Geographic Names Standardization Policy for Colombia

United States Board on Geographic Names – Foreign Names Committee

August 2011

1.   Introduction

The standardization policies presented below have been prepared to effect consistent treatment of geographic name spellings in U.S. Government data bases, publications, maps, and charts, and are intended to satisfy the statutory requirement levied upon the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) in Public Law 242 of the 80th Congress (43 U.S.C. §§ 364 et seq) to develop principles, policies and procedures for geographic names standardization, and to promulgate decisions with respect to the principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography. The policies described herein are limited to geographic names encountered in Colombia, and shall be applied to all Colombian geographic name and feature records in the Geographic Names Database maintained for U.S. Government purposes by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA).

2.   Languages and Language Policy

a.   Demographics

As of July 2010, the CIA World Factbook estimates Colombia's population at 44 million. The population is ethnically diverse with 58% mestizo, 20% white, 14% mulatto, 4% black, 3% black-Amerindian, and 1% Amerindian. Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion.[1]

b.   Languages

Spanish (ISO 639-3 code 'spn') is the official language of Colombia.

Of the indigenous languages, three major language classifications exist within the country: Macro-Chibchan, Tucanoan, and Arawakan. The Macro-Chibchan language communities are found in the north of the country. The most common examples of Chibchan languages are Arhuaco (ISO 639-3 code 'arh'; 15,000 speakers), Kogi (ISO 639-3 code 'kog'; 11,000 speakers), and Barí (ISO 639-3 code 'mot'; 4,000 speakers). Tucanoan languages are spoken in the south of Colombia. Cubeo (ISO 639-3 code 'cub'; 5,000 speakers), Koreguaje (ISO 639-3 code 'coe'; 2,200 speakers), and Macuna (ISO 639-3 code 'myy'; 1,000 speakers) are the most common examples of Tucanoan languages. Arawakan-speaking communities are found in the eastern lowland areas. The most common Arawakan languages are Wayuu (ISO 639-3 code 'guc'; 135,000 speakers), Curripaco (ISO 639-3 code 'kpc'; 8,000 speakers), and Piapoco (ISO 639-3 code 'pio'; 5,000 speakers). Furthermore, a dialectal variety of Quechua, referred to as Inga or Ingano, is manifested in some parts of Colombia.[2]

c.   Geographic Names Standardization

Geographical naming for cartographic purposes falls in the domain of the Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi (IGAC). As of 2010, Colombia does not have an official body governing geographical names policy or naming within the country.

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[1] Colombia. The 2010 CIA World Factbook. < https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html> 17 Nov 2010.
[2] Lewis, M. Paul (ed.), 2009. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Sixteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International.

3.   Toponymic Policies

a.   *Orthography*

Spanish orthographic conventions are to be followed. For more information, please refer to Spanish orthographic reference material such as *Ortografía y ortotipografía des español actual* by José Martínez de Sousa (2004).

b.   *Romanization*

Romanization is not required.

c.   *Diacritics*

Diacritics are shown in standardized name forms as they appear on native sources and in accordance with Spanish orthography. Uppercase letters in standardized name forms retain diacritics.

In accordance with Spanish orthography, the following diacritics are encountered in standardized name forms in Colombia:

Character Name	*Character*	*Unicode Value*
Capital A with acute accent	Á	00C1
Capital E with acute accent	É	00C9
Capital I with acute accent	Í	00CD
Capital N with tilde	Ñ	00D1
Capital O with acute accent	Ó	00D3
Capital U with acute accent	Ú	00DA
Capital U with dieresis	Ü	00DC
Small a with acute accent	á	00E1
Small e with acute accent	é	00E9
Small i with acute accent	í	00ED
Small n with tilde	ñ	00F1
Small o with acute accent	ó	00F3
Small u with acute accent	ú	00FA
Small u with dieresis	ü	00FC

d.   *Generic Terms*

A generic is a term that describes a feature. Examples include words such as 'river,' 'hill,' and 'lake.' Except in cases in which the generic type does not identify the feature type, generics appearing in standardized name forms should be considered true generics. Otherwise, the term is considered to be a false generic and should not be collected as a generic. Generics are not collected for populated places in Colombia.

A glossary of generic terms for Colombia is found in Appendix A.

e.   *Hyphenation, Capitalization, and Spelling*

The definite article (*el, la, lo, los, las*) is generally shown in approved names as found on native sources. When source evidence regarding the capitalization of the definite article is mixed, names of associated features, if present, will be examined to assist in the decision. When a name is encountered in all capital letters, a non-initial definite article will be in lower case when the standardized name form is derived. In the absence of conclusive evidence non-initial definite articles are written in lowercase letters in the standardized name form.

f.   *Numbers*

Names containing numerals as integral parts, both cardinal and ordinal, should be treated according to the following principles:

- Arabic numerals are ordinarily expanded in Spanish. Examples: *4 Caminos* (on source) is rendered *Cuatro Caminos*; *2da Palma* (on source) is rendered *Segunda Palma*.
- Roman numerals are retained throughout.
- These principles apply to both initial and non-initial numerals.

g.   **Optional Long and Short Forms**

Short forms are not added to Variant names and should be removed when a formerly Approved name becomes a Variant name.

