

## **Opening speech / Discorso di apertura**

### **FIG/FAO Seminario Internazionale “Gestione del Territorio Pubblico e dello Stato”**

**Dr. Mika TÖRHÖNEN, FAO**

Buon giorno e Benvenuti a tutti!

Presidente Romanelli, Presidente Savoldi, Prof. Enemark, cari Colleghi ed Amici porgo, innanzi tutto, il mio cordiale saluto e quello della FAO ed in particolare quello dell'Unità della Gestione delle Terre e dell'Ordinamento Fondiario che ho l'onore di rappresentare, a tutti Voi intervenuti in questa straordinaria assemblea.

Esprimo, inoltre, la mia sincera gratitudine al Consiglio Nazionale dei Geometri, la Federazione Internazionale dei Geometri per aver reso possibile lo svolgimento di questo importante evento internazionale e per l'attenzione e l'interesse manifestati ai problemi legati alla gestione del Territorio Pubblico e dello Stato.

Rivolgo infine il mio augurio affinché i lavori si rivelino ricchi di interesse per tutti, che siano uno scambio proficuo di esperienze e che risultino in una serie di iniziative da applicare nelle attività in questo settore in un prossimo futuro.

### **FAO and State/Public Sector Land Management**

Access to land is a crucial factor in the eradication of food insecurity and rural poverty. Rural landlessness is often the best predictor of poverty and hunger. The poorest are usually landless or land-poor. Inadequate rights of access to land and other natural resources, and insecure tenure of those rights, often result in extreme poverty and hunger. Secure tenure and widespread access to land are widely accepted as the base for ensuring sustainable use of land and natural resources.

The vesting of ownership of substantial portions of a nation's land in state/public sector ownership and management is a widespread feature of national land tenure structures. The management of these areas of land is commonly problematic, with, for example, considered, rational, equitable and transparently implemented policies lacking, frequent corruption in the administration of such assets and lack of adequate capacities to manage such lands effectively. These problems are globally widespread and are present in both developing economies and more developed economies. FAO's Land Tenure and Management Unit's (NRLA) normative work on state/public sector land management aims to support governments and others in addressing these challenges by providing guidelines, policy recommendations and examples of good practice in this area. Three complementary framework papers addressing respectively issues of land policy, property management and

civil society perspectives have been prepared in this context and will be presented at the FIG/CNG Verona Seminar cosponsored by FAO.

The Verona seminar, with presentations by eighteen countries drawn from many regions of the world, will contribute to FAO's ongoing activities in this area. By the end of these activities, global awareness of problems associated with state/public land and its management, and their impact on efficient use and equitable access to land will be well defined, well known by land professionals, well recognised by policy makers and increasingly addressed in new development initiatives.

## **La FAO e la Gestione Fondiaria nel settore Statale e Pubblico**

L'accesso a terra è un fattore cruciale nell'eliminazione dell'insicurezza alimentare e della povertà rurale. La mancanza di terra è spesso il migliore indicatore di povertà e di fame. I più poveri sono solitamente privi di terra o non possiedono appezzamenti di terra sufficienti alla loro sussistenza. Diritti inadeguati di accesso alla terra e ad altre risorse naturali, e possesso insicuro di quei diritti, conducono spesso alla povertà estrema e alla fame. Il possesso sicuro e l'accesso diffuso alla terra sono ampiamente accettati come la base per garantire l'uso sostenibile del suolo e delle risorse naturali.

Il conferimento della proprietà di parti considerevoli delle terre di una nazione e alla gestione da parte del settore statale e pubblico è una caratteristica diffusa delle strutture nazionali di gestione fondiaria. La gestione di queste zone di territorio è comunemente problematica, con, per esempio, carenza di politiche ponderate, razionali, eque e di trasparente applicazione, frequente corruzione nella gestione di tali beni e mancanza di capacità sufficienti per gestire efficacemente queste terre. Questi problemi sono diffusi globalmente e sono presenti sia in economie in sviluppo sia in economie sviluppate. L'opera normativa dell'Unità della Gestione delle Terre e dell'Ordinamento Fondiario della FAO (NRLA) mira a sostenere i governi ed altri attori nell'affrontare queste sfide, fornendo linee-guida, raccomandazioni normative ed esempi di buona pratica in questo settore. In questo contesto, sono stati presentati tre documenti di riferimento complementari che affrontano rispettivamente le problematiche della normativa fondiaria, l'amministrazione della proprietà e le prospettive della società civile, e saranno presentati al seminario FIG/CNG di Verona co-patrocinato dalla FAO.

Il seminario di Verona, con interventi di diciotto paesi provenienti da diverse regioni del mondo, contribuirà alle attività della FAO in corso in questo settore. Alla fine di questa attività, la consapevolezza globale dei problemi connessi con le terre statali/pubbliche e la loro amministrazione, ed il loro effetto sull'uso efficiente e sull'accesso equo alla terra risulteranno ben definiti, ben conosciuti da parte dei professionisti della terra, ben riconosciuti da parte dei legislatori ed affrontati in maniera crescente in nuove iniziative di sviluppo.

