From the Publisher

Geographical names are an important source of information when identifying and locating various objects on the Earth’s surface. They are important elements in the spoken language and in written form are essential elements of maps and other publications. With that in mind, every country tries to elaborate and publish their own official lists of geographical names, so-called national gazetteers.

Elaborating and publishing national gazetteers is also laid down in the resolution of the United Nations Organization approved by the 1967 First United Nations Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names in Geneva, the purpose being to standardize geographical names in individual countries. The Conference recommended that official lists of accepted geographical names and their location be elaborated and published in individual countries. Such official lists should ensure explicitness when using geographical names in various kinds of publications and mass media.

The Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography initiated the publication of a national gazetteer in Poland in the late 1970s, offering to cover the cost of its editing and printing. It was published in 1991 after years of work, on the order of the Surveyor General of Poland, as a copious volume entitled *Geographical names of the Republic of Poland*, though it only contained around 28,000 names, including almost 3,500 names of water objects (hydronyms), established by the Commission for Establishing Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects affiliated to the Council of Ministers’ Office.

Due to the restricted scope of this first Polish gazetteer, sufficient only for drafting maps at scales of 1:500,000 and smaller, the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography started drafting a new gazetteer in the late 1990s which would contain a complete list, wherever possible, of standardized names of objects of various categories. A decision was taken to publish it successively as a multi-volume work entitled: *Geographical Names of Poland*.

The publication hereby presented is the first volume of a series to be published over several years containing a list of almost 16,000 standardized names of water objects (so-called hydronyms) divided into two parts: 1. *Flowing waters, sources, waterfalls* and 2. *Standing waters*, verified and established by the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects, operating since 1997 and affiliated to the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration.

This publication could appear only as the result of great commitment and exhaustive effort on the part of many persons and institutions to whom I wish to express sincere gratitude. I feel also sure that this promising beginning will be followed by successive volumes of this Polish modern national gazetteer, so greatly needed and long awaited.

Surveyor General of Poland

Jerzy Albin
Foreword

Poland lies in a moderate climate and holds numerous diverse water objects: rivers, creeks and brooks, lakes, ponds, pools, sources, waterfalls etc. The number of these objects and, thereby, their names are estimated to be around 50,000 (together with variant, historical, slang etc. names).

Polish hydronyms are rather well historically documented. The names of the largest rivers date back to the pre-IndoEuropean period (e.g. Wisła, Odra, Bug, Warta, Nysa). The youngest onomastic layer is of Slav etymology, though German, Belarusian, Ukrainian and Slovak names are encountered on the borderlands. Jadzwing and Old Prussian names exist widely throughout the Warmia and Mazury region, both of which languages have become extinct.

The following hydronyms can be semantically distinguished:

1) names originating in an object’s characteristic features,
2) names originating in the object’s erstwhile owner,
3) names originating in other geographic objects (particularly localities).

The requirement to standardise hydronyms in Poland, on a par with other names of physiographic objects, is established in the Act of 29 August 2003¹. The Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects affiliated to the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration performs standardization jobs in Poland. The Commission is a consultative and advisory body and is also empowered to establish, change and abolish official names.

Work to standardize hydronyms in Poland was commenced only after the II World War. Geographic names on the Regained Territories in north and west Poland had then to be Polonised and were published in a glossary². Standardized hydronyms have been listed in 197 booklets of Official names of localities and physiographic objects³ and in Geographical names of the Republic of Poland⁴. A number of official hydronyms were also published in “Monitor Polski” official gazettes in the 1950s.

A project to standardize systematically contemporary Polish hydronyms was born in the late 20th century. A plan to gather these names from several sources: hydrology, cartography and onomastic was created on the initiative of the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography. That programme envisaged the elaboration of hydronyms according to the catchment areas of Poland’s main rivers. That project was in the form of a table in which the genitive case, kind of object and hydrographic location were given, additionally indicating the geographic coordinates. Information whether the given name had ever been standardized was also given. The toponomastic sources are given in the bibliography.

The tabular lists of hydronyms were delivered to the Commission on Establishing the Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects. Under a decision issued by Prof. Kazimierz ¹ Act of 29 August 2003 on official names of localities and physiographic objects. “Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej” (Law Gazette of the Republic of Poland) 2003, Nr 166, poz. 1612. Art. 3.1).
² S. Rospond, Słownik nazw geograficznych Polski Zachodniej i Północnej (Glossary of geographical names of west and north Poland), volumes I–II, Wroclaw 1951.
³ Published by the Council of Ministers’ Office between 1963 and 1974 according to the erstwhile system of counties (powiat).
Rymut the Commission chairman, the lists concerning each catchment area were reviewed and presented by eminent Polish onomastical experts during Commission meetings. Standardization of Polish hydronyms was performed between November 2003 and end-2005, during which time the name of the Commission was amended as well as its composition (partly). Its official name since 29 August 2003 is Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects.

