Geographic Names Standardization Policy
for Suriname

United States Board on Geographic Names
Foreign Names Committee

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1. Introduction

This geographic names standardization policy has been prepared as an aid to those geographic names experts who are the working staff for the United States Board on Geographic Names (BGN) in the standardization of the geographic names of Suriname for United States Government use. The BGN and its staff work to effect consistent treatment of geographic name spellings in U.S. Government databases, publications, maps, and charts. The country policies are intended to satisfy, in part, the statutory requirements levied upon the BGN in Public Law USC 80-242 to develop principles, policies and procedures for geographic names standardization, and to promulgate decisions with respect to the principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography.

2. Languages and Language Policy

a. Demographics

The estimated population of Suriname as of July 2016 was 585,824 people. Suriname's ethnic diversity is due in part to its history as a Dutch plantation colony. African slaves sustained the colony's agricultural industry until 1863 when slavery was abolished. This led to the importation of workers from Java, a Dutch colonial possession at the time, as well as India and China. Today, the largest single ethnic group is of Hindustani heritage, comprising approximately 37% of the population. The second largest ethnic group is of Creole descent, comprising approximately 31% of the total population. The remainder of the population is of Javanese (15%), Maroon (descendants of escaped African slaves, 10%), Amerindian (2%), Chinese (2%), white (1%), and other (2%) descents.[1]

b. Languages

Dutch (ISO 639-3 code *nld*) is the sole official language of Suriname. Sranan Tongo (ISO 639-3 code *srn*), the lingua franca of Suriname, is an English-based Creole language shared by Hindustanis, Javanese, Maroons, Amerindians, and Chinese. Other languages spoken include Caribbean Hindustani (ISO 639-3 code *hns*), Javanese (ISO 639-3 code *jvn*), Aukan (ISO 639-3 code *djk*), Saramaccan (ISO 639-3 code *srm*), and Hakka Chinese (ISO 639-3 code *hak*).[2]

c. Geographic Names Standardization

According to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), National

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[1] "Suriname." *CIA World Facebook*. Central Intelligence Agency, Web. <www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/ns.html> (Accessed 6 April 2016).

[2] "Suriname." *Ethnologue*. Lewis, M. Paul, Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.). 2016. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Nineteenth edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International, Web. <www.ethnologue.com/country/SR/languages> (Accessed 6 April 2016).

Geographical Names Authority Suriname is in charge of standardizing Surinamese toponyms.[3] The country participates in the Dutch- and German-speaking Division as well as the Latin America Division of the UNGEGN.[4] The current mapping authority in Suriname is the *Ministerie van Ruimtelijke ordening, Grond- en Bosbeheer* (Ministry of Planning, Land Management and Forest Policy).

3. Toponymic Policies

a. Orthography

Geographic names standardization policy will follow Dutch orthographic conventions. The user of Surinamese geographic sources should be aware that native sources may contain place names in other languages, including French (ISO 639-3 code *fra*), particularly in Paramaribo and its environs.

b. Romanization

Romanization is not required.

c. Diacritics

Diacritics are shown in standardized and variant names in conformance with native sources and Dutch orthography. Some of the diacritics not usually found in Dutch can be attributed to loanwords from foreign languages. Uppercase letters retain diacritics.

Character Name	Upper Case	Unicode Value	Lower Case	Unicode Value
A with dieresis	Ä	00C4	ä	00E4
A with grave accent	À	00C0	à	00E0
C with cedilla	Ç	00C7	ç	00E7
E with acute accent	É	00C9	é	00E9
IJ ligature	IJ	0132	ij	0133
O with acute accent	Ó	00D3	ó	00F3
U with dieresis	Ü	00DC	ü	00FC

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[3] "Authorities List." UNGEGN. United Nations, Web. <unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/NNA/Authorities_list_September%202016_rev.pdf> (Accessed 15 November 2016).

[4] "UNGEGN Divisions." UNGEGN. United Nations, Web. <www.unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/divisions.html> (Accessed 6 April 2016).

d. Generic Terms

A generic is a term used to describe a geographic feature, such as "river," "hill," and "lake." If the generic term does not identify the feature, the term should be considered a false generic and should not be collected in the GNDB as a generic. Generic terms are not collected for populated places. Appendix A provides a partial list of common generic terms one may encounter in Surinamese geographic names sources.

In Dutch, generics may precede or follow a place name; i.e., *Hoek Galibi* (Galibi Point) and *Commewijne Rivier* (Commewijne River).

e. Hyphenation, Capitalization, and Spelling

Surinamese geographic names follow Dutch grammar and spelling conventions. When hyphenated place names are encountered on authoritative sources, the hyphens should be included in the feature name as in, *Hok-A-Hing Gebergte*.

Unless they are capitalized on the source, articles and prepositions appearing in non-initial position are collected in lower case as in, *Hoek van Meerzorg, Bergen op Zoom* and *Koe en Kalf Eiland*.

f. Long and Short Forms

Short forms are not added to variant names in the GNDB.

Administrative division names are accorded long and short forms. Example: *Distrikt Marowijne* [long form]; *Marowijne* [short form].

Long and short forms of names of populated places are approved when supported by official evidence.

g. Numbers

Names containing cardinal or ordinal numerals should be treated according to the following guidelines:

- Arabic numbers are generally expanded in Dutch; i.e., *Leiding 18* (on source) should be written as *Leiding Achttien*.
- Roman numerals are retained throughout; i.e., *Frederik Willem IV Vallen*.

These guidelines apply to numerals in both initial and non-initial positions.

h. Unique Linguistic Situations

Alternate Names

Feature names in Surinamese sources may appear with alternate names in parentheses. In these cases, the first name will be chosen as the approved name, while the name in

parentheses will be rendered as the variant name, unless overwhelming evidence suggests otherwise.