Administrative division names are accorded long and short forms, e.g., Departamento del Cesar [long form]; Cesar [short form].

Long and short forms of names of populated places are approved when supported by official evidence, e.g., Guamo de Zaragoza [long form]; Guamo [short form].

Railroad station names that appear on official sources with the generic term *estación* are given long and short forms as supported by the evidence.
Example: Estación El Crucero [long form]; El Crucero [short form].

Where official maps show more than one populated place with the same name in the same *município* (second administrative division), a special effort is to be made to obtain distinguishing long forms from census lists and other official sources.

h.   **Unique Linguistic Situations**

Names Containing the Conjunction "o"

Some sources may show two or more names for a feature joined by the conjunction "o," meaning "or" (e.g., Río Rojo o Colorado). For the purposes of standardization, only one name is selected as the official standard name. The choice of name as standard will depend on the weight of evidence. If there is no further evidence, one should use the first as the official standard name. In accordance with standard policy, the other names for the feature will be considered variants.

i.   ***Abbreviations***

The following is a list of abbreviations of generics which are regularly found on Colombian cartographic products. Abbreviations must be spelled out in the Geographic Names Database.

Abbreviated form	*Unabbreviated Form*
A.	Arroyo
B.	Bahía
Bco.	Banco
Bo.	Boca
C.	Cabo, Cayo, or Cerro
Co.	Cerro
Ca.	Cañada
Cdon.	Cordón
Cem.	Cementerio
Clla.	Cuchilla
Cord.	Cordillera
Dpto.	Departamento
Ensa.	Ensenada
Esc.	Escuela
Est.	Estación, Estero
Fte.	Fuerte
G.	Golfo
Hac.	Hacienda
I(s).	Isla(s)
Ilte(s).	Islote(s)
L.	Loma
L., Lag.	Lago or Laguna
Mo.	Morro
Mte.	Monte
Nvdo.	Nevado
P.	Playa, Presa, or Pico
Pco.	Pico
Pen.	Península
Pta.	Punta
Pte.	Puente
Pto.	Puerto
Pvcia.	Provincia
Q., Queb., Qda.	Quebrada
R.	Río
Reg.	Región
S.	Sierra
Serr.	Serranía
V.	Valle, Volcán

4.   Political Geographic Policy

a.   Country Name and Capital

Country Names
Conventional long form: Republic of Colombia
Conventional short form: Colombia
Standard long form: República de Colombia
Standard short form: Colombia

Capital
Approved name: Bogotá

b.   First-Order Administrative Divisions

	Name	Generic	Seat	FIPS 10-4	ISO 3166-2
1.	Amazonas	departamento	Leticia	CO01	CO -AMA
2.	Antioquia	departamento	Medellín	CO02	CO-ANT
3.	Arauca	departamento	Arauca	CO03	CO-ARA
4.	Atlántico	departamento	Barranquilla	CO04	CO-ATL
5.	Bolívar	departamento	Cartagena	CO35	CO-BOL
6.	Boyacá	departamento	Tunja	CO36	CO-BOY
7.	Caldas	departamento	Manizales	CO37	CO-CAL
8.	Caquetá	departamento	Florencia	CO08	CO-CAQ
9.	Casanare	departamento	Yopal	CO32	CO-CAS
10.	Cauca	departamento	Popayán	CO09	CO-CAU
11.	Cesar	departamento	Valledupar	CO10	CO-CES
12.	Chocó	departamento	Quibdó	CO11	CO-CHO
13.	Córdoba	departamento	Montería	CO12	CO-COR
14.	Cundinamarca	departamento	Bogotá	CO33	CO-CUN
15.	Distrito Capital	distrito capital*	Bogotá	CO34	CO-DC
16.	Guainía	departamento	Puerto Inírida	CO15	CO-GUA
17.	Guaviare	departamento	San José del Guaviare	CO14	CO-GUV
18.	Huila	departamento	Neiva	CO16	CO-HUI
19.	La Guajira	departamento	Riohacha	CO17	CO-LAG
20.	Magdalena	departamento	Santa Marta	CO38	CO-MAG
21.	Meta	departamento	Villavicencio	CO19	CO-MET
22.	Nariño	departamento	Pasto	CO20	CO-NAR
23.	Norte de Santander	departamento	Cúcuta	CO21	CO-NSA
24.	Putumayo	departamento	Mocoa	CO22	CO-PUT
25.	Quindío	departamento	Armenia	CO23	CO-QUI
26.	Risaralda	departamento	Pereira	CO24	CO-RIS
27.	Archipiélago de San Andrés, Providencia y Santa Catalina	departamento	San Andrés	CO25	CO-SAP

28.	Santander	departamento	Bucaramanga	CO26	CO-SAN
29.	Sucre	departamento	Sincelejo	CO27	CO-SUC
30.	Tolima	departamento	Ibagué	CO28	CO-TOL
31.	Valle del Cauca	departamento	Cali	CO29	CO-VAC
32.	Vaupés	departamento	Mitú	CO30	CO-VAU
33.	Vichada	departamento	Puerto Carreño	CO31	CO-VID

* *Distrito Capital* has a first order administrative division status.

c.   ***Disputed Territories***

Note: For the latest country specific boundary dispute information, visit the U.S. Department of State's Boundaries and Sovereignty Encyclopedia, or B.A.S.E., at http://base.us-state.osis.gov/.

