a wider range of educated people in Austria. They were elaborated by a group of experts looking at the use of exonyms in Austrian media, modern literature and daily practice and recommending the more widely used names for continued use. The initiative for both undertakings came from Austrian cartographic publishers, who felt uncomfortable with the inconsistent and sometimes confusing use of exonyms.

The working group of the 1994 publication was chaired by Otto BACK (linguist) and composed of Josef BREU (geographer), Lukas BIRSAK (cartographer), Helmut DESOYE (geographer), Ferdinand MAYER (cartographer), Isolde HAUSNER (linguist), Peter JORDAN (geographer and cartographer) and Roman STANI-FERTL (cartographer) as additional members. It started working in 1989 – so right after the turn of politics – and arrived at the final publication after 64 meetings.

The working group of the 2012 publication was chaired by Lukas BIRSAK. The other members were Otto BACK, Michael DUSCHANEK (geographer and historian), Isolde HAUSNER, Peter JORDAN, Ingrid KRETSCHMER (cartographer), and Roman STANI-FERTL. Its work began in 2005 and was completed after about 70 meetings.

The 2012 publication contains a general chapter on principles of rendering geographical names, detailed recommendations for the Romanization of non-Roman scripts (see the recommendation for the Cyrillic script in the Appendix) and in their main part lists of German exonyms for geographical features of all categories and all countries of the world accompanied by information on official languages and other regulations concerning place names country by country (see some country sections and the list for macro-regions in the Appendix).

Figure 1 shows German exonyms widely used in Austria (just) for populated places in Europe important enough to be reflected in Austrian school atlases as documented and recommended for further use in the "Recommendations" of 2012. The "Recommendations" comprise of course also names of other feature types, but since countries are with a few exceptions always named by exonyms and at least the generics of names for relief features, lakes and seas are very frequently translated and thus create according to our understanding exonyms, these other names are not documented here in order not to level out the picture. The "Recommendations" are of course also not confined to Europe, but have a global scope.

The figure shows very characteristically the network of relations of the Austrian German-speaking community: It is dense on the territory of the former Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (except the German-speaking areas, of course), i.e. in Northern Italy, in the Bohemian Lands, and Belgium. It is still dense in East Central Europe with its former German settlement (where historical German endonyms have turned into exonyms) and in territories belonging to former empires with Germans as dominant groups and German as an official language (Habsburg Empire, German Empire).
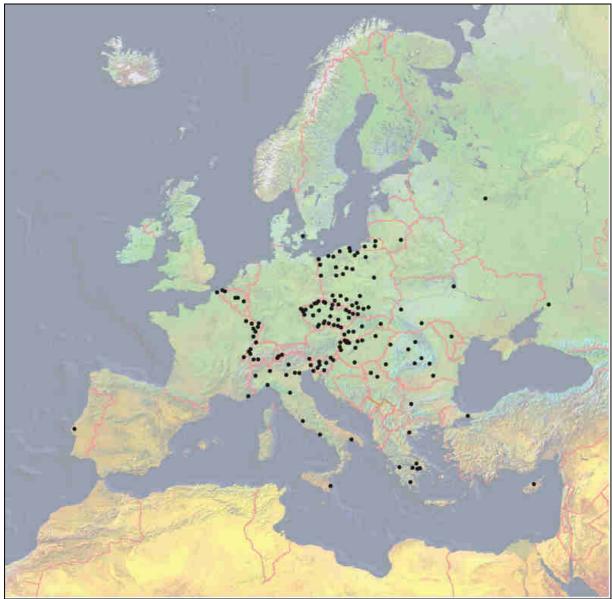

Fig. 1: German exonyms for populated places in Europe as documented and recommended for use by AKO 2012 (author's draft based on AKO 2012)

It is also obvious that distance matters: Places near to the Austrian border have a higher probability to be named by an exonym. This is, however, also influenced by the fact that Austrian school atlases portray areas near to the Austrian border in larger map scales and contain thus a larger number of features to be named.

