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**Reports: Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the
standardization of geographical names**

Report of the Russian Federation

Submitted by Russian Federation **

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** Prepared by the Federal Service for State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography

Report of the Russian Federation*

Summary

The Report covers some trends in the national standardization of geographical names, namely the current status of the legislative and normative framework for identification, standardization, usage, registration, and storage of geographical names as a part of historical and cultural heritage of the peoples in the Russian Federation as well as the current status of the development of the national database of geographical objects' names – State Catalogue of Geographical Names, coordination of dictionaries and references content, manufacturing of the basic cartographic products.

The Report informs on the usage of GOST-83 Romanization system approved by the Fifth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names for maps and atlases published for international circulation.

The report lists international events dedicated to geographical names, which were attended by Russian specialists in the period 2017 – 2019.

Legislative framework for standardization of geographical names

The legislation of the Russian Federation for geographical names is based on the Constitution of the Russian Federation and includes the Federal Law “On names of geographical objects” No. 152-FZ passed on December 18, 1997 as well as adopted in their development normative legal acts of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law “On names of geographical objects“ is applied to standardization, usage, registration, and storage of names of geographical objects in the Russian Federation, on continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation as well as of features discovered or specified by the Russian explorers in the World Ocean and Antarctica.

The following normative legal acts are in force in the Russian Federation:

1. The Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 28.11.2018 No. 681 “On the assignment of individual geographical objects, the names of persons who have special merits to the Motherland”;

2. Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 15.11.2012 No. 1167 “On the procedure to coordinate proposals on naming of some geographical objects or on renaming of some geographical objects”;

3. Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 19.11.2014 No. 1221 “On approval of the Rules for assignment, alteration and cancellation of addresses” which set that place names within the address structure must coincide with those registered in the State Catalogue of Geographical Names;

4. Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 22.05.2015 No. 492 “On the addresses input to the State Address Register, procedure for inter-departmental information cooperation to maintain the State Address Register, on the procedure for alternation and annulment of some acts of the Government of the Russian Federation which approved the Rules for inter-departmental information cooperation to maintain the State Address Register, including providing information from the State Catalogue of Geographical Names”;

5. Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 07.03.2019 No. 245 “About the approval of Rules of consideration of offers on assignment to separate geographical objects of names of the persons having special merits before the Motherland and use of the

specified names”;

6. Decree of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation of 27.03.2014 No. 171 “On approval of the procedure for examination of proposals on naming and renaming of geographical objects and conclusion issuing”;

7. Decree of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation of 27.03.2014 No. 172 “On approval of the Procedure for registration of geographical names, releasing of gazetteers and dictionaries of geographical names as well as development and maintenance of the State Catalogue of Geographical Names”;

8. Decree of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation of 29.05.2015 No. 322 “On approval of the Procedure for identification of the available names of geographical objects in the Russian Federation, on its continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation as well as of features discovered or specified by the Russian explorers in the World Ocean and Antarctica”.

The enlisted normative-legal documents relating to names of geographical objects are accessible on the official website of the Federal Service for State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography (Rosreestr) (hereinafter – Official website): <https://rosreestr.ru/site/activity/geodeziya-i-kartografiya/naimenovaniya-geograficheskikh-obektov/zakonodatelstvo-rf-o-naimenovaniyakh-geograficheskikh-obektov/>.

National authorities for standardization of geographical names

The Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and the Federal Service for State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography (Rosreestr) are authorized executive federal bodies in the field of geographical names.

The Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation develops state policies and carries out normative-legal regulation in the area of names of geographical objects.

Rosreestr is responsible for the following activities:

- develop and maintain the State Catalogue of Geographical Names;
- standardize geographical names in the Russian language;
- prepare expert opinions on proposals on naming and renaming of geographical objects and conclusion issuing;
- coordinate within its competence the content of dictionaries and references of geographical names published by federal executive bodies and public authorities in the subjects of the Russian Federation.

As part of the expertise Rosreestr coordinates with the federal executive bodies proposals on naming of railway stations, seaports and river ports, airports, geographical objects of territorial sea, continental shelf and exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation as well as features discovered or specified by the Russian explorers in the World Ocean and Antarctica or renaming of these objects.

In the framework of maintenance of the State Catalogue of Geographical Names works are carried out on registration and accounting of names of geographical objects of the Russian Federation, continental shelf and exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation as well as geographic objects discovered or specified by the Russian explorers in the World Ocean and Antarctica, on the identification of existing names of geographical objects.

