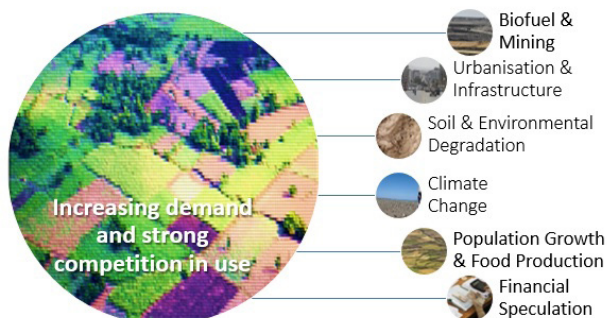


Integrated spatial and land use planning

The Background

Access to land is essential for food security and development. However, fertile land is limited and becoming increasingly scarce. Competition for land as a resource has risen steeply in recent years. Various actors are competing for this scarce resource, sometimes with contradictory and exclusive interests in both rural and urban areas. This competition leads, among other things, to heavy losses of agricultural land and green spaces. Worldwide, around 10 million hectares of arable land are lost every year - an area of around 14 million football pitches. In Germany, more than 70 hectares of land per day are still converted into settlement and traffic areas.



Source: Own illustration.

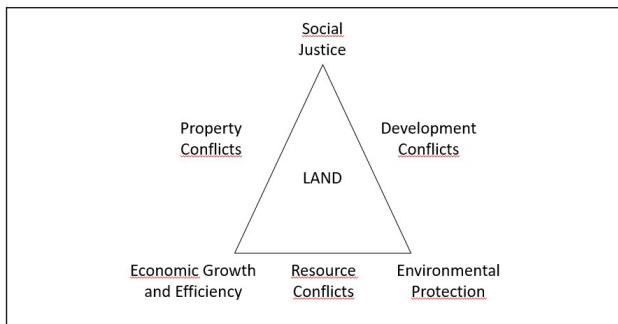
Agenda 2030, the global framework for sustainable development adopted in 2015, underlines the importance of land governance for sustainable development. Land use planning plays a specific role here. With its integrative and transformative approach to sustainable development, its global validity (universality) and its comprehensive system of objectives, Agenda 2030 strengthens international cooperation. Agenda 2030 is guided by five key mes-

sages, the so-called five Ps (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership). With its focus on participatory approaches and local solutions, Agenda 2030 thus provides important impulses for sustainable land use planning - not only in rural areas, but also for cities and peri-urban areas. Land use planning is thus also an essential component of the New Urban Agenda and is explicitly mentioned in Agenda 2030 with regard to sustainable urban development.

Land use planning is understood as an inclusive social process that is based on dialogue and follows grassroots democratic principles such as participation, subsidiarity, transparency and practicability. It not only defines the sustainable use of land, but also determines the methods for achieving these goals. Properly applied, land use planning can prevent land conflicts, soil erosion and degradation, and identify new and potential land uses. In this way, it can lay the foundations for sustainable, socially just and economically sound land use.

The challenges are however wide-ranging and multifaceted. Global changes such as climate change, population growth, urbanisation and industrialisation put land as a resource under great pressure. At the same time, soil fertility is severely impaired by inappropriate land use and can lead to soil degradation and erosion. Worldwide, around 24 billion tons of fertile soil are lost every year. Increasing land concentration is restricting access to land for many actors. The extreme increase in large-scale land acquisitions and leases (see position paper "Large-scale land acquisitions and leases") illustrates the dimensions of global competition for land. In this context, land use planning must ensure that development goals such as food security, economic growth, conflict resolution and

protection of climate, environment and biodiversity are achieved. At the same time, the rights of cultural minorities such as indigenous groups must be taken into account. Their interests are often not only economic or ecological, but also based on spiritual practices.



Source: Own illustration.

A further challenge is that a large amount of data is required for the identification of suitable land areas and their optimal use. Although the methodological-technical foundations and possibilities of land use planning have developed considerably as a result of technical progress in the field of remote sensing and Geographical Information Systems (GIS), the availability and transparency of data remains a central challenge. Current information on existing and planned land uses is scarce and the lack of data transparency in national projects makes long-term reliable land use planning at local and regional levels difficult. In addition, the actors involved often lack the ability to analyse and apply data for planning procedures.

Our position

In this context, GIZ takes the following positions:

■ Spatial and land use planning promotes sustainable development through vertical and horizontal planning processes

Land use planning is far more than planning the use of spaces or community development planning. It creates the conditions for sustainable, socially and environmentally compatible land use that is socially desirable, economically sound and coherent with development strategies. To this end, local needs and interests must be combined with national and international development strategies and measures, thus creating a vertical interlinkage. In order to make these interlinkages sustainable, all interest groups must be involved in the overall negotiations. Important principles and goals of spatial development must be formulated at international, national and regional

levels. Interdisciplinary cooperation and the coordination of all sectors involved, so-called horizontal interlinkages, are essential for land use planning. This is the only way to achieve sustainable planning that reconciles social, economic and ecological concerns. This generally requires long-term support for institution-building and improved cooperation between ministries and authorities in various sectors. Land use planning thus also helps those involved to develop and expand their skills and competences.

