

Maciej Zych

Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland

The list of Polish geographical names of the world

At the end of 2013, the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography published “Official List of Polish Geographical Names of the World” [“Urzędowy wykaz polskich nazw geograficznych świata”]¹. This 874-page publication was prepared by the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland. This is the second list comprising Polish exonyms from the whole world – the previous one, entitled “Polish geographical names of the world” [“Polskie nazwy geograficzne świata”], was issued in the years 1994-1996. Unlike the previous list, this one has, according to the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration on the manner and scope of activity of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names, the status of the official list. The list is published for use by the entities responsible for executing public tasks in the territory of the Republic of Poland.

1. Previous lists of the recommended Polish geographical names of the world

The Polish geographical names of the world, despite having been used for many centuries, were not subject to studies and standardization until the post-World War II years. In the inter-war period, Polish names were commonly used both in maps and atlases as well as encyclopaedias. However, apart from names of principal geographic objects well-established in the Polish language, the name forms often varied, and authors sometimes arbitrarily Polonized foreign names.

In 1951, the Commission on Geographical Names [Komisja Nazw Geograficznych] was created at the Polish Geographical Society [Polskie Towarzystwo Geograficzne] (led by Professor Stanisław Leszczycki) to make extensive efforts in order to provide uniformity to the geographical names used in Poland and prepare a list with correct names recommended for use, including both Polonized names and original ones. By 1956, the Commission (since 1953, acting at the Institute of Geography of the Polish Academy of Sciences [Instytut Geografii Polskiej Akademii Nauk] as the Commission on Establishing Geographical Names [Komisja Ustalania Nazw Geograficznych]) established 19,720 names of objects from all around the world, part of which were Polish names. From 1952 to 1956, the gazetteers were systematically published in 15 volumes², and in 1959 a revised and updated complete gazetteer was published under the title of “Polish Geographical Names of the World” [“Polskie nazewnictwo geograficzne świata”], gathering the names included in the previous volumes and edited by Lech Ratajski, Janina Szewczyk and Przemysław Zwoliński. The list of names which were included there was recognized by the Language Culture Commission of

¹ The whole publication is available on the website of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland: http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/english/wpngs_en.php.

² The names volumes were issued in 1952–53 as part of the “Geographical Bulletin” [“Biuletyn Geograficzny”] of the Polish Geographical Society, in 1954 – of the “Geographical Bulletin” of the Institute of Geography of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and in 1955–56 – of the “Geographical Documentation” [“Dokumentacja Geograficzna”] of the same Institute.

the Linguistics Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences [Komisja Kultury Języka Komitetu Językoznawstwa Polskiej Akademii Nauk] as the norm, therefore, it became widely used in many dictionaries, encyclopaedias and geographic studies. This list included many Polish geographical names, however, it also included objects for which the Polish name either had not existed or had not been recommended by the Commission.

In 1967, the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was held, and subsequently the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) was created. This international cooperation increased the authorities' awareness of the importance of the standardization of geographical names. This led to moving the Commission in 1973 to the Ministry of Science, Higher Education and Technology [Ministerstwo Nauki, Szkolnictwa Wyższego i Techniki] and changing its name into the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names of the World [Komisja Standaryzacji Nazw Geograficznych Świata] (in 1984 the name was changed to Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside Poland [Komisja Standaryzacji Nazw Geograficznych poza Granicami Polski]). It was presided by Professor Lech Ratajski. As a result, the list of names of countries published in the mid-1970s was issued upon an order of the Minister. In the 1986, another official list of country names was released.

During the Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, which was held in 1972 in London, several resolutions on exonyms were adopted. One of them (II/28) recommended to the Member States' national geographical names authorities to prepare lists of exonyms currently employed. Another one (II/29) called for limiting the use of exonyms. On the Third Conference (Athens, 1977), countries were called to continue works on the preparation of lists of exonyms. Taking into account these resolutions, the Commission, headed since 1978 by Professor Jerzy Kondracki, proceeded to develop a list of Polish geographical names of the world (Polish exonyms). The first list of Polish exonyms which included only names of object from Europe (excluding the area of the Soviet Union) was published in 1982. This list, entitled "List of the Most Important Polish Exonyms for Europe (without USSR)", has been prepared for the Forth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (Geneva, 1982). The list, which was published in English only, included in the first part names of 33 countries, and in the second part 520 Polish exonyms with endonyms of these objects.