4. Political Geography Policy

a. Country Name

Conventional long form: Republic of Suriname
Conventional short form: Suriname
Approved long form: Republiek Suriname
Approved short form: Suriname

b. Capital Name

Approved name: Paramaribo

c. First-order Administrative Divisions

Please see Appendix B for a map depicting first-order administrative divisions in Suriname.

Name	Generic	GEC	GENC	Seat
Brokopondo	Distrikt	NS10	SR-BR	Brokopondo
Commewijne	Distrikt	NS11	SR-CM	Nieuw Amsterdam
Coronie	Distrikt	NS12	SR-CR	Totness
Marowijne	Distrikt	NS13	SR-MA	Albina
Nickerie	Distrikt	NS14	SR-NI	Nieuw Nickerie
Para	Distrikt	NS15	SR-PR	Onverwacht
Paramaribo	Distrikt	NS16	SR-PM	Paramaribo[5]
Saramacca	Distrikt	NS17	SR-SA	Groningen
Sipaliwini	Distrikt	NS18	SR-SI	*None*[6]
Wanica	Distrikt	NS19	SR-WA	Lelydorp

d. Conventional and Anglicized Names

Conventional Names

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[5] In addition to being the seat of Paramaribo Distrikt, Paramaribo is the capital of Suriname.

[6] Sipaliwini does not have a regional capital, it is directly administered by the national government in Paramaribo.

Name	UFI	UNI	Designation
Maroni River	-914663	-1353915	STM
Maroni	-914663	-1353915	STM
Courantyne River	-913818	-1352398	STM
Courantyne	-913818	-1352398	STM
Republic of Suriname	-915232	-1354876	PCLI
Suriname	-915232	14103760	PCLI

e. Unique Geopolitical Situations

For the latest information on country-specific boundary disputes, please consult the US Department of State Office of the Geographer and Global Issues.

Disputed Territories

Suriname claims a sizeable portion of southeastern Guyana. The disputed area, which amounts to about 15,000 square kilometers of remote, forested terrain, is referred to as the New River Triangle. The dispute stems from differing views over the source of the Courantyne River, the agreed upon border between Suriname and Guyana. Guyana views the Kutari River as the source of the Courantyne, while Suriname claims the New River, deep into Guyanese territory, to be the true source. On Surinamese maps, the New River is referred to as "Bowen Corantijn," meaning "Upper Courantyne." The area left in question is the territory bounded by Brazil to the south, the New River to the west, and the Kutari River to the east, continuing north until the confluence of the New River and the Courantyne. In addition to the New River Triangle, Suriname and Guyana dispute their offshore maritime boundaries.[7] All geographic features within areas of Guyana claimed by Suriname are to be assigned Guyana's country code.

Similar to their dispute with Guyana, Suriname claims a 5,000 square kilometer area of dense jungle in southeastern French Guiana. This dispute stems from the two countries' inability to agree upon the source of the Lawa river; Suriname claims the Malani (Marouni) as the source while France maintains that it is the Litani. On September 15, 1915, France and the Netherlands signed an agreement setting the Litani as the boundary but since then, the Netherlands and now Suriname have once again claimed the Malani as the source. The area left in question is the territory bounded by Brazil to the south, the Litani to the west, and the Malani to the east, continuing north until the confluence of the two rivers. The disputed territory is currently under French administration. Geographic features within areas claimed by Suriname east of the Litani are assigned the French Guiana country code.

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[7] "Guyana (05/07)," US Department of State, Web. <www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/guyana/85054.htm> (Accessed 6 April 2016).

5. Source Material

The preferred sources for Suriname map and geospatial products are those produced by the *Ministerie van Ruimtelijke ordening, Grond- en Bosbeheer*. Other preferred sources include those produced by *Centraal Bureau Luchtkartering* (Central Bureau of Aerial Mapping), *Maritieme Autoriteit Suriname* (Maritime Authority Suriname), as well as other Surinamese government agencies. Sources produced by Surinamese academic institutions, UN and US government agencies, and international organizations like the Organization of American States (OAS) may be used; however, these sources are not authoritative unless they contain a caveat that the information contained was produced for the Surinamese government.

a. Preferred Sources

The following is a list of preferred sources for geographic name selection.

1. 1:50,000-scale map series, Suriname, Centraal Bureau Luchtkartering, 1980-1981.
2. 1:200,000-scale map series, Suriname, Centraal Bureau Luchtkartering, 1971-1982.
3. 1:100,000-scale map series, Suriname, Centraal Bureau Luchtkartering, 1953-1981.

Appendix A. Glossary of Generic Terms

The following is a partial list of common generic terms one may encounter in Surinamese geographic names sources:

Generic	Feature Designation Name	Designation Code
berg	hill, mountain	HLL, MT
dam	dam	DAM
distrikt	first-order administrative division	ADM1
eiland(en)	island(s)	ISL(S)
gebergte	hill, mountain, mountains	HLL, MT, MTS
graf	grave	GRV
heuvel(s)	hill(s)	HLL(S)
kan	canal	CNL
kanaal	canal	CNL
kazerne	barracks	BRKS
keten	mountains	MTS
kreek	stream, distributary, intermittent stream	STM, STMD, STMI
leiding	canal	CNL
meer	lake	LK
piek	peak	PK
polder	polder	PLDR
punt	point	PT
rio	stream	STM
rivier	stream	STM
savanne	grasslands	GRSLD
soela	rapids	RPDS
stroomversnelling	rapids	RPDS
tabbetje	island	ISL
top	peak	PK
val	rapids	RPDS
vallen	rapids	RPDS
versnelling	rapids	RPDS
weg	road	RD

Appendix B. First-order Administrative Divisions of Suriname