
United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

Asia South-East Division

9th Divisional Meeting

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Country Report

Report of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia *

Summary

The report of Indonesia, prepared by the Geospatial Information Agency (Badan Informasi Geospasial - BIG), summarizes all activities carried out by Indonesia in 2021.

As the national geospatial agency and the secretariat of the Asia South-East Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, BIG has been actively involved in national standardization activities and has been working on the Division's work plan for the period 2019–2022.

After the government enacted Government Regulation Number 2 of 2021 on Standardization of Geographical Names (hereinafter referred to as GR 2/2021) on 6 January 2021, Indonesia has made robust efforts to disseminate GR 2/2021 through any technical medium of information or communication. It includes several initiatives to establish toponymic education, research and assistance provided for the stakeholders (mainly ministries/agencies and local governments) in dealing with geographical names standardization, along with several ministries/agencies, local governments, citizens, and communities.

A. Regulation on Standardization of Geographical Names

BIG is currently drafting technical guidelines for the implementation of the GR 2/2021. The technical guidelines will regulate the following matters: 1) the writing and spatial rules of geographical names; 2) the actors of standardization activities; 3) standardization stages; 4) the use of the Geographical Names Information System (also known as SINAR); and 5) monitoring and evaluation of geographical names standardization.

BIG has also been disseminating the GR 2/2021 through various means, including press releases on BIG's website, social media, a talk show on local radio networks, and meetings with related ministries/agencies.

B. Activities on National Standardization of Geographical Names

1. Collection of Geographical Names

BIG performed toponymic surveys in development areas in Indonesia. The project area covers 13 provinces, namely Banten, South Sumatera, North Sumatera, West Sumatera, East Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, North Kalimantan, Riau, East Nusa Tenggara, South East Sulawesi, North Sulawesi, Lampung, and Jambi. Nevertheless, toponymic surveys can be carried out by BIG surveyors and other actors, such as ministries/agencies, local governments, and the public. According to the current data in SINAR, Indonesia has collected a total of 245,581 geographical names from 4,162 users.

The collection of geographical names for maritime features was conducted through several ways, as follows: 1) toponymic surveys, conducted by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries and the Indonesian Navy Hydrographic and Oceanographic Center; 2) identification through national digital elevation model (DEM) and bathymetric surveys for undersea features, conducted by the National Research and Innovation Agency; and 3) secondary data compilation for seamount features from the Volcanological Survey of Indonesia.

BIG also organized the discussions on toponymic data sharing with various ministries/agencies and non-governmental organizations. The ministries/agencies engaged in

such activities are the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning/National Land Agency, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, and Statistics Indonesia. The discussions aimed to establish a data-sharing mechanism between the stakeholders to enrich data collection of geographical names and disseminate the recent government regulation. BIG plans to continue and follow up on these discussions in the future.

2. Verification of Geographical Names

The verification process implements the bottom-up approach. Pursuant to GR 2/2021, the verification process is divided into three stages: regency/municipality, provincial, and national level. In June 2021, regency/municipality verification was carried out on geographical names in North Sulawesi and Central Kalimantan. Respective local governments conducted the verification in collaboration with the Office of Language Center.

Subsequently, the provincial verification was carried out online in July 2021, owing to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The provincial verification aimed to process the data from regency/municipality verification and verify the data with strategic value at the provincial level in North Sulawesi and Central Kalimantan. Finally, in July - August 2021, BIG conducted national verification through an online meeting, verifying a total of 2,038 geographical names.

For maritime features, verification was conducted by BIG in collaboration with the Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesian Navy Hydrographic and Oceanographic Center, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, and the National Research and Innovation Agency (Indonesian Institute of Sciences and Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology) in April and September 2021. The verification was carried out on 100 maritime features, consisting of 21 straits, 2 terraces, 1 sea channel, 1 escarpment, 1 fault, 2 plateaus, 1 fan, 48 basins, 2 seamounts, 11 fisheries management areas, and 10 national marine protected areas.

In August 2021, BIG in coordination with the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, and Indonesian Navy Hydrographic and Oceanographic Center verified 229 islands. Furthermore, through excellent coordination, BIG and the above mentioned ministries/agencies agreed that the number of islands stipulated in the Gazetteer of the Republic of Indonesia in 2021 is 17,000 verified islands by coordinates (16,771 islands names derived from the national gazetteer and 229 islands from verification 2021).