The works of the Commission on the list of Polish exonyms for objects from the whole world were concluded only in the 90s. In the years 1994-1996, a 4-volume list of Polish geographical names of the world was published. The publication implemented decisions of the UNGEGN aiming to standardize the geographical names used in particular countries: in maps, atlases, handbooks, the press and other mass media. It was also intended to resolve many doubts and prevent numerous cases of incoherence in the use of the Polish traditional geographical names of objects outside Poland. The names included there were recommended for common use by the Ministry of National Education. The list, which is divided into four parts, features over 6,400 names from all continents as well as seas and oceans (undersea features). In the first part, 1,706 Polish geographical names of objects from Europe (excluding areas of the former Soviet Union) were listed including national forms of these names (with transcription and transliteration for the non-Roman writing systems). The second part listed 2,943 Polish geographical names from the areas of Eastern Europe and Asia; the third part listed 1,374 Polish exonyms from Africa, the Americas, Australia, Oceania and Antarctica, and the fourth part listed 370 Polish geographical names for seas and undersea features.

Another period of the Commission's works started in 2000, when – pursuant to newly adopted regulations – the Commission was allocated to the Surveyor General of Poland (called the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of

Poland [Komisja Standaryzacji Nazw Geograficznych poza Granicami Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej] since 2001). The Commission launched extensive works on preparing gazetteers with geographical names of the world. Its new chairman, Maksymilian Skotnicki, drew up the general guidelines for the publication, continuing the traditions initiated in the 1950s. The goal was to prepare a gazetteer with geographical names recommended for use in Poland, including both names of objects with Polish names as well as those where such names did not exist. The Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names was in charge of standardising nothing but Polish names (exonyms), while original names (endonyms) were provided based on the most reliable sources. The correctness of the compiled nomenclature was assured by the competent authors selected to prepare the lists of names from the areas of particular countries; they were preferably linguists (experts in languages in which the respective names were established) along with geographers, cartographers and historians. The team of authors was composed of 28 people in total; furthermore, the lists – verified subsequently by revisers – were discussed at the Commission’s general meetings. The initially anticipated period of three to four years turned out to be insufficient to prepare the gazetteers (it took seven years to elaborate the ones published in the 1950s), and the number of names included in the volumes exceeded the expectations by reaching about 30,000 items. The final, twelfth volume of the “Geographical Names of the World” [“Nazewnictwo geograficzne świata”] was released in 2010, upon nearly ten years of works. In total, the “Geographical Names of the World” included around 53,000 names of geographical objects, while Polish names were determined for about 10,000 of them.

2. The rules for establishing Polish geographical names of the world and definition of an exonym

Throughout the decades after the first Commission was appointed, the rules for determination of names have evolved. This concerned mostly the correct use of exonyms. At first, their widespread use was recommended, even if it involved Polonizing names of places which were not very well-known in our country. Following the adoption by the UNGEGN resolution calling for the limitation of the use of exonyms, the Commission significantly reduced the recommended number of Polish names. As one of the effects of these activities was, highly controversial from today’s point of view, decision on replacing in the school atlases Polish city names by the original ones. At present, the Commission intends to preserve those names that are well-established in the Polish language and form part of Polish cultural heritage. Nonetheless, some of the exonyms are not recommended by the Commission (as unused in practice or even incorrect). However, standardization was performed with respect to names of smaller geographic objects from areas historically connected with Poland, as well as for a number of features that Polish names, although often not traditional, were considered useful – this refers mainly to names of administrative units and areas of environment protection. On the one hand, the Commission’s purpose was to preserve those Polish names that deserved such protection, and, on the other hand, to remove from use those that had been introduced precipitately or had become obsolete (e.g. the name of *Celowiec* for Klagenfurt, *Tallin* for Tallinn, *Rejkiawik* for Reykjavík, *Abisomalia* for not currently recognizes region in Africa, *Góry Richthofena* for Qilian Shan). At the same time, following the evolution of the nomenclature, some old names were replaced with modern ones (e.g. *Sinciang* for previously used exonym *Sinkiang*, *Swanetia* instead of *Swanecja*, *Mordowia* instead of *Mordwa*, *Pjongjang* instead of *Phenian*, *Iwano-Frankiowsk* instead of *Iwano-Frankowsk*).

