

Country Report of Lao PDR

“Geographical Name”

Ministry of Home Affairs

National geographic Department

Introduction

The National Geographic Department has been tasked with implementing the roles and responsibilities assigned to conduct surveys, taking aerial photographs and mapping the basic principles of contributing to the construction of infrastructure and socio-economic development.

After The Government promulgated the Prime Minister's Decree No. 255 / PM, dated 16 August 2005 on the survey and mapping work in the territory of the Lao PDR, the Geographical Indication Manual has become an important tool in the management, implementation and development of survey and mapping work.

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I. Background

Before 1975, this work was carried out at the national level and had a subcommittee responsible for the naming, compilation and naming process in the official language and how to write names from Lao into international languages. (Written in Roman script).

After 1975, there was no longer any coordination and information exchange, The National Geographic Department is required to use the Geographical names of the country to write on the map, then collected information , used to write the original version is also used in many maps.

The writing of the name from Lao into the international language followed the old method, and if there was a change in the name, it was done according to the instructions of the person in charge of the content of the map, such as : The study map.

Laos Country has replacing the country and district names such as :

- changed from: Lao kingdom to Lao People's Democratic Republic
- changed from:

Kamphèngnakhoneviangchan to Nakhonelouangviangchan on Aug 21,2003

- changed from: Khanthabouly to Kaysone phomvihane ,on Dec 13,2005etc

II. Implementation

- Design the rules are basic for the real action
- Collect for location and source of geographical name to be Available in the whole country for prepare to analyze and consider further.
- Geographical names appear on the map to get from location or field and make sure that it is correctly from location.

III. The principle of writing the geographical name on the map is based on two principles:

- The principle of writing the geographical name of on the map of the landscape is to write in Lao and Roman characters with the phonetic system (TRANSCRIPTION) in Lao only;
- The principle of writing the geographical name in the specific work map can be written as follows:
 - Written in Lao language only;
 - Or written in Lao and in Roman alphabet by TRANSCRIPTION in Lao;
 - Or write in Lao and international languages (English, French, Russian, Chinese, Spanish ...)

The principles for writing the geographical names on the map in Lao and Roman alphabet.

The names of the landscapes, such as rivers, lakes, streams, creeks, canals, lakes, villages, districts, provinces, countries, and the names in the map in Lao language should be written according to the names, local words and grammar.

1) The principles of consonants and vowels from the Lao by Roman alphabet

Reading or writing names from the Lao language to Roman alphabet by TRANSCRIPTION in Lao is difficult because the Lao language has a phonetic alphabet, short vowel, long vowel, high vowel, low vowel.

Ex:

- ປະ, ປາ, ປ່າ, ປ້າ, ປື້າ, ປໍາ Roman alphabet Pa (PA)

- ນະ, ນາ, ນ່າ, ນໍ້າ, ນື້າ, ນໍາ Roman alphabet Na (NA)

(one word in Lao can be derived into several words with different meanings by phonetic, vowel and consonant pronunciation).


2) The geographical names shown on the map must be names that are correct according to local dialects or currently used officially.

for example:

- ແຂວງວຽງຈັນ /Khoèng Viangchan (Roman) / Vientiane Province(English)
- ເມືອງຄໍາ /Muang Kham District (Roman) / Kham District (English)
- ບ້ານໃໝ່ Ban Mai (Roman) / Mai Village (English)
- ນໍ້າງຸ່ມ Nam Ngum (Roman) / Ngum River (English)
- ເຊບ້ຽໄຟ Xé Bangfai (Roman) / Xe Bangfai River (English)

And more ...