But the network of historical relations as it is otherwise reflected by the pattern of exonyms, is distorted – as with all other Central and East European languages – by the European gradient in language prestige from West towards East: Almost no exonyms are in use for places in the Anglophone and Francophone sphere, since English and French are prestigious languages and languages of prestigious communities as well as well-known trade languages in Austria.

The "Recommendations" strongly suggest to put the exonym (if it is recommended for use without any restrictions) in the first position on maps and in written German texts arguing that it is the name to be regarded first, while they also recommend to render in addition the endonym in brackets – at least in the largest map scale and when a name occurs for the first time in a written text. They allow, however, in some cases also the alternative use of the endonym in the first position – dependent on the context. In some other cases, they mention also exonyms that have got out of use and are just to be used in historical contexts. The "Recommendations" abstain, however, from branding the German names recommended for use as "exonyms". In many cases, it was unclear for the team of authors, whether the German names in question were exonyms in the sense of the UNGEGN Glossary (UNGEGN 2007).

The "Recommendations" were meant to address not only editors of school atlases and school text books, but of educational media in general as well as print and electronic media.

This intention succeeded completely as regards school atlases: All school atlases licensed for Austrian schools and published in Austria observe strictly the "Recommendations". Also the main Austrian geographical journal, the Annals of the Austrian Geographical Society [Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Geographischen Gesellschaft] sticks strictly to their principles.

With the media and in practical daily use, however, it is different. The Austrian Board on Geographical Names is just an expert body without any legal competences to decide on name use. Thus, exonym use in the media is still inconsistent and sometimes confusing.

In general, exonym use in the media and also in daily life declines. This is mainly due to the fact that many geography teachers have been educated in the post-war period up to 1989, when German exonyms had a negative image, and avoid using them. In consequence, usually only the oldest have a wider knowledge and practise a more intensive use of exonyms, while especially the age group between 30 and 75 lacks exonym knowledge or regards their use as politically incorrect. The 'political gap' is widened by a paradigmatic change in didactics of geography in the 1960s from descriptive regional geography teaching to the explanation of functional relations. This lead to a substantial decline in topographic knowledge and resulted in the remarkable fact that while people are travelling around the globe more than ever, their mental maps are almost empty.

Replacement of exonyms by endonyms in schools and in daily communication does unfortunately not mean that strong efforts are made to pronounce endonyms correctly. Not in a few instances they are pronounced in a way that a donor language speaker would not understand them.

Decline in exonym use affects also larger and more important features like the capitals of Croatia and Slovakia: The German exonym *Agram* for Zagreb has almost got out of use. Curiously enough, the Austrian embassy in Croatia's capital preserves in its official name the exonym. For the Slovakian capital, the endonym *Bratislava* has essentially gained ground compared to *Pressburg* in German contexts in recent years. This is especially true for the

border region on the Austrian side, where traffic signposts with just the endonym hint to this city right at the other side of the border. Preferring the 'strange' endonym to the familiar exonym may also express a kind of mental reservation or 'pushing away' the Slovakian neighbours, who had earlier neatly been separated by the Iron Curtain, but became later so 'invasive'.

But also, and even more so, exonyms of smaller places right at the opposite side of the border fall into oblivion. Younger people do not know them anymore, and the elder use them only in historical contexts. A case in point is *Kranjska Gora* near the Carinthian border in Slovenia. Only older people in Carinthia know the German exonym *Kronau*, but don't use it, when they speak of the modern skiing resort, known by its World Cup competitions. Thus, the new image of the place as a tourist resort and location of sports events is associated exclusively with the Slovenian name.

Even a Hungarian border town with a German-speaking minority and bilingual (Hungarian/German) signposts and street names, Sopron/Ödenburg, with both names actually being endonyms in the sense defined in the introduction, is on the Austrian side of the border predominantly addressed by its Hungarian name. Also Austrian traffic signposts do not mention the town's second endonym and official name, *Ödenburg* (Fig. 2).