To determine the correct forms of the Polish geographical names of the world (exonyms), the Commission had to define them in the first place. It was initially established

that the Polish exonyms are names of those geographic objects which are located outside Poland whose forms as used in Polish differ from the original ones, used in the languages in the respective countries.

As a result of the modification of the definition of exonym adopted by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, also the definition used by the Commission evolved, and currently it reads as follows: **an Polish exonym** is a name currently used in Poland in the Polish language for a geographical feature situated outside the Polish territory and different in its graphical form from the standardized endonym of this feature. Omission, addition or translation of a generic term is not considered to be a difference in form, nor is a transliteration or transcription of a name originally written in a non-Roman script as long as it follows previously established rules. However, according to the Commission, any omission or addition of diacritics or prefixes forming an integral part of the name is considered to be a difference in graphical form. An important issue here is that the Commission takes into account only names used in Poland, and forms used by Polish minorities abroad, if they are different than the ones used in Poland, they are not considered (e.g. the name of *Daugawpils* used by the Latvian Poles instead of the name of *Dyneburg* used in Poland for the Latvian city of Daugavpils).

The Commission has agreed that this definition of an exonym is not exhaustive when it comes to the Polish geographical names of the world, as there are names traditionally used in Poland that are not considered exonyms. The Commission has called such names **quasi-exonyms** and covered by this term:

- geographical names of transboundary features equivalent to at least one standard endonym in use in one of the countries where the respective feature is located, but different from at least one of such other endonyms; for example the name *Dunaj* [Danube] – a Slovak endonym and transcription of the Ukrainian name *Дунай* (i.e. *Dunaj*) – is treated as a Polish name and applied to the entire river, not only to its parts situated in Slovakia and Ukraine, but also in Germany and Austria (German endonym: *Donau*), Hungary (Hungarian endonym: *Duna*), Croatia and Serbia (Croatian and Serbian endonym: *Dunav*), Bulgaria (Bulgarian endonym: *Дунав* – *Dunav* in transliteration and *Dunaw* in Polish transcription) and Romania (Romanian endonym: *Dunărea*);
- geographical names of features with more than one endonym in the official language or languages of the respective country and identical to one of such names; for example the name *Dublin*, the English endonym, has been adopted in Polish for the capital of Ireland, while the use of the Irish endonym *Baile Átha Cliath* is not recommended; likewise, it is recommended to use the Finnish name for the capital of Finland – *Helsinki* – rather than the Swedish one – *Helsingfors*;
- geographical names of features whose official endonyms are written in a non-Roman script, identical to the name of the feature written in only one of the Romanization methods approved by the Commission, namely transcription or transliteration; for example the Russian mountains have been called in Polish *Ural*, which corresponds to the Russian endonym *Урал* in its transliteration (the Polish transcription of this name is *Urał*), and for the city of Moscow the Russian endonym *Москва* in the Polish transcription has been adopted – *Moskwa* (its transliterated form is *Moskva*);
- geographical names different from the official endonym of the respective feature only because of the translation or omission of a generic term, for example *Zatoka Alaska* standing for the *Gulf of Alaska*.

The Commission standardizes only those quasi-exonyms which refer to well-known features.

It is also important to refer to the term of “standardized endonym” presented in the definition adopted by the Commission. In general meaning “endonyms” are the names of geographical features in languages used in the area where these features are located, while the term of “standardized endonyms” refers to endonyms that have been approved by a competent geographical names authority.