On December 13, 2007, The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that three Caribbean islands (San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina) disputed by Nicaragua and Colombia belonged to Colombia because of a 1928 Treaty between the two nations.[3] In October 2010, Honduras and Colombia submitted applications to intervene in the dispute. Then on May 4, 2011, after six months of deliberations the ICJ determined that Costa Rica and Honduras could not intervene in the territorial and maritime dispute between Nicaragua v. Colombia.[4]

There is also a managed dispute with Venezuela over the maritime boundary and Venezuelan-administered Los Monjes Islands near the Golfo de Venezuela (Gulf of Venezuela).[5]

Furthermore, The United States Government, while cognizant of multiple sovereignty claims of other governments, considers Bajo Nuevo and Serranilla Bank as part of its territorial claims pursuant to the Guano Act of 1856."

5.   Source Material

The Instituto Geográfico "Agustín Codazzi" (IGAC) is the preferred authority for Colombian map and chart sources. In addition, there are other Colombian government agencies and commercial producers. The following is a listing of source material, prioritized according to recommended usage for geographic name selection. All items

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[3] United Nations News Centre. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=25046&Cr=icj&Cr1>. 26 Jan. 2011.

[4] Territorial and Maritime Dispute (Nicaragua v. Colombia). International Court of Justice. 04 May 2011. <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=2&case=124>. 07 Jun 2011.

[5] Colombia. Transnational Issues. < https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html > 17 Nov 2010.
Colombia: Learning the Foreign Policy Process. Rekonja-Kornat, Gerhard. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*. Vol 25, No 2 (May 1983).
Realism and Internationalism in the Gulf of Venezuela. George, Larry N. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*. Vol 30, No 4 (Winter 1988-1989).

are available at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) Research Center, except where noted.

1. 1:50,000/100,000-scale map series, Instituto Geográfico "Agustín Codazzi" (IGAC), Bogotá, 1950's to 1990's.
2. Various scales ADM1 maps, IGAC 2007.
3. 1:250,000/500,000-scale administrative maps, Instituto Geográfico "Agustín Codazzi" (IGAC) and private agencies, 1970's to 2003.
4. 1:2,000,000-scale maps of Colombia, Instituto Geográfico "Agustín Codazzi" (IGAC), 1990, 2000 and Rodríguez/ Instituto Geográfico "Agustín Codazzi" (IGAC), 1993.
5. Atlas de Colombia, 1:700,000, Instituto Geográfico "Agustín Codazzi" (IGAC), fourth edition, 1992 and fifth edition 2003 various scales (50k to 1.5M) and CD-ROM Atlas de Colombia 1998

Other sources of information:
1. BGN Gazetteer of Colombia, 1988.
2. Diccionario Geográfico de Colombia, Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi (IGAC), 1980 edition and 1996 edition in hardcopy and CD-ROM.
3. Map series of various scales, Instituto Geográfico "Agustín Codazzi" (IGAC) and other government and private agencies, 1970's to 1990's.
4. Instituto Geográfico "Agustín Codazzi" (IGAC) Website: www.igac.gov.co

Appendix A – The following is a glossary of generic terms that one may encounter in Colombia. Please note that this list is incomplete and only represents the most frequently occurring generics.

Spanish Generic	Designation Name	Designation Code
acequía, canal	canal	CNL
alto, cerro, cuchilla, morro, montaña, serranía, sierra	mountain	MT
alto, cerro, loma, morro	hills	HILL
arroyo, caño, morichal, quebrada, río	stream	STM
bahía	bay	BAY
banco	bank	BNK
boca, estuario	estuary	ESTY
boca, ensenada	inlet	INLT
bosque, selva	forest	FRST
cabo	cape	CAPE
caño	tidal creek	CRKT
ciénaga	marsh	MRSH
ciénaga, laguna	lagoon	LGN
cuchilla, fila, filo	ridge	RDGE
delta	delta	DLTA
departamento, distrito capital	first-order administrative division	ADM1, department
embalse, represa	reservoir	RSV
ensenada	cove	COVE
estero	wetland	WTLD
estrecho	strait	STRT
golfo	gulf	GULF
isla, islote	island	ISL
lago	lake	LK
llano, sabana	plain	PLN
mesa	mesa	MESA
municipio	second-order administrative division	ADM2, municipality
parque, parque nacional	park	PRK
paso	pass	PASS
península	peninsula	PEN
picacho, pico	peak	PK
puente	bridge	BDG
puerto	harbor	HBR
punta	point	PT
rapido, salto	waterfall	FLLS
sabana	grassland	GRSLD