



International Federation of Surveyors  
 Fédération Internationale des Géomètres  
 Internationale Vereinigung der Vermessungsingenieure

## Marrakech Declaration on Sustainable Development

Following on the 2nd FIG Regional Conference 'Urban-Rural Interrelationship for Sustainable Environment' held in Marrakech, Morocco from 2nd to 5th December 2003, FIG and its partners has published the Marrakech Declaration. This, entitled 'Urban-Rural Interrelationship for Sustainable Development' was launched at the '2nd World Urban Forum' held in Barcelona from 13th to 17th September 2004 and at the 'Symposium on Urban-Rural Interrelationship' organised by UN-Habitat in Nairobi during World Habitat Day celebrations that took place from 1st to 4th October 2004. The conference in Morocco was organised by the Ordre National des Ingénieurs Géomètres-Topographes (ONIGT) and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG). It was co-sponsored and supported by the Arab Union of Surveyors (AUS) and the Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI). Several United Na-

tions agencies also took part: the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT), United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The aim of the conference was to shed some light on selected issues of urban-rural interrelations and to raise awareness of this complex topic. It also tried to explain the close linkage of land policy and land administration.

The urban-rural interaction agenda is currently broad and covers a number of concerns. It consists of the exchange of goods and services, people, information, and money that can be provided by adequate infrastructure, such as transportation, communication, energy and basic services. Infrastructure is the backbone of urban-rural development. However, its provision often involves a trade-off with land and natural resources; roads, rail and power lines have a negative impact, especially on rural areas, by cutting up the landscape. Provision of this crucial infrastructure needs to balance the interests of both rural and urban communities to ensure their common future. Due to the different functions given to land by human beings differing land policies and land administration can be observed between urban and rural areas in many countries. However, whilst sustainable land development for both areas is a complex mix of political, legal, socio-economic and ecological aspects, the wellbeing of human habitation in rural and urban spaces can be achieved only by the adoption of common and comprehensive land policy

to support sustainable land management. Many international governmental and non-governmental organisations have accentuated the need for both a common land policy for rural and urban areas and a holistic thematic approach to enabling the sustainable development of land and ensuring human wellbeing.

As with previous FIG publications, some published together with partners like the United Nations, this new publication stresses a specific topic of global interest and importance. FIG, acting as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) wants to contribute to UN millennium goals of building a more sustainable, just and peaceful world. The Marrakech Declaration reflects the findings and recommendations of the 2nd FIG Regional Conference and is intended to support politicians, senior managers, professional organisations and decision-makers in their efforts to enable balanced co-existence of sustainable nature and a liveable habitat. Even though the guidance and lessons learnt are tailored to the situation of urban-rural interrelations in African and the Arabic countries, these can be adapted to the specific requirements of urban-rural spaces all over the world. This includes Europe, where there is currently intensive discussion concerning this unsolved topic.

### Recommendations

The International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) and partners in the Marrakech Declaration recognise the urban-rural divide in different areas of the world and believes that a commitment to addressing this issue is essential for acceptable human living conditions throughout the world. The urban-rural interrelation-

ship for sustainable development is a central theme in the global concept of good urban-rural governance.

The declaration recommends the development of a comprehensive national land policy that includes:

- institutional and government actions required for providing good governance
- land administration infrastructures for control of land tenure, land value and land use
- tools for capacity assessment and development at societal, organisation and individual level.

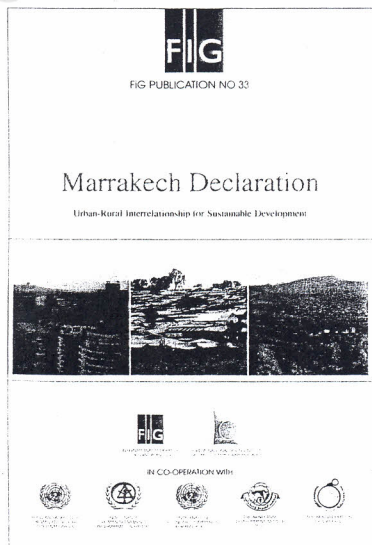
### Role of FIG

NGOs such as the FIG have a threefold role as regards the theme of urban-rural linkages for sustainable development in co-operation with global, national and local partners.

1. These organisations and their member associations and individual members can be enablers; that is they can act as community developers, organisers or consultants alongside Community-Based Organisations (CBOs).
2. They can be mediators between people and the authorities that control access to resources, goods and services.
3. They can be advisers to government institutions on policy changes to increase local access to resources and to provide greater freedom to use these in locally determined ways, including urban-rural linkages.

### Further Reading

Interrelationship in Sustainable Development, City and Rural Area: Problems and Attitudes, Holger Magel, GIM International, February 2004. ■■



The Marrakech Declaration has been published in the FIG series as publication number 33. See [www.fig.net](http://www.fig.net).