



## Project "FLOSS-Cadastre"

### Report of EGM in Rome, 22-23 October 2007

As discussed at the last annual meeting in Korea, Working Group 7.3 intends to explore the possibilities of "free/libre open-source software" (FLOSS) in the cadastral field. The main initiative comes from the Land Tenure group of FAO, which has seen several projects fail in developing countries. The failures have often been related to the software development difficulties with scarce resources and capacities. Learning from others has been hindered by secret source codes. High software and license costs have often led to the use of pirate software. FAO is convinced that a contribution in this area would be beneficial to many projects.

The project is being supported by the World Bank as well as FIG-Commission 7. The FAO provided funding for getting the project started. In a first phase, a consultant has been mandated to establish a scoping paper, of which the intention was to explore the field and make recommendations in how to approach the topic. This scoping paper is of high quality and a valuable basis for continuation.

The first phase of the project has been concluded with an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) in Rome on 22-23 October with the following participants:

- FAO: Mika Törhönen, Paul Munro-Faure, Dave Palmer, Vladimir Evtimov
- World Bank: Gavin Adlington
- FIG-Commission 7: András Osskó, Daniel Steudler
- Bosnia-Herzegovina: Kemal Osmanovic, Michael Wagner
- Bavaria: Johannes Freund
- Consultants: Gertrude Pieper, Gottfried Konecny

The aim of the EGM was to recognize the results of the scoping paper and to discuss the next steps. In order to learn from experiences, two other OSS projects within FAO have been presented at the meeting. One project was in the field of metadata, called "GeoNetwork opensource" (<http://geonetwork-opensource.org/>). A major lesson learnt in this project was that in order to be successful, an OSS project needs healthy user and development communities, and most crucial a core team/platform to make things happen.

The discussions at the EGM concluded that – in an initial phase – the project should aim for the development and provision of OSS tools for the following:

- basic cadastral operations (geometrical software tools to consolidate and subdivide parcels);
- data modelling tools for handling data models and establishing data bases (the CCDM is considered to be a crucial basis).

The realization of any further tools or modules will then depend very much on how the user community accepts the initiative and how their needs will be expressed.

The second phase of the project now will include the carrying out several case studies, where OSS experiences in the cadastre will be investigated. The first case study country is Bosnia-Herzegovina and others from different continents will follow.

In parallel, the following actions are being undertaken

- to look for funding for the third phase (to establish the core team/platform);

- to look for the cooperation with a university; most likely with the University of Otago in New Zealand with a Users' Needs Conference in Dunedin NZ on about April 2008.
- to plan a workshop or conference where the project can be presented and discussed. The World Bank-FIG conference in November 2008 seems to be an attractive venue for organising a workshop on the FLOSS Cadastre and Land Registration, while the annual meeting of FIG-Commission 7 in Verona, Italy in September 2008 could host a preparatory meeting.

Bern, 29. Nov. 2007

Daniel Steudler, Chair of Working Group 7.3