In some subjects of the Russian Federation, Toponymic Commissions were organized under the executive public bodies. Their purpose is to regulate usage of urban names, register and preserve them as a part of historical and cultural heritage.

Under the Russian Geographic Society, there is the Toponymic Commission, the purpose of which is to study folk toponymic nomenclature, introduce toponymy into curriculum of higher

educational institutions. In 2017 – 2018, 52nd and 53rd all-Russian student conferences on toponymy were held.

Taking into account positive expert opinions given by Rosreestr in 2017 – 2019, the Government of the Russian Federation adopted more than 42 normative acts on assigning names to 85 geographical objects and renaming of 7 objects.

The names of geographical objects immortalized the names of heroes-participants of the Great Patriotic War, who took part in the liberation of southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, scientists-geologists, geomorphologists and historians, researchers and diplomats, heroes of the Russian Federation and others who have services to the state.

The names were given to the settlements of the Republic of Dagestan and Tatarstan, Transbaikal, Krasnodar and Khabarovsk territories, Belgorod, Novgorod and other regions of the Russian Federation.

Development of national database of geographical names

Development and maintenance of the State Catalogue of Geographical Names of the Russian Federation, its continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation as well as of features discovered or specified by the Russian explorers in the World Ocean and Antarctica are held on a regular basis.

Generally, development and maintenance of the State Catalogue of Geographical Names are specified by the Decree of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation of 27.03.2014 No. 172. Development and maintenance of the State Catalogue of Geographical Names are executed by the Federal Service for State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography (Rosreestr) and its subordinate federal state budget institution “Federal Scientific and Technical Center of Geodesy, Cartography and Spatial Data Infrastructure”.

The State Catalogue of Geographical Names is based on the information retrieval system that provides creation of database containing objects and their names, their storage, processing and output per typical user requests.

In 2016, the developed information search system was registered by the Russian Federal Service for Intellectual Property in the Unified Register of Russian Computer Programs and Databases. The Russian Federation is a copyright holder of the system, with Rosreestr acting on behalf of it.

In the course of maintenance of the State Catalogue, the following data is input:

- newly named geographical objects;
- renamed geographical objects;
- changed generic terms;
- objects excluded from registration as not existing any longer;
- changes in administrative-territorial affiliation of objects.

New data input into the State Catalogue as a part of its maintenance is accompanied with its sources and date of its input.

The State Catalogue consists of two standalone sections:

- first section – geographical objects located on the land part of the Russian Federation;
- second section – geographical objects located on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation as well as objects discovered or specified by the Russian explorers in the World Ocean and Antarctica.

In the database of the State Catalogue, each geographical object is specified by parameters most of which are mandatory for its registration and unique identification (name, generic term, administrative status of a populated place, administrative affiliation, geo coordinates, sheet nomenclature of 1:100,000 scale topographic map where an object is shown, location of an object

relative to other large objects). The other portion of parameters covers additional information on a name and object (versions of a name, versions of a generic term, name origin, etymology, etc.).

When the abovementioned parameters are input into the database of the State Catalogue, an automated registration is performed that is accompanied by assignment of individual registration numbers to geographical names and by recording dates of their registration in the database.

Information submitted for inputting into the database of the State Catalogue should be confirmed by reliable sources. Among these sources the following could be mentioned: normative-legal acts of the Russian Federation and its subjects, reference-books of administrative division of the subjects of the Russian Federation, the census, dictionaries of geographical names and gazetteers which were agreed with the state bodies authorized in geographical names, cartographic and other documents.

The database of the State Catalogue already includes the information on names of 787,800 geographical objects identified by the sources listed in the Order of identification of existing names of geographical objects (Decree of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation of 29.05.2015 No. 322). This data includes 1,806 names of geographical objects located on the continental shelf and in the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation as well as objects discovered or specified by the Russian explorers in the World Ocean and Antarctica.

In order to make information on geographical names reliable and actual, the names of geographical objects registered in the State Catalogue are verified together with the public authorities of the corresponding subjects of the Russian Federation.

With a view to promptly provide concerned users with information, registers of geographical names for each of 85 subjects of the Russian Federation were compiled on the base of the State Catalogue and published on the Official website: <https://rosreestr.ru/site/activity/geodeziya-i-kartografiya/naimenovaniya-geograficheskikh-obektov/gosudarstvennyy-katalog-geograficheskikh-nazvaniy/>.

In response to requests of individuals and legal entities, public authorities, local governments, the information registered in the State Catalogue of Geographical Names is provided free of charge both in hard copy and electronic format.