3) Lao alphabet to Roman alphabet with Lao phonetic alphabet

Lao Consonants	Roman Consonants	Examples	
ກ	K	ກາ	KA
		ກາກ	KAK
ຂ	KH	ຂາ	KHA
ຄ	KH	ຄາ	KHA
ງ/ ຫງ	NG	ງາ	NGA
 (Ctrl) ▾		ງາງ	NGANG
ຈ	CH	ຈາ	CHA
ສ	S	ສາ	SA
ຊ	X	ຊາ	XA
ຍ	GN	ຍາ	GNA
		ຍາຍ	GNAY
ດ	D	ດາ	DA
		ດັດ	DAT
		ດາດ	DAD
ຕ	T	ຕາ	TA

4) Lao to Roman Vowels with Lao phonetic Vowels

vowels (Lao)			vowels (Roman)	
No	Short vowels	Long vowels	Short vowels	Long vowels
1	ɤ	ɤː	a	A
2	ɨ	ɨː	i	I
3	ɯ	ɯː	u	U
4	ɤ̃	ɤ̃ː	ou	OU
5	ɤ̃	ɤ̃ː	é	É
6	ɤ̃	ɤ̃ː	è	È
7	ɤ̃	ɤ̃ː	ô	Ô
8	ɤ̃	ɤ̃ː	o	O
9	ɤ̃	ɤ̃ː	eu	EU

IV Principles for writing the country, capital, province, district, city and village, mountain, river of Lao PDR

Principles for writing the country:

- Roman: **Sathalanalat Paxathipatai Paxaxôn Lao (1), Short form: Laos**
- English: **Lao People's Democratic Republic**
- French: **Republique démocratique populaire lao**

From the reference book " List of country names Submitted by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names" on meeting " Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Berlin, 27 August_05 September 2002 " pages 61.

1. Principles for writing the Capital :

In order to be uniform in writing the name "Vientiane Capital" in creating maps throughout the country to be unique and concise in our style, we need to write the name in Lao as "Vientiane" as the key in writing the name on the map and in Roman with the Lao phonetic " Vientiane ".

Roman: " Nakhonlouang Viangchan "

English: " Vientiane Capital "

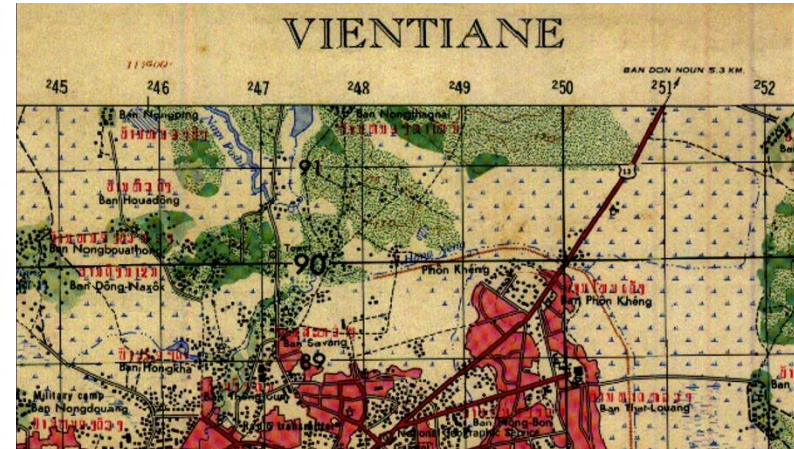
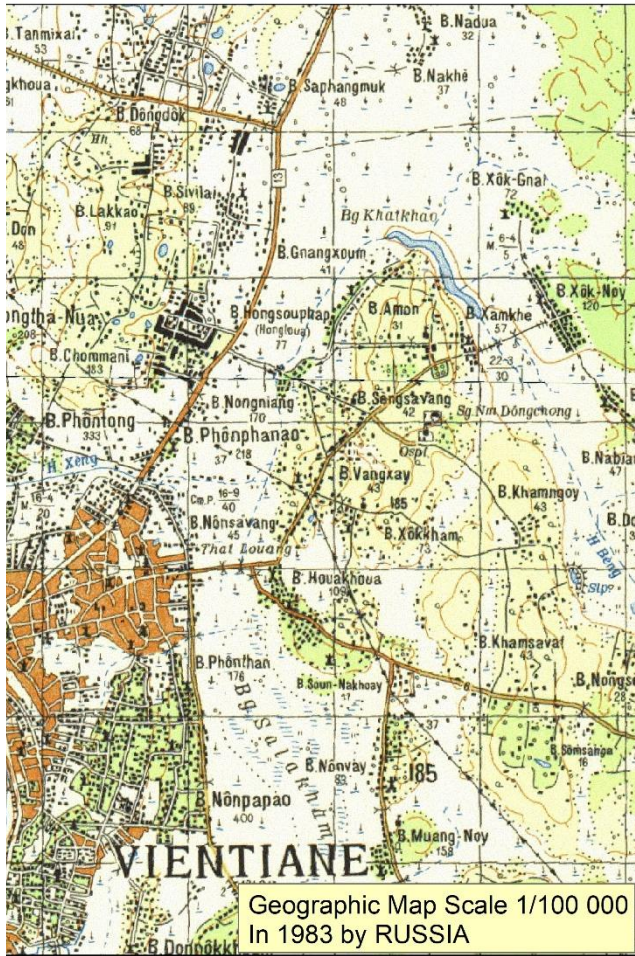
2. Principles for writing the Provincial name :