There are, however, also some exceptions, where exonyms – in fact historical endonyms – see a certain revival: Abbazia [Opatija] at the Croatian coast and the old Bohemian spas Karlsbad [Karlovy Vary], Marienbad [Mariánské Lázně] and Franzensbad [Františkovy Lázně] style themselves fin de siècle resorts and try to attract guests also by using the old name.

Certainly, also the principle of traffic signposts in Austria to use exclusively endonyms for populated places (not for countries) has some impact on exonym use in the wider public. The only prominent exception is *Maribor/Marburg* for a city in the now Slovenian part of Styria [Steiermark], where the German exonym is given after a slash (Fig. 3). Otherwise only some minor older signposts along country roads present the exonym – in contrast to some neighbour countries like Slovenia and Hungary, where exonyms figure even on motorway signposts in the first position (Fig. 4, 5).

Fig. 2: Even an officially bilingual place in Hungary, Sopron/Ödenburg, is indicated only by its Hungarian name on Austrian traffic signposts (Photo: JORDAN 2006)

Fig. 3: An exception in Austria: a traffic signpost shows endonym and exonym (Photo: JORDAN 2007)

Fig. 4: Hungarian traffic signposts show exonym and endonym (Photo: JORDAN 2006)

Fig. 5: Slovenian traffic signposts show exonym and endonym (Photo: JORDAN 2006)

Also in Austrian railway traffic – with station signs, schedules and announcements – only endonyms are used.

4 Conclusion

On the background of the list of criteria for exonym use that has been presented in earlier UNGEGN working papers (e.g. JORDAN 2011) it can be stated that in Austria (German) exonyms are mainly used

- for a domestic audience, e.g. in atlases and books for schools with German as language of tuition;
- in spoken language and fully formulated written texts and less in technical means of communication like tables or maps;
- for features important for the receiver community for various reasons, also because they are just near;
- for transboundary features in the sense of geographical features transgressing community boundaries;
- for seas and oceans;
- for exclusively historical features without an equivalent in the present;
- for a composed endonym with a transparent generic component, which can be translated;
- for an endonym difficult to be pronounced by a German-speaker;
- for endonyms in a language not frequently learned in Austria.

5 References

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Appendix

Conversion table for various Cyrillic alphabets (AKO 2012):

Kyrillisch AKO

In: Georgien, Kirgisistan, Moldau, Mongolei, Russland, Tadschikistan, Ukraine, Weißrussland

Für: Russisch, Kirgisisch, Weißrussisch, Inguschetisch, Kabardinisch, Mongolisch, Abchasisch, Adyge-Tscherkessisch, Baschkirisch, Burjatisch, Ossetisch, Ukrainisch, Tschuwaschisch, Awarisch, Abasinisch, Mansisch, Tscherkessisch, Balkarisch, Tschuktschisch, Korjakisch, Komi-Permjakisch, Nenzisch, Ewenkisch, Dolganisch, Chakassisch, Udmurtisch, Tadschikisch, Tschetschenisch, Tatarisch, Tuwinisch, Jakutisch, Mari, Komi-Syrjänisch, Altaisch, Ossetisch-Alanisch, Mordwinisch, Karelisch, Karatschaiisch, Kalmykisch, Chantisch

Empfohlen wird für die angeführten Sprachen mit kyrillischer Schrift eine gemeinsame Umschriftungstabelle, die auch die außerhalb des Russischen vorkommenden Sonderzeichen enthält:

I: empfohlen; II: BGN (soweit feststellbar); III: ZIKMUND (betrifft nur GUS-Staaten)