For other countries, the issue of standardized endonyms, however, may be questionable. In countries where geographical names authorities exist such names can be obtained from national gazetteers or databases. However, standardization exists in a minority of countries, and even in those countries where it exists, it does not always cover all of geographic features. Therefore, the Commission in its work adopted in practice an assumption that in the case of lack of list of standardized names, the names placed on topographic maps and others official sources will be recognised as standardized endonyms. But in the case of some countries, even such an approach proved to be insufficient. In such cases the Commission has used the most reliable international publications and considered as endonyms the names in official languages of the state or its administrative units.

3. New list of Polish geographical names of the world

The works on “Official List of Polish Geographical Names of the World” began in early 2010, immediately after the completion of the 12-volume list of “Geographical Names of the World”. These works lasted until the second half of 2013. The Polish names included in this publication were discussed during 34 meetings of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names (not all of these meetings, however, were entirely devoted to discussing the names to this list). Altogether, 5266 Polish names were added, 512 names were changed, and 267 were deleted during these meetings.

The list includes names of geographical features from all continents, as well as names of undersea features, however, the names of objects lying entirely in the Polish territory have been excluded. The list refers only to the features for which Polish geographical names (exonyms and quasi-exonyms) are recommended, such as *Paryż* for Paris, *Gwinea* [Guinea] for Guinée, *Wyspy Japońskie* [Japanese Archipelago] for Nihon Rettō, *Andy* [the Andes] for Cordillera de los Andes, or *Zatoka Omańska* [Gulf of Oman] for Khalīj ‘Umān / Daryā-ye ‘Omān. Therefore, geographical features for which this kind of name either does not exist or are not recommended have not been contained, including names commonly used in Polish such as *Berlin*, *Amsterdam*, *Lombardia*, *Alaska*, *Tasmania*, *Jawa* or *Niger*, which – although well-established in the Polish language – are identical to the original names (which means that endonyms are used in Polish in these cases). This also applies to names originally written in a non-Roman script, where the names used in the Polish language are identical to the forms created by means of all recommended Romanization methods (transcription and transliteration), for example *Krasnojarsk* [Krasnoyarsk] (Красноярск in Russian), *Lida* (Ліда in Belarusian and Лида in Russian), *Astana* (Астана in Kazakh and Russian) or *Gorgany* (Горгани in Ukrainian). That is why, the lists may seem incomplete in particular categories, especially in the case of administrative divisions, whose small number has been omitted. It should be noted that the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland is responsible for standardization of the Polish names only, excluding any standardization of endonyms – the exonyms and quasi-exonyms listed in the gazetteer are the only Polish geographical names the Commission recommends. If a certain object has not been listed, it means that the Commission does not recommend using its Polish name even if such a name can be found in some publications. The reason for omitting a name may also be the fact that the object it refers to is insignificant or ceased to exist.

The Polish names for 13,358 geographical features have been given in the list. Exonyms are recommended for 11,326 of them, quasi-exonyms for 1,813 (without considering variants in both cases). For 219 transboundary features that are located partly in Poland, their Polish names are endonyms, however, where they refer to those parts of such features situated outside Poland, they can be considered quasi-exonyms (e.g. *Karpaty* [Carpathians], *Nizina Wschodnioeuropejska* [East European Plain], *Bug* [Bug River], *Morze Bałtyckie* [Baltic Sea]). Most of the features are included in the chapter with European countries – 9,646, whereas the smallest number of the features are listed in the chapter with countries from South America – 170 (see Tabl. 1). Among the countries, the most numerous are the ones with names from Ukraine (2,222 named features), Belarus (2,020), Lithuania (1,334), Russia (1,041), and Slovakia (782).

