

Deqing Meeting of the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management 26 & 29 September 2018, Deqing, Zhejiang, China

Summary Report

The Deqing meeting of the United Nations Expert Group on Land Administration and Management (EG-LAM) was convened in Deqing, China on 26 and 29 September 2018. The Expert Group meeting was ably and hospitably hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources, China, the Zhejiang Provincial Government and the Deqing County Government, and was attended by twenty-seven participants. Twenty-one of the participants represented their national agencies coming from thirteen Member States and three from international organization and United Nations system. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Deqing International Seminar on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) with the theme “Effective Land Administration”. All participants of the Deqing meeting also participated and contributed to the Deqing International Seminar held from 27 – 28 September 2018, at the same venue, the Treasure Island International Hotel, Wukang Town, Deqing.

After the initial formalities, introductions, overviews and updates, the Expert Group promptly went to task - discussing, debating, deliberating and developing an overarching policy guidance that can be readily referenced by Member States that will effectively and efficiently relate people to land in all its forms. Presentations and discussions including breakout groups provided additional content and context to the Expert Groups work. The diversity of the participants, their backgrounds, experiences, knowledge and (national and regional) circumstances further enriched the discussions and deliberations. There was progressive recognition of the need to address adequate and appropriate data and information, to leverage on technologies and technological innovations to efficiently collect, collate and consume reliable, timely and quality data and information for land administration and management, and to share and disseminate land information. It was stressed that effective land administration is dependent on the availability and accessibility of current, comprehensive and credible data.

The Expert Group improved its understanding on the role and significance of effective land administration, and its impact on leaving no one behind – the overarching principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Land administration that is effective: i) can accelerate the proportion of adult population with tenure security, ii) promote efficient and vibrant land market taking into consideration aspects of land values and land development, iii) contribute to smart and resilient societies, iv) mitigate issues related to land as a cause triggering migration, both intra- and trans-boundary, and triggering conflict that often leads to violent and protracted conflicts. These are in addition to: a) conferring land rights and providing access to land, d) securing land and property rights, c) land, environmental and resource management, d) access to basic infrastructure and services, or e) supporting equitable and safe housing.

The Expert Group understands that effective land administration must be inclusive and accessible, gender and youth sensitive, consider the vulnerable and marginalized. The enabling environment for effective land administration called for: i) sound legal and policy frameworks, ii) leveraging technologies and innovations including mobile computing, iii) consider data and information from a wide range of sources, scales and sensors, iv) harnessing partnerships with civil societies, academia, professionals, private sector and philanthropic organizations.



There is the need: a) for continual advocacy and awareness across multiple sectors - intra and inter-agency or ministries, across governments, with professionals, industry, investors and the community, b) for and role of sound and tested land tools and technical guides; c) to adopt open standards, and d) to be interoperable – of systems, institutions as well as legislative and human interoperability.

Participants considered key elements or pillars of effective land administration together with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, which was adopted by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management in August 2018. The Integrated Geospatial Information Framework has a vision, a mission and the overarching strategic framework comprise seven principles, eight goals and nine strategic pathways. The Expert Group arrived in Deqing having debated and considered seven pillars, namely –

- i) Responsible governance
- ii) Concept of continuum
- iii) Fit-for-purpose
- iv) Finance
- v) Assessment and monitoring
- vi) Capacity and partnership
- vii) Transparency and accountability

and during the Deqing meeting, concluded that the seven pillars, importantly, aligned with the nine strategic pathways of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. The Expert Group concluded that the overarching policy guidance being developed is a specialization of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for land administration and management.

Going forward, the Expert Group seek to consider and elaborate the nine strategic pathways of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework as is pertinent to land administration and management. The Expert Group considered the overarching policy guidance - the Framework for Effective Land Administration, with nine pillars, currently and tentatively, as follows :

- a) Governance, Institutions and Accountability (instead of Governance and institutions, and will include transparency and accountability)
- b) Legal and policy
- c) Financial
- d) Data
- e) Innovation
- f) Standards
- g) Partnerships
- h) Capacity and Education
- i) Advocacy and Awareness (instead of Communication and Engagement)

During the Deqing meeting and the Deqing International Seminar, the Expert Group further discussed and began to consider and elaborate the nine pillars of the Framework for Effective Land Administration. The Expert Group discussed a vision statement, an initial formulation was suggested and will be deliberated by the Expert Group in the coming months and discussed at its subsequent online meetings. The initial formulation of the vision statement –

Reliably and in a timely manner, document, record and recognize people to land relationships in all its forms for people, planet, peace and prosperity.



Considering the presentations and discussions at both the Deqing meeting and the Deqing International Seminar, effective land administration caters to all people, and must: i) develop confidence and trust, promote security, safety and peace, and peace building, ii) cater to all circumstances and situations – in times of peace and prosperity, in times of stress and hardships (disaster and conflicts), and iii) promote preparedness and resilience (with increasing climate vulnerabilities).

The Expert Group concluded its Deqing meeting, the second face-to-face working meeting of experts, with an outline of a work plan for the 2019 – 2020 biennium that has particular focus on developing the Framework for Effective Land Administration, and presenting the framework to the Committee of Experts at its ninth session for adoption. In the lead up to the ninth session of the Committee of Experts, the Expert Group will carry out a global consultation amongst members and related stakeholders of Committee of Experts for the proposed Framework on Effective Land Administration, and perhaps an open consultation process alongside the global consultation. The Expert Group expects to leverage online meetings to work through and develop the framework with its vision, value propositions and pillars, agree on its work plan for 2019 – 2020, and in going about delivering its work plan.

Deqing, Zhejiang, China
29 September 2018