In order to be uniform in spelling the name "province" in creating a national map to be unique and Lao-style, we need to write the name in Lao “ແຂວງ” or “ຂ” as the main name in the map and the Roman alphabet "Khoèng" or "KHOÈNG" to abbreviate “ Kh”.

Ex:

- Nakhonlouang Vientiane (Roman) / Vientiane Capital(Eng)
- Khoèng/Kh Phôngsali(Roman) / Phongsaly Province(Eng)
- Khoèng/Kh Louangnamtha (Roman) / Luangnamtha Province(Eng)

Etc....



3. Principles for writing the Districts name

" ເມືອງ" (MUANG) / (District) Allows the abbreviation to be "ມ." /"M." , even though the city name may have one or more syllables, depending on the real name.

For example:

Muang Sing (MUANG SING) Or M. Sing (M. SING)

4. Principles for writing the Villages name

" ឃុំ " (Ban) / (Village) Allows the abbreviation to be " ប. " / " B. " , even though the city name may have one or more syllables, depending on the real name.

For example:

ឃុំ ណែន	(Ban Dôn)	(BAN DÔN)	Don Village
ឃុំ ប. ណែន	(B. Dôn)	(B. DÔN)	Don Village

5. Principles for writing the name of Mountain

“ ɸ ” "Mountain" is abbreviated “ Ph. “ / ”PH” If the name of the mountain has a single consonant, 02 consonants or more than 02 consonants, it is allowed to abbreviate" mountain "as “ ɸ ” to be “ ɸ. ” or "Ph. ”

For example:

Phou Nok (PHOU NÔK)

Or Ph. Nok (Ph. Nôk) (PH. NÔK)

6. Principles for writing the name of River

It is not allowed to abbreviate from “ ນ້ຳ ”, “ Nam (River)“ to “ ນ. “ (N). Even if the name of river has a single consonant, 02 consonants or more than 02 consonants.

For example: Nam Ngum (NAM NGUM) Do not write “n.” Ngum (N. Ngum)/ (N. NGUM).

It is allowed to abbreviate “ ຫ້ວຍ ” (Houay/stream)"to" ຫ. “ (H.). Even if the name of the stream 02 has 2 or more consonants.

For example:Houay Dua (HOUAY DUA)

Or h. H. Dua (H. DUA)

V. How to Improve in the future

- For designing the geographical names need to be the same standard and agreement in the whole country
- Currently we established the Law on surveying and mapping . The process of task pass through the National Assembly which help to support survey and mapping in Laos to be upgrade in this sector

THANK YOU