Chapter	Number of principal names				Number of variant names	Number of official names
	total	of which:				
		exonyms	quasi-exonyms	objects partly in Poland		
1. Europe	9646	8172	1264	210	156	86
2. Asia	1579	1251	326	2	50	62
3. Africa	710	609	101	0	9	51
4. North America	462	435	27	0	7	19
5. South America	170	156	14	0	5	14
6. Australia and Oceania	243	202	41	0	3	19
7. Antarctica	322	301	21	0	2	3
8. Undersea features	355	306	40	9	18	0
Entire list*	13358	11326	1813	219	238	254

Tabl. 1. The number of Polish geographical names in the list by chapters.

* The value specified in the row “Entire list” is not the sum of the values in the rows for individual chapters – some features’ names are listed in several chapters of the publication.

Due to the fact that the names of transboundary features have been repeated in the lists of individual countries (e.g. the name of *Morze Karaibskie* [Caribbean Sea] is included in lists of 37 countries and territories, and the name of *Antyle* [Antilles] – in 30 lists), there is a total of 14,976 name entities in the publication. In addition, 238 Polish variant names are included in the list (226 of which are exonyms, 8 quasi-exonyms, and 4 are names of features laying partially in the territory of Poland), including one case when two variant names have been adopted for one feature (the names of *Genezaret* and *Jezioro Galilejskie* for the exonym of *Jezioro Tyberiadzkie* [Sea of Galilee]). In the publication also 254 long forms of names, mostly used in official relations, are listed. This means that the total of 13,850 Polish recommended names are given in the list³. In addition, 129 Polish historical names (mostly for cities and towns) are included in it – but these historical names have been given solely for informational purposes without any standardization or formal recommendation.

Compared to the previous publication, the Commission has significantly extended the number of recommended Polish names for geographic features (mostly towns) that lay on areas which belonged to Poland before World War II, particularly in the areas nowadays inhabited by Polish minority. For this reason, the lists of Polish names from Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine have been significantly enhanced. Many Polish names have also been included for the areas of the Czech Republic inhabited by Poles and the Slovak part of the Tatra Mountains. Quasi-exonyms have been included to a greater extent than in the previous

³ The publication implements the resolutions of the Commission passed until 25th September 2013.

gazetteers (especially for objects whose original names are not written in the Roman script), which extended the lists by a whole range of names referring to objects from Asia, North Africa and Eastern Europe. In comparison to the previous lists, the Polish names for protected areas (423 names) and administrative units (1,669 names) have also been considerably extended.

Due to certain political ambiguities, it should be noted that the list presents names the Commission has established as correct solely from the linguistic point of view and corresponding to the information gathered so far. In no event shall these recommendations be regarded as an expression of the Commission's political preferences or its position as regards the administrative affiliation of particular territories. Any decisions of a political character, if necessary, were consulted with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as for example in the case of recognising the status of Kosovo as a separate state or the use of such names as *Macedonia*, *Mjanma* [Myanmar] or *Falklandy* [Falkland Islands].

4. Composition of the list

The list has been divided into eight parts (chapters). Seven of them correspond to the traditionally determined parts of the world (Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Australia and Oceania, Antarctica). The last one is devoted to undersea features. In the case of countries or territories situated in two parts of the world, the entire list of names from its area has been included in the chapter related to the part of the world it is usually associated with (for example the whole list for Russia, together with the objects located in Asia, will be found in the *Europe* chapter, while the entire list for Turkey, including the European part, will be found in the *Asia* chapter). The allocation of particular areas and territories to particular parts of the world is for convenience only, and was made based on physical geography. Therefore, for example Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao or Trinidad and Tobago have been assigned to South America, Clipperton Island – to North America, and the British Indian Ocean Territory, Christmas Island and the Cocos Islands – to Asia. In the case of islands, their allocation to particular parts of the world is often problematic.

Chapters of the particular parts of the world begin with the list of recommended Polish names of the great regional units (e.g. *Arktyka* [Arctic], *Skandynawia* [Scandinavia], *Bliski Wschód* [Middle East], *Ameryka* [Americas]) and oceans. Next, the names are posted according to alphabetically arranged 263 countries and non-self-governing territories⁴.