For the administrative area, as of October 2021, the Ministry of Home Affairs has provided information on the addition of 34 districts, 18 *Kelurahan*¹, 10 villages, as well as the reduction of 3 villages due to the merger process. As a result, the details of registered administrative area names in Indonesia, as follows: 34 Provinces, 416 Regencies, 98 Cities, 7,264 Districts, 8,506 *Kelurahan*, and 74,960 Villages.

3. Toponym Education and Research

Through various venues, BIG actively contributes in advancing the education and training on the implementation of geographical names standardization. In early October 2021, BIG

¹ Kelurahan is the fourth level of government within a province. Kelurahan is equivalent to “Village”.

launched an online seminar with “Geographical Names Application for Regional Development”. The webinar was convened to disseminate the GR 2/2021, serve as a platform for learning and sharing the development of geographical names standardization in local governments, and further discuss the strategic moves to accelerate the standardization process. The webinar drew massive attention, with more than 300 local governments (municipalities) working on geographical names standardization.

BIG also provides technical assistance to local governments to encourage them to learn about geographical names and facilitate capacity building, which in turn will help fulfill the demand of qualified personnel in geographical names standardization. The technical assistance is mainly focused on collecting and verifying geographical names in the framework of standardization. From June - September 2021, BIG has provided technical assistance to the following local governments: North Sulawesi Province, Central Kalimantan Province, West Java Province, and Lamongan Regency.

In addition, the National Agency for Language Development and Cultivation conducted toponymy thematic analysis to record and protect minority names and geographical names in Indonesia. The studies were conducted in nine regencies, including Rejang Lebong Regency, Sanggau Regency, Kampar Regency, Merangin Regency, South Lampung Regency, Banjar Regency, North Gorontalo Regency, Cirebon Regency, and Tasikmalaya Regency.

4. Publication on Toponymy

BIG regularly creates and uploads geographical names on BIG's official social networks, including the SINAR website. The contents include the history and the meaning of selected geographical names and the principle of geographical names based on GR 2/2021. BIG also published guidelines for geographical names collection and verification on the SINAR website.

In addition, BIG and the National Agency for Language Development and Cultivation contributed an article titled “Minority Names and Geographical Names in a Multilingual setting: Sanggau, West Kalimantan, Indonesia” in UNGEGN bulletin number 61.

To access the bulletin, kindly visit this website: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/pubs/Bulletin/UNGEGN_bulletin_no.61.pdf.

5. Preparation of the Gazetteer of the Republic of Indonesia 2021

The geographical names standardization procedure has already commenced in early 2021 and recently entered the announcement phase. In this phase, multiple stakeholders (ministries/agencies, local governments, the public, and other stakeholders interested in geographical names) could provide feedback and comments through the SINAR application. After the announcement phase, there will be a verification process to revise geographical names based on the feedback and comments. Then, it will be stipulated as standardized geographical names by the Head of BIG.

BIG will host a national gathering to disseminate the Gazetteer of the Republic of Indonesia in November 2021. The event will be attended by the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Education and Culture, Indonesian

Navy Hydrographic and Oceanographic Center, Indonesian Army's Topographic Directorate, and the National Research and Innovation Agency (Indonesian Institute of Sciences and Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology).

C. Involvements in UNGEGN Asia South-East Division

At the 6th divisional meeting, Indonesia was elected as a chair of the ASE Division for the 2018-2022 period. During Indonesia's chairmanship, Indonesia proposed an ASE Division work plan for the 2019-2022 period which was agreed by member countries. The scope of the work plan is as follows: 1) Regional Database and Gazetteer Standards; 2) UNGEGN ASE Divisional Meeting; 3) Regional Map of ASE Division; and 4) Generic Terms.

The progress details of the work plan are provided in the Chairman of the UNGEGN ASE Division Report document.

D. Conclusions

Following the enactment of GR 2/2021 and formulating the technical guidelines to implement the GR 2/2021, Indonesia consistently carries out and improves the activities related to geographical names. Furthermore, BIG's commitment to conduct the standardization of geographical names despite the COVID-19 pandemic was also reflected by its effort to adjust the activities into virtual format (e.g., toponymy seminar, coordination with some ministries/agencies, technical assistance, and other supporting activities).