■ Spatial and land use planning ensures reconciliation of interests and conflict resolution

Land use planning sets exchange processes in motion at different levels and across different sectors and interest groups. During this process, decisions are made and consensus is reached on the use and protection of private, municipal or public land. The participatory nature of this approach enables the population to make its own decisions about the distribution and allocation of resources. This ensures a balance of interests and supports the settlement of conflicts in the event of competing claims for use.

■ Spatial and land use planning supports the securing of land rights

Participatory spatial and land use planning is an important instrument for linking traditional and modern land rights systems. It should therefore be promoted strongly through international cooperation. Land use planning provides additional security to existing land rights, helps to prevent possible conflicts and supports the avoidance of overlapping planning by different ministries.

■ Spatial and land use planning addresses urban-rural interlinkages

Urbanisation and globalisation are intensifying relations between cities and their hinterlands. The rapid growth of cities is accompanied by a drastic increase in land and resource consumption. At around 40 percent, the immigration of rural populations contributes significantly to urbanisation, especially to the growth of peri-urban areas. Cities are turning into urban regions and are increasingly influencing surrounding rural areas and lifestyles. While land use planning has long been associated with rural areas, the importance of land use planning in urban and peri-urban areas is now recognised. The "International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning" were published by UN-Habitat in 2015 and serve, among other things, as a global orientation for integrated urban and territorial land use planning.

■ **Spatial and land use planning is sustainable natural resource management**

The protection of nature and the environment as well as the efficient use of resources in urban and rural areas is a decisive prerequisite for safeguarding the natural livelihoods of the growing population and for development within the limits of our earth's carrying capacity. Public green spaces and the preservation of ecological functions and biodiversity increase the environmental quality and quality of life. Integrated planning instruments and cross-sectoral solutions contribute to a just transition of energy and post-fossil transformation and thus play an important role in the fight against climate change.

Our recommended actions

GIZ considers the following the most important recommendations for action:

■ **Recognition, establishment and strengthening of rights of disposal**

Aspects of access to land are still under-represented in land use planning. Often ownership is not clarified, leading to land conflicts and illegal transactions. Land use planning and the securing of land rights should therefore be linked, for example through identifying overlapping and competing land uses and claims and finding solutions.

■ **Firmer control of land markets and land transactions**

Without the necessary control of the land market and land transactions, there is a risk of speculation and illegal parcelling of land, which prevents sustainable land use. Therefore a forward-looking and comprehensive land use planning is needed. Its implementation must be strictly adhered to and monitored, and construction and use specifications must be effectively enforced.

■ **Context-specific design of the planning system**

Land use planning must be adapted in each case to the conditions in the partner country. Although the core instruments remain the same, local conditions have a major influence on their application. Such factors include, for example, the statutory versus customary law and its influence on traditional institutions, administrative struc-

tures, the type of governance or the degree of public participation or decentralisation.

■ **Integrate Planning with Budgeting**

Long-term financing of the implementation of land use plans based on the partner's available resources should be part of the planning process from the outset. This is the only way to make the implementation of the plans realistic. Budgeting and land use planning should therefore always be closely linked.

■ **Create legal liability**

Land use planning is increasingly anchored institutionally, yet it often lacks the necessary legal binding force. The aim must therefore be to legally secure land use planning as a process. The land uses defined in land use plans must be enforceable, for example with the help of courts, arbitration mechanisms or local committees. This requires strengthening the relevant institutions and clarifying responsibilities. The role of traditional legal institutions must be integrated as far as possible, as this creates transparency far beyond the local level. These structures and processes can then also provide the foundation for decisions on foreign direct investment and the awarding of land concessions.

■ **Improve cooperation and data availability**

In terms of economic efficiency, it is important to value existing data. For this, data exchange between different departments is indispensable. However, the existing data sets are often incomplete or outdated in relation to fact-based land use planning and must be supplemented by data collection. Data collection requires both the cooperation of the affected population and the various authorities. Geoinformation systems, spatial data infrastructures and remote sensing technologies are important technical tools for data collection, data processing and presentation in the field of land use planning.

■ **Stronger integration of remote sensing in the planning process**

Geodata can be processed, updated and made available by national authorities. However, basic geodata must often first be collected. Geodata provides information on the topography of landscapes, property boundaries and individual objects in a cartographically representable form. This basic data is the starting point for many other administrative and planning processes.

Aerial photographs are increasingly being used for large areas. For smaller areas, the use of "Unmanned Aerial Vehicles", or drones, is an option. As far as legally possible, all data should be made publicly accessible in the form of open data.

¹ GIZ: Land Use Planning: Concepts, Tools and Applications.

² GIZ und GLTN: Land Use Planning for Tenure Security

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