The Commission members are outstanding specialists with many years of standardization practice. In standardization procedures they are guided by specific general principles rooted in Polish standardization traditions. The Commission also takes into consideration the specifics of hydronym material.

A standardized unit consists of the following information:
1) the object’s full name,
2) its genitive form,
3) information concerning the kind of object,
4) geographic coordinates.

When establishing a name the Commission takes into account:
1) consistency of the sound and spelling of the name with the general rules of the Polish language,
2) the name’s etymology,
3) historical references,
4) tradition of how the name is used in a local community,
5) frequency with which the form appears on topographic maps and in hydrographic and onomastical elaborations,
6) administrative traditions (appearance of the given name in „Monitor Polski”, Official names, in a gazetteer).

But sometimes differences exist between official and local names. This is most often the case in the Regained Territories in north and west Poland where names established shortly after the II World War were not accepted by local communities. The new incoming population gave geographic objects their own names which became consolidated in documents issued by local offices. In such cases the Commission established the new official names and abolished the previous one (by publishing in an official document).

During the standardization process the Commission members represent (as regards methodology) a systemic approach to the onomastical layer. A given hydronym is collated with:

a) a collection of all known Polish hydronyms and their types,
b) other local proper nouns: of villages, towns, local names and names of persons.

Should a lake, river and village bore the same name, the Commission tried to differentiate the names of these objects, e.g. Uhryń the name of a village and brook and simultaneously the variant Uhryński Potok – the brook’s name; the Commission chose the second name. However, the Commission in principle does not create such names by itself.

Multi-verbal names created the greatest problems and discussions. Orthographic Polish-language dictionaries contain few rules here. One is the principle that a toponymic term is avoided in a name with a noun element, e.g. Mąkolno and not Jezioro Mąkolno (Mąkolno Lake). A topographical term does appear as an element of a name with an adjective element, e.g. Jezioro Powidzkie and not Powidzkie. Orthographic rules do not define, however, what the order of the various elements must be. Tradition most frequently decides in daily practice. Two possibilities exist in Poland: Jezioro Powidzkie with the jezioro element at the beginning or Powidzkie Jezioro where the opposite order is used. The same is true in place names, e.g. Nowy Sącz, Stary Sącz but Treby Stare, Treby Nowe. The Commission tried to respect regional practice and not enforce standard forms for the whole of Poland. But certain general trends did appear: where a qualitative adjective existed in a name, it stood in first place.
(Czarny Staw) but when it was a locality-derivative adjective it most frequently appeared in second place (Jezioro Głodowskie).

The Commission was firm in eliminating names with numbers as digitals, that is names like Staw Kolejowy I, Staw Kolejowy II. They pose problems when declining orally (I – one or first?). For such names it was decided that the alphabetic form be used: Staw Kolejowy Pierwszy, Staw Kolejowy Drugi.

For prepositional names the Commission laid down that the hydrographic term be used (e.g. Staw koło Lasu and not Koło Lasu), to allow the name to be declined.

The Commission often changed evidently deformed names, originating in one type of source (e.g. hydrographic records or only on maps) in accord with orthographic principles e.g. Stróżka to Strużka.

Though tabular lists had been earlier drafted, many names had to be explained. Differences also appeared in geographic locations given by various sources. Some had to be checked on the spot, others in onomastic elaborations, while others required verification in the State Register of Geographical Names. Examples: Reczynek or Raczyn, Eligzej, Podskalniok or Potok pod Skalniok.

Troubles were also caused by the genitive form of names such as Stobna (Stobny or Stobnej). Here decisions were taken basing on existing records. If there were none, analogies were employed for a locality of similar name or a common noun sounding the same (appellative).

Commission meetings closed with resolutions being approved in which the number of names investigated number of names on which positive decisions were taken and the number requiring elucidation. The resolutions also indicated names which should be struck off the list or shifted to a proper collection (e.g. from the collection of flowing waters to that of standing waters.

The number of standardized hydronyms and encountered problems required great and responsible effort.