# **Voluntary guidelines for responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources**

## **Background**

Land and other natural resources (including forests, fisheries and water) are the single greatest asset in most countries. They provide the platform for food and shelter. They are a basic factor of economic production as well as a basis for social, cultural and religious values and practices. Access to land and other natural resources and the associated tenure security have significant implications for development. Secure rights of access for the poor and vulnerable are increasingly affected by climate change, violent conflicts and natural disasters, population growth and urbanization, and demands for land for agriculture and for new energy sources such as bio-energy. In a time of sustained increase in demand for land and other natural resources, and hence of their increased value, this is an issue of global importance.

Responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resource can help to reduce hunger and poverty and to support social and economic development.

Weak governance, in contrast, has adverse consequences for society regardless of whether it arises from state capture (where the powerful acquire state resources on a grand scale for their own benefit) or administrative corruption (where government officials use their power for self-enrichment rather than to execute the tasks for which they are appointed). Weak governance is found in formal statutory land administration as well as in informal and customary tenure arrangements. The poor are particularly vulnerable to the effects of weak governance as they lack the ability to protect their rights to land and other natural resources. Weak governance promotes gender inequality as poor women tend to be less able to secure their rights. It fosters social inequality with potentially destabilizing consequences as the rich are able to benefit from opportunities to acquire land while the poor lose their rights to land and common property resources such as grazing lands and forests. Weak governance leads to environmental degradation as corrupt officials and private interests collude to ignore controls on land use, the extraction of water and minerals, and the clearing of forests. The abuse and degradation of state land, including national parks, is a direct result of weak governance. The evasion of taxes related to property reduces the public revenues. The arbitrary application of the rule of law discourages investment and constrains economic development.

Weak governance of tenure tends to flourish where the law is complex, inconsistent or obsolete, and/or where officials lack motivation and are poorly trained and paid. Reversing weak governance requires overcoming opposition from those who benefit from corruption. It demands the strong commitment of the people involved, and the development of capacity in order to make changes possible. Achieving responsible governance in land and other natural resource tenure and its administration is not easy, but it is attainable.

## **FAO voluntary guidelines for responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources**

FAO has been working with generous support from the Government of Finland since 2005 on raising awareness of the importance of this issue and has prepared technical guidelines and other materials with partners, including the World Bank, UN-Habitat, Transparency International and International Federation of Surveyors (FIG). As the next step FAO, with the initial support of GTZ, the World Bank, UN-Habitat and the Government of Finland announces a new initiative to assist countries wishing to develop a formal policy response to the problems of weak governance and corruption. This work is intended to result in *voluntary guidelines for responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources* prepared jointly by governments, civil society and international organizations and approved by FAO's member nations, as well as other interested parties.

The work will draw on FAO's valuable experience in facilitating voluntary guidelines such for those for *Responsible fisheries, Forest fire management, Responsible management of planted forests, Distribution and use of pesticides* and *Right to adequate food*. The objective of the voluntary guidelines is to assist countries and their institutions to improve the governance of tenure and its administration as a means to alleviating hunger and poverty, enhancing the environment, supporting national and local economic development, and reforming public administration. The voluntary guidelines will likely be of most use to countries that are making progress in improving governance of society as a whole, as the governance of tenure cannot be separated from governance in other sectors. However, working to achieve higher standards in tenure and its administration is an important way in which a country can improve its governance in general.

The voluntary guidelines will be prepared to support the efforts of countries to improve the standard of behaviour pertaining to tenure and its administration. The work will seek to improve the governance of land and other natural resources, with potentially significant economical and social consequences over both short and long terms. The voluntary guidelines will be gender-sensitive, and address the needs of the poor and vulnerable. It will be an important political initiative that will receive global attention and raise awareness in the highest levels of government all over the world. The voluntary guidelines will be accompanied by a portfolio of supporting documents such as a simple, non-technical explanation of the guidelines, national action plans, training and advocacy materials, and technical papers that provide further elaboration on aspects of the guidelines.

The work on the voluntary guidelines includes:

- Preparation of background papers and their distribution;
- Preparation of a discussion paper on the objectives, scope, content, target beneficiaries, partners and processes;
- Review of the discussion paper through the internet and regional workshops;
- Preparation of draft voluntary guidelines based on input received from workshops, etc;
- Review of the draft voluntary guidelines through the internet and regional workshops;
- Preparation of a revised draft of the voluntary guidelines;

- Review of the voluntary guidelines by FAO's regional conferences and governing bodies;
- Finalization of the voluntary guidelines.

## CONTACT

Paul Munro-Faure, Chief, Land Tenure and Management Unit

Email: [paul.munrofaure@fao.org](mailto:paul.munrofaure@fao.org)

Mika Törhönen, Land Tenure Officer, Land Tenure and Management Unit

Email: [mika.torhonen@fao.org](mailto:mika.torhonen@fao.org)