The lists of names from the areas of particular countries and non-self-governing territories start with introductory information based on the *Official List of Names of Countries and Non-Self-Governing Territories* [*Urzędowy wykaz nazw państw i terytoriów niesamodzielnych*]:

- short and full official name of the country (territory) in Polish and official languages;
- name of the capital of the country (territory) used in Polish, if its spelling is Polonized, it is followed by the name in the official language;
- information on the official national and local languages used in the respective country (territory).

The names of countries, territories and their capitals included in the list have been approved by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Any footnotes clarifying the status of the names of states and territories come from the Ministry.

⁴ Antarctic territories (area lying south of 60°S) have been grouped in one list, and individual lists for four territories with undetermined or disputed international status, namely Palestine, Western Sahara, Taiwan and the Spratly Islands, have been placed.

Names of geographical features from the areas of individual countries or territories have been arranged by 59 categories. The occurrence of a particular category depends on the specificity of a country (territory), so in some countries certain categories will not be represented. In extreme cases where Polish names are not recommended for any geographical feature within a country or territory, only introductory information is provided.

Among all categories, the most numerous category is “localities” in which 5,238 Polish names of features are given. It constitutes almost 40% of all the objects included in publication. The size of this category is mainly due to the inclusion of the numerous names for localities from Belarus (1,624 names), Ukraine (1,468 names), and Lithuania (836 names), especially that lay on areas which belonged to Poland before World War II – the name of localities from these three countries account for 75% of all localities included in the list. Other numerous categories are: “administrative units” (with names of 1,669 objects), “rivers” (667 names), and “mountains” (592 names); in the following fifteen categories from 100 to 500 objects with Polish names are included.

In the eighth chapter, related to undersea features, names are posted according to the location of features on five oceans (Arctic Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Southern Ocean, Pacific Ocean) with the separately listed features from the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. Names of individual geographic features included in this chapter have been arranged by 14 categories.

Within particular categories, names have been arranged in plain alphabetical order, for example *Jezioro Wiktorii* [Lake Victoria]; *Prowincja Północna* [North Province], not: *Wiktorii, Jezioro* [Victoria, Lake]; *Północna, Prowincja* [North, Province].

Entries related to particular geographic features present the Polonized form first – the *exonym*, written in bold letters with no italics, or a *quasi-exonym*, written in bold letters and italics. Then, the original name (endonym) is given in the official language, or original names, where more than one official language is applicable or the feature has official names in more than one language. Efforts were made in order to provide names in the official languages of autonomous regions as well as officially adopted names in minority languages. Where for one feature endonyms are given in more than one language, the name is preceded by a designation of the language in which the name is used.

Where the lists concerned areas where more than one official language is in use, the Commission observed the principle of equality of all official nation-wide languages. Hence, putting names in one language in the first place is not equivalent to discriminating one language over another. An exception was made for situations where nation-wide languages have the official status only at the central level, and locally only some of them are official, like for example in Switzerland. Where in a given area two languages are in use, one of which is an official national language and the other is an official local language, then the names in the national language were given first as more important unless only names in the local language have an official status (like in Catalonia, Spain). Attention was paid to provide official names in minority languages wherever applicable, mostly in accordance with respective legal acts, gazetteers and maps.

For names from the area of Antarctica and the adjacent islands, endonyms were provided in most cases in accordance with the Composite Gazetteer of Antarctica published by the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research; the names are given in the languages of countries conducting research in those areas (mostly in English). For undersea features, English names were given as endonyms, generally following the GEBCO (General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans) Gazetteer of the International Hydrographic Organization, while in case of the Baltic seabed formations also names were provided in the official languages of the countries the respective exclusive economic zone where the object is located belongs to.