The State Catalogue of Geographical Names is used to maintain the e-Bulletin of official changes of geographical names made in the Russian Federation since 1997.

The e-Bulletin is accessible on the Official website: <https://rosreestr.ru/site/activity/geodeziya-i-kartografiya/naimenovaniya-geograficheskikh-obektov/raboty-v-oblasti-naimenovaniy-geograficheskikh-obektov/>.

Dictionaries and references of geographical names

In accordance with the Federal Law “On names of geographical objects” Rosreestr is tasked with agreeing on the content of dictionaries and references of geographical names prior to their publication. In 2017, the draft directory of administrative-territorial division of the Leningrad region was reviewed.

Cartographic publications

The most significant publication is the National Atlas of Russia which is an encyclopedic scientific and cartographic source that contains information on the state structure, nature, resources, population, economics, environment status, history and culture of Russia. The Atlas (in 4 volumes) is issued in both hard copy and electronic form.

For the first time in the history of Russia, the Federal Service for State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography prepared and published in 2017 the National Atlas of the Arctic, which is a fundamental complex cartographic work of information and reference, scientific and applied nature.

The Atlas is published in printed and expanded electronic versions with a circulation of 1 000 copies of each version. The expanded electronic version of the national Atlas of the Arctic includes the content of the printed version of the Atlas, as well as thematic maps and text descriptions not included in the printed version and created additionally. The volume of additionally created thematic maps is comparable in volume with the printed version of the Atlas.

Making speech at the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Russian geographical society in St. Petersburg on April 27, 2018, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin stressed that documents, cartographic and other publications in Russian or other languages of the nations of the Russian Federation should use the established names of geographical objects, that is, assigned and renamed in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation in the field of names of geographical objects.

Update of guidelines for Russian transfer of geographical names

Within the framework of implementation of the unified state policy in the field of geographical names, as well as taking into account changes and clarifications in a number of subjects of the Russian Federation of the rules of spelling of the nations of the Russian Federation, work is continuing on updating normative documents in the field of names of geographical objects.

Taking into account the experience gained over the last period, in order to further improve the practice of Russian transfer of geographical names, as well as taking into account the proposals and recommendations received from the subjects of the Russian Federation, Rosreestr prepared draft rules for the transfer of geographical names of the Republics of Bashkortostan, Buryatia, Tatarstan, Altai, Tuva, Mordovia, North Ossetia – Alania, Kalmykia, Komi, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous district, as well as Mansi and Nogai names.

National Romanization system for geographical names

For cartographic products issued in national languages, the Romanization system for the Cyrillic characters GOST-83 approved by the Fifth UN Conference of the standardization of geographical names (Montreal, 1987) continues to be used. GOST-83 is available at the Official website: <https://rosreestr.ru/site/activity/geodeziya-i-kartografiya/naimenovaniya-geograficheskikh-obektov/zakonodatelstvo-rf-o-naimenovaniyakh-geograficheskikh-obektov/>.

This system is also used in the second section of the State Catalogue of Geographical Names to register information on the names and types of geographical objects of the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation, as well as geographical objects discovered or allocated by Russian scientists within the World Ocean and Antarctica.

Participation in international events on the standardization of geographical names

In the reporting period, much attention was paid to international cooperation in the area of geographical names.

Experts from Russia took part in the 11th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and 30th Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

Russian specialists, who are part of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division and the Baltic Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names as their permanent members, participated in the work of these divisions, held respectively in the Russian Federation, (Irkutsk, 2017), the Republic of Uzbekistan (Tashkent, 2018), the Republic of Lithuania, (Vilnius, 2018).

Cooperation between countries of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division and the Baltic Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names is progressing well. The meetings of the Baltic Division were attended by specialists from the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine, who were permanent members of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division.

Cooperation within the Working group on geographical names of the Interstate Council for Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Earth Remote Sensing of the Commonwealth of Independent States is successfully developing.

The main result of the collaboration was the e-Bulletin of changes in geographical names in CIS countries. The e-Bulletin is annually updated and published on the Official website in Russian and national languages of its member-states.

Russian specialists in 2018 took part in the work of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) (Switzerland) with a report on the standardization of names of geographical objects of Antarctica in the Russian Federation.

The expert of the Geological Institute of the Russian Academy of Science, as a permanent member of the Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN) of the united Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) and the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) took part in a workshop of the Subcommittee (New Zealand) in 2018, at which proposals from the Russian Federation on the assignment of names to forms of underwater relief were made.