	Zeichen	I	II	III			Zeichen	I	II	III
1	a	a	a	a		34	ј	s. Anm.	j, y	j
2	ä	ä	ä	ä		35	к	k	k	k
3	ă	a				36	ќ	k	kh	
4	æ	ae				37	қ	k		
5	б	b	b	b		38	ҡ	k	q	q
6	в	s. Anm.	v	w, u		39	к	k		
7	г	s. Anm.	g, h	g, h		40	қ	k	q	q
8	ѓ	g	g	g		41	л	l	l	l
9	ѓ	gh	đ, g			42	љ	lj	lj	
10	ғ	gh	gh	gh		43	љ	l		
11	ђ	gh	gh	gh		44	ԯ	l		
12	h	h	h	h		45	м	m	m	
13	д	d	d	d		46	н	n	n	
14	е	s. Anm.	e, ye	e, je		47	њ	nj	nj	
15	є	je	ye	je		48	ң	s. Anm.	ng	ng, n
16	ё	je				49	ӈ	ng		
17	ĕ	e				50	ӊ	s. Anm.	ng	ng, n
18	ё	s. Anm.	ë, yë	jo, o		51	о	o	o	o
19	ж	s. Anm.	ž, zh, j	sh		52	ö	ö	ö	ö
20	җ	dsch	j	dsh, dh		53	ө	ö	ö	ö
21	ӝ	dsch	j	dsh		54	ӧ	ö		
22	ӂ	s	z	s		55	ꚉ	jü		ju
23	з	s. Anm.	z			56	п	p	p	p
24	ҙ	dh	dh	dh		57	ҧ	p		p
25	ӟ	ds	dz	ds		58	р	r	r	r
26	з	ds	dz	ds		59	с	s. Anm.	s	ss, s
27	ѕ	dz	dz			60	ҫ	s. Anm.	s, th	ss, s, th
28	и	s. Anm.	i, y	i, y		61	т	t	t	t
29	ӣ	i	í	i		62	ћ	ć	ć	
30	й	y	y	y		63	ҭ	t	t	t
31	й	s. Anm.	y	i, j		64	у	u	u, ū	u
32	і	i	i	i		65	ÿ	ü	ü	ü
33	ї	ji	yi	ji		66	ў	u		u

Lists of exonyms for some countries with information on official languages, languages and transcriptions recommended for endonym rendering (AKO 2012):

Posen (dt), Poznań (End)

Stettin (dt), Szczecin (End)

Teschen (dt), Cieszyn (End)

Thorn (dt), Toruń (End)

Waldenburg (dt), Wałbrzych (End)

Warschau (dt), Warszawa (End)

Portugal

Amtssprachen: Portugiesisch

Empfohlene Sprachen/Transkriptionen:

1 Portugiesisch

Gewässer:

Tejo (End), *Anm.: in Spanien:* Tajo

Inseln:

Azoren (dt)

Kaps:

Kap Carvoeiro (dt)

Kap Roca (dt)

Kap São Vicente (dt)

Siedlungen:

Lissabon (dt), Lisboa (End)

Ruanda

Amtssprachen: Rwanda, Französisch

Empfohlene Sprachen/Transkriptionen:

1 Rwanda

Gewässer:

Kiwusee (dt)

Rumänien

Amtssprachen: Rumänisch

Empfohlene Sprachen/Transkriptionen:

1 Rumänisch

Besonderheiten:
Dt. Namenformen: a) In „Altrumänien" (Gebiet bis 1918) nur wenige dt. Exonyme für bedeutende Objekte. b) In den Gebieten, die bis 1918 zu Österreich-Ungarn gehörten, wegen des damals starken dt. Bevölkerungsanteils viele dt. Namenformen; aufgrund der historischen Beziehungen zu Österreich sind sie großenteils noch in Gebrauch. Seit 2001 sind zahlreiche Siedlungen mit Anteilen sprachlicher Minderheiten von mehr als 20% rechtlich mehrsprachig und sollten daher mit allen amtlichen Namen unter Verwendung von Schrägstrichen verzeichnet werden.