For names in languages using a non-Roman script, a Romanized form has been given, established according to the rules the Commission recommends for use in Poland for the geographical names from the respective language. In such cases, first the transliteration is specified, marked with the abbreviation *trl.*, then the transcription of the original name, or in other words, the phonetic conversion of the name into Polish, usually in letters of the Polish alphabet (marked with the abbreviation *trb.*). Both name forms, the transcription and transliteration, are given even if they are equal. The *trl.* abbreviation has been omitted in the case of languages where only the international Romanization system is recommended (i.e. Polish phonetic transcription is not recommended), namely Burmese, Chinese, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao and Thai. It is also omitted for languages where the Polish transcription is unavailable, as it has not been elaborated by the Commission – namely Berber, Tibetan, Uyghur and languages of the republics of Russia. Please note that a name written in its Polish transcription shall not be considered a Polish name – despite being written with Polish letters, such a name remains an endonym.

Where Polish variant names are provided (for example *Wyspy Liparyjskie* [Lipari Islands]; *Wyspy Eolskie* [Aeolian Islands]), the one the Commission considers more appropriate is given first, while the others are also considered acceptable. Polish names preceded by the abbreviation *ofic.* are not variants, but the official (long) forms of the names, applicable in particular to countries, territories and administrative units (for example *Sardynia* [Sardinia]; *ofic. Region Autonomiczny Sardynii* [Autonomous Region of Sardinia]). The latter are always preceded by the short form. Where only the Polish exonym is given, without endonym, it means that the respective geographical feature is unnamed in the country where it is situated or no correct original name of it has been found.

The names are followed by the geographical coordinates of the feature. They have been provided for all features excluding countries and non-self-governing territories as well as large regional units and oceans. For most areal features, coordinates of the optical centre have been provided, and for localities, the aim was to give the coordinates of their centre. In the case of scattered features such as groups of islands or lakes as well as features of a crescent shape, coordinates have been provided for a point within the feature and not situated outside. The precision of the coordinates depends on the size of the geographical feature, for smaller ones such as peaks or capes coordinates were provided with an accuracy to one arc second, while for the largest ones, with an accuracy to several degrees. It should be noted that these coordinates are provided for identification purposes only. Precise determination of the spatial extent of many surface features is not always possible, as it may vary in different publications; this specifically applies to lands and regions as well as landforms – in the publication, generally the largest extent provided by Polish authors is given. Thus, the coordinates of the centre of such an object are only approximate. Furthermore, in some cases the reference of the Polish name does not correspond to the reference of the original name (endonym).

For transboundary features, the coordinates of its part situated within a particular country have been given, followed by the coordinates of the entire feature in brackets. For certain features, mainly administrative units and areas of environment protection (but not groups of islands or lakes) composed of several fragments, the coordinates of the centres of their main parts have been provided, divided by the word *oraz* [and]. The same principle applied where on the territory of a country a transboundary feature is composed of several fragments (for example Greater Himalaya in India).

For linear features, the coordinates of their both ends have been provided. For rivers, coordinates have been provided for their origin (given first) and their confluence with another watercourse or another water body (given second). For rivers, the goal was to provide coordinates for the beginning and the end of the section for which the Polish name is applied,

which may not correspond to the way its original name is used. For transboundary rivers, the coordinates of the place where the river crosses a country border have been given, accompanied by the coordinates of the origin and the end of the whole watercourse in brackets. For rivers which cross a single border more than once, only the first point where the river flows into a given country, and the last one where it leaves it, have been provided. For rivers marking out country borders, points where the border diverges from the watercourse are taken into account. Moreover, where the beginning of a watercourse cannot be unambiguously established, coordinates were given for the probable place where such a watercourse begins, established on the basis of topographic maps and satellite images. For other linear features (e.g. canals, roads), similar rules have been adopted for establishing the coordinates.

If necessary, the additional information and observations are provided, such as information about localization of a transboundary feature in other countries, additional characteristics of a feature or its localization, information that a part of a locality is situated within an independent locality, and selected historical names of a feature (preceded by the abbreviation *hist.*).

5. Name index

The alphabetical index of all Polish names is attached at the end of the publication. The name index contains exclusively the Polish names from the list (without the original names), including those listed as historical. The only exception are long (official) names of countries, territories and administrative units (such as *Republika Francuska* [French Republic], *Terytorium Samoa Amerykańskiego* [Territory of American Samoa] or *Tybetański Region Autonomiczny* [Tibet Autonomous Region]) which have been omitted if a short Polish name has been included in the list for the respective country, territory or administrative unit (for example *Francja* [France], *Samoa Amerykańskie* [American Samoa], *Tybet* [Tibet]).

