

**Report for the 23rd General Assembly
FIG Working Week in Prague, 22-26 May 2000**

COMMISSION 7 – CADASTRE AND LAND MANAGEMENT

1. General

At the time of writing this report it is four months since the Commission's Annual Meeting in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, and just less than four months until the Commission's next Annual Meeting, the first in the new Millennium, at Hamburg in Germany. This will take place in the week prior to the Prague Working Week.

The Bay of Islands meeting was an outstanding success. It was a real tribute to the organising abilities of Bill Robertson and his team from the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors. The setting was spectacular, everything went wonderfully well, our meetings with our New Zealand colleagues formed many new friendships, and the Commission's business made real progress.

The particular feature of the Annual Meeting that has become the Commission's trademark, the one day international symposium, focussed this time on the work of Agneta Ericsson's Task Force on Women's Access to Land. Agneta, our Swedish delegate, with Sue Nichols from Canada in particular generated a great deal of light on the subject. I think we were all very impressed not only by the quality of the papers and presentations but also by the genuine interest and enthusiasm of the large numbers of people attending. The material was considered of such quality by the New Zealand Institute that it has been formally published in the Institute's *Survey Quarterly*, a notable first for those involved and a real achievement. The whole Commission, I am sure, joins me in congratulation.

From New Zealand, a strong contingent of Commission 7 delegates went on to work as a part of the Bathurst Workshop on "Land Tenure and Cadastral Infrastructures for Sustainable Development". The outcome of the Workshop, The Bathurst Declaration, has been widely reported internationally, and will help to focus our thinking for the future for years to come.

The group was a part of the team assembled by Ian Williamson, our former chair, and Don Grant, our Australian delegate, over a period of years of patient and painstaking planning. The Workshop ended up including representatives from 25 different countries and five United Nations related agencies: the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Habitat (Centre for Human Settlements), Division for Sustainable Development, Food and Agriculture Organisation, Economic Commission for Africa, and World Bank.

It was a remarkable meeting, and everyone there put their whole hearts into the work. But I think we all recognise that, at the end of the day, we were there because of the commitment, remarkable effort and energy of Ian and Don. My warmest congratulations to our two Australian delegates and their colleagues on behalf of the Commission.

Of course, what can be said about Bathurst, has equally to be said about Melbourne and the International Conference. This attracted over 150 international delegates and was followed by the Melbourne Round Table between FIG and the UN and bilateral agencies, hosted at Ian's University of Melbourne.

Later in the year, the hand-over from the UK to the US administration took place. Peter Dale, the outgoing President, has been, and will continue to be a great friend of the Commission.

We hope he will still join our annual meetings when he has the time. His place is taken, of course, by Bob Foster, who will be very welcome in joining us in Hamburg and providing us with an opening address at our one day International Symposium.

Surviving the Millennium bug, the next item on the Commission's agenda following New Zealand was the Advisory Committee of Commission Officers (ACCO) in Denmark in January. The meeting was held at the new FIG permanent office, and organised by Markku Villikka, FIG's Executive Secretary. The new permanent address, with Markku and his support staff, is one of the most important and positive moves ever made by FIG and is working outstandingly well. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for helping to focus peoples' attention on working co-operatively between commissions, and on looking to the future to supporting and implementing the Bureau's workplan.

2. Plans for the future

The Commission's three Working Groups have continued to work since the New Zealand meeting.

The Commission is looking forward to the Annual Meeting in May in Hamburg, Germany, in May 2000. This is hosted by the German Association and organised by Dr Winfried Hawerk, our German delegate, and Gabrielle Dasse.

Working Group 3, chaired by Andras Ossko, is making a big input into this meeting in fulfillment of a part of the Working Group's terms of reference to prepare a one day open international seminar on "Land Markets". This highly topical programme looks excellent and we will be able to report informally to the Working Week on what will I am sure prove a very successful day.

Meanwhile preparations continue for the Commission's inputs into the Prague Working Week and Symposium in May 2000 immediately following the Commission's Annual Meeting. A valuable contribution will be made in Prague by a group of Commission delegates and others. It will focus on the land market and cadastre debates that are of great interest and debate in the Central and Eastern European region. A second group of Commission delegates will simultaneously be heading in the direction of Austria to join Gerda Schennach, our Austrian delegate, for the Austrian Association's Meeting in Vienna. The papers there will feature a strong representation from the Commission including Andras Ossko (Hungary), Paul van der Molen (Netherlands and vice chair) and Jürg Kaufmann (Switzerland) amongst others.

Later in the year – in September 2000 – the Commission is also involved with the Maltese member association in the preparation of a joint Commission Meeting with Commissions 2, 4, 5, and 6 in Malta. We have already filled our part of the bill with an excellent schedule of papers for two sessions. The first Commission session will feature international specialists from various parts of the globe; the second will feature specialists sharing the experience of situations in the Mediterranean region. As always the Commission will hope to get a good picture of the situation in Malta in particular, but more widely in the region as well.

Active preparations for the Commission's Annual Meeting in Sweden in 2001 are under way. This will be a critical meeting where we set the agenda for the Washington DC Congress under the US administration.

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