Aleksandra Cieślikowa Chairperson of the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects

Ewa Wołnicz-Pawłowska Deputy chairperson of the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects
Introduction

This list of hydronyms is composed of two parts. The first holds 8149 names of flowing waters, sources and waterfalls while the second part – 7761 names of standing waters. The total of both parts is 15910 hydronyms. The greatest number begins with the letter S (11%) and K (10%), also letters B, M and P (8% each). Names starting with the mentioned letters account for 45% of the entire collection. Names starting with A, E, F and I appear most rarely – a total 1.5%.

Bearing in mind interest among English speaking foreigners, all titles, introductory texts and table headings are also given in English.

Part 1. Flowing waters, sources, waterfalls

Volume I. Hydronyms – Part 1. Flowing waters, sources, waterfalls contains the list of names of rivers, brooks, creeks, streams, oxbows, canals and ditches as well as lists of names of 136 sources and 16 waterfalls.

Hydronyms in the list of surface waters are in alphabetic order, though the working lists were drafted in hydrographic order. Publishing a list of hydronyms in hydrographic order, i.e. in the sequence of flowing waters in a catchment area (main river with tributaries) starting from their sources to mouths would require an additional index of names and a substantial increase of the publication’s size. A hydrographic order is displayed in outline on the enclosed map.

Explanatory notes to tabular lists of hydronyms of flowing waters, sources and waterfalls

Column 1 – name of water object

The list of hydronyms holds only standardized names (without variants), of water objects situated within Poland’s borders.

The given names concern a whole object and also its sections (section names). The section names in the list are given in italics.

As concerns objects flowing through a national frontier and rivers flowing partly outside it, only the Polish name is given, e.g. Nysa Łużycka, Odra.

In cases of multi-word names the order of the words has been established by the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects. A comma between words signifies the beginning of the name is the word following the comma, e.g. Grodzki, Kanał – is Kanał Grodzki; Kaszowski, Potok – is Potok Kaszowski.

Column 2 – ending of hydronyms in the genitive case

Ending of names in the genitive have been established by the above mentioned Commission.
Column 3 – kind of water object

Explanatory notes of terms have been established on the basis of analyses of many available definitions in Polish and foreign geographic, technical and other dictionaries. They have been drafted for persons using this list of hydronymy, with the specific purpose of arranging basic terms to make comprehensible what their meaning is in Polish hydrography.

The following kinds of objects have been distinguished:

**River** – a large natural watercourse flowing constantly or periodically in a self-created channel; a river flows into a sea, lake or other river; it has its own name. Source watercourses with section names constituting the beginning of a given river, in this collection are defined as rivers, principally to stress their continuity of flow. In Poland a watercourse with catchment area greater than 100 sq. km is termed a river.

**Brook** – a watercourse flowing through land of substantial vertical intervals, usually in an erosion-shaped channel in rocks, characterised by sharp drops and a strong current. In Poland the name brook is usually used for watercourses flowing in mountains and highlands, rarely in other regions. A mountain brook has channel falls of between 5 ‰ and 30 ‰, while a torrent has falls of up to 80 ‰ and even greater. Highland brooks are defined as having falls between 5 ‰ and 10 ‰. Their catchment area rarely exceeds 100 sq. km.

**Creek** – a watercourse flowing slowly in an area of small relief. In Poland creeks appear mainly in lowlands. They have channel falls up to 2 ‰, and even 5 ‰ in areas of more diverse land. As in the case of mountain brooks, the catchment area does not exceed 100 sq. km.

**Stream** – a small watercourse flowing in an area of diverse relief through a narrow channel of small fall of levels and catchment area generally not exceeding 20 sq. km. In Poland normally encountered in foothills and highest parts of lake districts.

**Canal** – an artificial open channel of substantial dimensions and regular cross and lengthwise profile, carrying water for land-improvement, shipping and other purposes.

**Ditch** – An artificial open channel of small width, carrying water mainly for land-improvement purposes.

**River mouth arm** – fragment of a natural channel, generally of a large river, formed when the mouth section of the main channel is divided into several mouth arms. These arms often have their own names: e.g. Duńczyca, Lubczyński Nurt.

**River side-arm** – fragment of a natural river channel which separates from it and flows next to the main channel for some distance, then connects with it. Side-arms sometimes have their own names e.g. Martwa Woda a side-arm of the Regalica.

