



Roundtable #4

The modernization of cadastral systems for better governance of territories

Rationale

The cadastre has long been associated exclusively with real estate taxation and land title registration. This somewhat austere vision of the land registry no longer reflects its current situation.

Over the past twenty years, the cadastre has undergone a major conceptual and methodological modernization. With the development of geomatics, cadastres have become real information infrastructures for territorial governance. Indeed, cadastral information is now used for such diverse purposes as development planning, land use control, natural risk prevention and sustainable development.

In the last decade, many States have launched programmes to build and reform cadastral systems to address issues of economic development, poverty reduction and decentralization of government powers. It has thus become a tool that invites reflection on the political issues of geography.

The conceptual modernization of the cadastre

The versatile use of the cadastre is not automatic because of its computerization implemented over the past thirty years. Its integration into institutions responsible for territorial governance poses several political, legal, organizational, social and technical challenges. This is a question about the control of geographic information, its use, confidentiality, accessibility, etc. Cadastral problems are no longer only technical; they rather reflect the difficulties inherent in the territorial organization that a society wants to establish on the territory it occupies.

The use of this methodological approach remains a recent phenomenon since, historically, the cadastre has been treated and analysed as a technical tool only, its other dimensions having been obscured.

There is currently an international context favourable to land reforms due to the globalization of trade and the desire to combat poverty through the regularization of informal land tenure. These reforms provide an opportunity to build strong, reliable and sustainable institutions that promote access to land, unequivocal land use, secure transfer of rights, mortgage credit and rational land use.

The land registry is almost always at the centre of these land reforms because it provides regional and local institutions with the necessary information support to strengthen their territorial governance capacities.

By sharing national experiences, completed or in the process of being implemented, this round table offers you a better understanding of the real possibilities offered by cadastral systems in the face of land management and planning reforms.