Berge, Gebirge:

Banater Bergland (dt)

Bihorgebirge (dt)

Fagarascher Gebirge (dt)

Getische Vorkarpaten (dt)

Ostkarpaten (dt)

Rodnaer Gebirge (dt)

Siebenbürgisches Erzgebirge (dt)

Südkarpaten (dt)

Westsiebenbürgisches Gebirge (dt), Munţii Apuseni (End)

Gewässer:

Alt (dt), Olt (End)

Bistritz (dt), Bistriţa (End)

Donau (dt), Dunărea (End)

Große Kokel (dt), Târnava Mare (End)

Kilijaarm (dt), Braţul Chilia(End)

Kleine Kokel (dt), Târnava Mică (End)

Moldau (dt), Moldova (End)

Mureş (End), [Mieresch] (dt), *anstatt:* Maros

Sankt-Georgs-Arm (dt), Braţul Sfântu Gheorghe (End)

Schil (dt), Jiu (End)

Schnelle Körös (dt), Crişul Repede (End)

Schwarze Körös (dt), Crişul Negru (End)

Sulinaarm (dt), Braţul Sulina (End)

Temes (dt), Timiş (End)

Theiß (dt), Tisa (End)

Weiße Körös (dt), Crişul Alb (End)

Landschaften:

Banat (End)

Bărăgansteppe (dt)

Bukowina (dt)

Burzenland (dt)

Crişana (End), *anstatt:* Kreischgebiet

Dobrudscha (dt)

Donaudelta (dt)

Große Walachei (dt), *auch:* Muntenien (dt)

Auf mehrere Staaten aufgeteilte Großregionen

Besonderheiten:
Diese Namenliste enthält im Dt. gebräuchliche und für Karten empfohlene Benennungen großräumiger Objekte (wie Kontinentteile, Großlandschaften, Inselgruppen, Gebirgszüge), an denen mehrere – in der Regel drei oder mehr – Staaten Anteil haben. Solche geographische Objekte sind in den Namenlisten der einzelnen Länder nicht enthalten. Es versteht sich, dass diese Aufzählung nicht etwa eine vollständige naturräumliche Gliederung wiedergibt.

Berge, Gebirge:

Alpen

Anden, *auch:* Kordilleren

Ardennen

Atlas

Bergland von Guayana

Beskiden

Dinarisches Gebirge

Hagengebirge

Himalaja

Karakorum

Karpaten

Kaukasus

Kordilleren, *Anm.: Nord- und Südamerika*

Mitumbakette

Rheinisches Schiefergebirge

Skandinavisches Gebirge

Inseln:

Antillen, *anstatt:* Westindien

Große Antillen

Inseln über dem Winde

Inseln unter dem Winde

Karibik, *auch:* Westindien

Kleine Antillen

Malaiischer Archipel

Melanesien

Mikronesien

Polynesien

Sundainseln

Landschaften:

Afrika

Amazonastiefland

Amerika

Antarktika

Antarktis

Apenninenhalbinsel

Arabien, *auch:* Arabische Halbinsel

Arktis

Asien

Balkanhalbinsel

Baltikum

Baltischer Landrücken

Europa

Große Arabische Wüste, *auch:* Rub al-Chali

Großes Ungarisches Tiefland

Hinterindien

Hochland von Adamaua

Hochland von Iran

Iberische Halbinsel, *auch:* Pyrenäenhalbinsel

Kleinasien

Kleines Ungarisches Tiefland

Kongobecken

Kurdistan

Lateinamerika

Lundaschwelle

Makedonien, *auch:* Mazedonien

Malaiische Halbinsel

Mesopotamien

Mittelamerika

Mitteleuropa

Naher Osten

Niederguinea

Niederguineaschwelle

Nigerbecken

Nordafrika

Nordamerika

Norddeutsches Tiefland

Nordeuropa, *auch:* Skandinavien

Oberguinea

Oberguineaschwelle

Ostafrika

Ostafrikanischer Graben

Ostafrikanisches Seenhochland

Ostasien

Osteuropa

Osteuropäisches Flachland

Ozeanien

Pannonisches Becken

Lists of exonyms for macro-regions (AKO 2012)