**Oxbow** – part of the lower stretch of a watercourse, which has separated from it in a natural or artificial way.

**Source** – natural, concentrated, intrinsic outflow of subterranean water to the surface.

**Waterfall** – water falling freely from a steep, sometimes even several hundreds metres high threshold.

Column 4 – recipient

Recipient is a term used in hydrography and hydrology to mean a stretch of water to which a tributary enters. Every river is the recipient for its tributaries, e.g. the Vistula is the recipient of all its direct tributaries. That information is particularly important since many similar single-word names appear in the alphabetical list, e.g. Biała, Czarna, Kamienna – the recipient then indicating in which river basin the given watercourse should be looked for.
Column 4 gives:

- recipients of all watercourses whose names are given in the list, e.g. Wisłok \(\rightarrow\) recipient San,
- recipients of successive river sections with section names, e.g. Nida \(\rightarrow\) recipient Dzialdówka, Dzialdówka \(\rightarrow\) recipient Wkra, Wkra \(\rightarrow\) recipient Narew,
- for watercourses delivering into through-flow lakes the recipient’s name, and in brackets – the lake’s name, e.g. Orzysza \(\rightarrow\) recipient Pisa (Lake Śniardwy),
- only the Polish name of the recipient (without endonym) when it is outside the national border, e.g. Niemen for Czarna Hańcza.

Recipients are both rivers in the case of navigable canals linking two rivers, e.g. Brda is the recipient for the Kanal Bydgoski from its initial point to the point where it connects with Brda, while the Noteć river – for the Kanal Bydgoski from its initial point to where it connects with the Noteć.

**Column 5 – geographic coordinates**

These coordinates refer to the mouth junction of the watercourse, that is the mouth of the tributary to the recipient. These junction points and their geographic coordinates were computer-established on a digital map of the hydrographic division of Poland at the scale of 1:50,000 and verified on the basis of a 1:10,000 map from the State Register of Geographical Names.

In the case of watercourses marked on maps by a single line, a mouth junction is the point where the tributary meets the recipient. In the case of large rivers, the beds of which are depicted on maps in an appropriate scale, the mouth junction is established according to the principles illustrated by the drawing.

Should the watercourse enter a lake or sea the junction is at the point where the watercourse contacts the reservoir bank. In the case of wide rivers entering a lake or sea, the principle indicated on the above drawing is obligatory.

In the case of rivers crossing the national border and having their source in Poland (e.g. the Łyna, Strwiąż), the end (mouth) of the river is taken to be the point where the river crosses the border.

Geographic coordinates of watercourses with sectional names have been calculated for the point on the river in which the name of the watercourse changes according to data usually established on the spot. For instance, that could be a lake bank in the case of watercourses flowing through a lake or a tributary mouth below which the river assumes a different name. Information on this issue is given in the remarks.

For navigable canals linking two rivers, e.g. the Kanal Bydgoski, Kanal Augustowski, these coordinates have been calculated for two mouth junctions (i.e. places where the canal joins the river).

In the case of canals linking lakes, e.g. Kanal Augustowski the geographic coordinates have also been calculated in the places where sections of the canal join the lakes on its route.
For lateral and transit canals, e.g. *Kanal Łącznański, Kanal Wieprz-Krza*, the coordinates of mouth junctions are calculated as for tributaries.

Geographic coordinates have been established for sources and waterfalls as in the case of point objects.

**Column 6 – remarks**

Particular cases appearing in the river system are elucidated in these remarks. Information concerning places where names of river sections change is given in the column. The approximate location of these places is defined by the name of the locality, lake or by indicating that the name appears in its upper or lower course.

**List of abbreviations**

- **uj.** – watercourse mouth
- **gb.** – upper section of watercourse
- **śrb.** – middle section of watercourse
- **db.** – lower section of watercourse
- **jez.** – lake
- **kan.** – canal

**MPHP** – *Mapa Podziału Hydrograficznego Polski* (Map of Hydrographic Division of Poland)

**PRNG** – *Państwowy Rejestr Nazw Geograficznych* (State Register of Geographical Names)

**Part 2. Standing waters**

*Standing waters*, part 2 of the list of hydronyms, contains the names of 7761 standing water objects: lakes, ponds, artificial storage reservoirs, bays, straits and also depths and shoals.

**Explanations to the tabular list of names of standing waters**

**Column 1 – name of the standing water**

The list contains standardized names (without variants) of standing water within Poland (together with territorial water).

The names in the list refer to a whole object as well as to its part, e.g. to the bays of lakes.

