International Seminar State Land Management in Transitional Countries: Issues and Ways Forward

Some concluding remarks

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Conclusions 1:

- Land management is a neglected area compared with surveying, geodesy, cadastre and spatial data

- An inventory of land and real estate is just the starting point for management and is not the final objective

- The reason that the public sector is often a poor land manager is because it has objectives that are numerous, sometimes conflicting, and often difficult to define – There is a political element to land management – If the politicians do not know what they are trying to achieve, land managers find it difficult to realise the objectives

- Frequently changing frameworks, policies and institutions are disruptive – need for clearly defined framework

- The legacy of previous state land management is a burden

Conclusions 2: Capacity building

- Good management is evidence based
- We need to develop the skills of managers in order to enable the best interests of the public sector and society to be promoted
- Important technical skills are often lacking eg valuation, finance, multi-disciplinary skills
- Need to move from land administration to land management – need to learn from the private sector
- "Capacity building for capacity builders" – how to improve human capital eg training, partnering, technical assistance, wikis, capturing and making available experience on an intranet, secondment
- Promotion of research into state land management

Conclusions 3: Accountability

- Decisions about state and public land are sensitive – the public is often emotionally attached to public land

- Public land is a finite resource – once it is gone, it is lost

- The public environment has to be handled properly with transparency and good communications with public and media

- State land managers need to be accountable to their citizens

- The issue of corruption in government needs to be tackled

- Improving state land management also means policies to improve the efficiency of property market and governance of public and company sectors

Conclusions 4: Role of state land

- All countries need some state and public sector land to achieve their functions:
  - To provide operational land for public goods and services
  - To generate revenue as alternative to taxation
  - To protect cultural, heritage and environmentally sensitive land
  - To meet social objectives eg good housing for the poor, access to land for youth and women
- We should not be ashamed of state land – but we often have good reason to be ashamed of how we manage it.
- It is not the private property of the state but belongs to society