The names were put in alphabetical order without considering diacritics not used in the Polish language. For the purposes of establishing the order, hyphens were treated as spaces, while all the other punctuation marks and apostrophes were ignored. In case of identical names, the order was decided depending firstly, on the type of the feature, and then on the name of the respective country or territory.

Unlike in the main list, the names were put in an inverted order, which means that for composed names featuring a generic term followed by a specific one, in the index the specific term was put first, and the generic term second, separated by a comma, for example *Wiktoria, Jezioro* [Victoria, Lake]; *Północna, Prowincja* [North, Province]. Such inversion was not applied where the first component of a name was a so-called false generic term (e.g. “most” [“bridge”] in the name of *Most Adama* [Adam’s Bridge] for islands), for names of countries and territories (e.g. *Republika Środkowoafrykańska* [Central African Republic], *Wyspy Salomona* [Solomon Islands]), and for names of localities (e.g. *Port Said*). The inverted order was not also applied if the first component of a name was an adjective (e.g. *Czarny Irtysz* [Black Irtysz], *Wielka Zatoka Australijska* [Great Australian Bight], *Nowa Gwinea* [New Guinea]). Where the inverted word order might be ambiguous to the reader, references have been provided, for example *Australijska, Wielka Zatoka* [Australian, Great Bight] → *Wielka Zatoka Australijska* [Great Australian Bight].

An index entry starts with the Polish name of the feature. It is followed by the type of the feature (according to the categories used in the list) the name refers to, usually expressed by an abbreviation. Then comes the name of the country or territory where the feature is situated. For transboundary features, there have been provided all countries or territories whose borders they cross. An exception has been made for large regional divisions and

oceans, where the continent has been specified instead of the state, and for undersea features, where the name of the ocean (sea) has been provided. The notice of the country (territory) is followed by the number of the page where the name can be found. For names of countries and territories, it is the number of the page where the list of names from that particular country or territory starts, while for transboundary features all numbers of pages where they can be found in the list are given.

The names of each feature are listed in the index separately even if more features have the same name (also in cases where they are listed on the same page). If a feature has more than one Polish name (apart from the principal name, variants exist), all information is provided for under the main name (mentioned in the main list in the first place); in case of the variants, only references to the principal name are given, for example: *Kabiska*, *Zatoka* [Gulf of Gabès] → *Mala Syrta* [Lesser Syrtis]. Historical names are also accompanied by a reference to the principal name.

6. Further works related to the list

The list has been published in Polish only, but the inset in English has been also prepared. This inset includes translation of introductory part of the publication, i.e.: editorial page, table of contents, “From the Publisher”, preface, introduction, Romanization rules, explanation of abbreviations, as well as translation of the footnotes contained in the publication and information about name index.

The next, updated issue of the list shall be published not less frequently than every five years, therefore, by the end of 2018 the second edition shall be published. The names from this list will be also included in the National Register of Geographical Names in its module related to Polish geographical names of the world.

The Commission regular updates the list. Information on the updates is available on the Commission’s website, but in Polish only (<http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/wpngs.php>).

The expansion of information on individual names is also planned as works for the coming years. These works include: establishing adjectives for certain names; establishing genitives and locatives for selected names; adding to endonyms originally written in non-Roman scripts their original notation (such as in Cyrillic alphabet, Arabic script or Chinese script); provide pronunciations for selected Polish names, especially for those whose pronunciation can be difficult or ambiguous – this pronunciation is to be given in the International Phonetic Alphabet, in simplified notation by the Polish letters, and as an audio files; adding information on superordinate object related to objects that are part of thereof.

The list of selected Polish names for buildings and other urban objects is also prepared. This list will be published as a supplement to the “Official List of Polish Geographical Names of the World”.