In the case of objects through which the national border cuts, only the Polish name is given, e.g. *Zalew Szczeciński, Jezioro Orawskie*.

For multi-word names the order of words has been established by the Commission on Names of Localities and Physiographical Objects. A comma between words signifies that the beginning of the name is the word after the comma, e.g. *Brzuskie, Jezioro* – is the *Jezioro Brzuskie, Grodzkie, Jezioro* – is the *Jezioro Grodzkie*.

**Column 2 – ending of hydronyms in the genitive case**

Ending of names in the genitive have been established by the above mentioned Commission.
Column 3 – kind of water object

Explanatory notes of terms have been elaborated on the basis of analyses of many available definitions in Polish and foreign geographic, technical and other dictionaries. They have been drafted for persons using this list of hydronyms, with the specific purpose of arranging basic terms to make comprehensible what their meaning is in Polish hydrography.

The following kinds of objects have been distinguished:

**Lake** – a natural inland water reservoir.

**Pond** – a shallow reservoir created by the artificial damming (ponding) of a river, usually for the purpose of fish breeding.

**Reservoir (artificial)** – an artificially created depression filled with standing water e.g. exhausted excavation, swallow hole, clay pit or reservoir created by lifting a river level by damming (e.g. storage reservoir).

**Bay** – part of a lake or sea surrounded by land on three sides.

**Straits** – a narrow stretch of water connecting two water regions and dividing two areas of land.

**Depth** – a clearly enclosed fall in the bottom of a reservoir, e.g. lake, sea situated substantially lower in relation to the surroundings.

**Shoal** – part of the bottom of a reservoir or watercourse situated very near the surface of the water, created by accumulation of sediment.

Column 4 – commune, column 5 – county, column 6 – voivodship

These columns hold information about the location of water objects in administration units according to the administrative division of Poland of 1 January 2006. The name of commune, county and voivodship is given for each object located within a given unit. When the object is situated within two units and is divided by an administration border, the point where the centre of the given water object is located is decisive when defining to which commune it belongs. In such a case the entire water object is located in the administration unit where its central point lies.

Column 7 – geographic coordinates

The geographic coordinates of surface objects given in the list have been defined according to a 1:10,000 map on the basis of the State Register of Geographical Names. They relate to a point situated in the middle of a lake, pond, artificial reservoir or bay. In the case of dismembered objects, e.g. lakes with bays or long finger lakes, the middle has been established to take into account also bays and the extreme tips of the lake. The coordinates of the middle point of a water object has been calculated with an accuracy of geographic seconds. For objects intersected by the national border, the coordinates has been given for the central point of the Polish part.

An approximate centre has been given for coordinates of depths and shoals.

Column 8 – remarks

The remarks contain information concerning:

- component parts of a lake when it contains several water regions of separate names, e.g. the Mamry lake is composed of lakes: Kisajno, Dargin, Jezioro Dobskie, Kirsajty, Mamry,
- should the national border intersect a lake or bay, e.g. Gaładuś lake,
• the existence of bays or arms of other names, e.g. Bruch bay is a part of Dąbrowa Wielka lake,
• that the lake has become a nature reserve,
• cases when two lakes have been given a common name, e.g. Malcz Północny and Malcz Południowy lakes bear the same name: Malcz.

List of abbreviations

jez. – lake
Zat. – Bay
gm. – commune
m.st. – capital city
pow. – county
MPHP – Mapa Podziału Hydrograficznego Polski (Map of Hydrographic Division of Poland)
PRNG – Państwowy Rejestr Nazw Geograficznych (State Register of Geographical Names)

Halina Czarnecka
Institute of Meteorology and Water Management
Bibliography of toponymic publications

A. Text publications


B. Atlases and maps


*Mapa cyfrowa podziału hydrograficznego Polski (MPHP).* IMGW. Warszawa 2005.

Mapy topograficzne w skali 1:50 000, 1:25 000, 1:10 000 z różnych okresów. GUGiK, Zarząd Topograficzny Sztabu Generalnego WP.

C. Acts

Zarządzenie Nr 115 Prezesa Rady Ministrów z dnia 1 czerwca 1951 r. w sprawie przywrócenia i ustalenia urzędowych nazw rzecznych śląskiej części dorzecza Odry i Łaby. „Monitor Polski” Nr A-62, Warszawa, 1951.

Ustawa z dnia 29 sierpnia 2003 r. o urzędowych nazwach miejscowości i obiektów fizjograficznych. „Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej” 2003, Nr 166, poz. 1612.