

Perspectives for Multi-Purpose Land Consolidation in Denmark

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Key words: Access to land; Capacity building; Implementation of plans; Land management; Spatial planning; Land consolidation

SUMMARY

In near future, The Danish Government expects to launch the implementation of multi-purpose land consolidation projects. This paper describes the background and possible implementation of this intention.

Land consolidation is a well known tool dating back to the Danish land reforms in the 1780ies. The modern land consolidation law was adopted in 1924. Since then, land consolidation has first and foremost served as an instrument to reduce land fragmentation and facilitate structural development in the Danish agricultural sector through enlargement of holding and farm sizes.. As such, Denmark has a long tradition for land consolidation. In the last decades, focus has been mainly on nature restoration.

In 2017, the Danish Government published a report that mapped the future land requirements in Denmark, concluding that by 2050 somewhat 130-140 % of the present land area will be necessary to fulfill the expected needs. However, an increasing number of stakeholders are already by now competing for the scarce land resources. This situation calls for an immediate effort to coordinate different interests, and subsequently to fulfill the demands of different stakeholders within the same land areas.

This recognition has led to implementation of land consolidation pilots. In these projects, the utilization of land in limited project areas is rethought with the aim of uniting a wide array of interests, spanning from agriculture, the aquatic environment, drinking water, climate adaptations, bio diversity, to leisure outdoor activities. The Danish municipalities play a central part in these projects in cooperation with several

NGOs.

However, land consolidation also enjoys vast attention in national Danish politics. Hence, it is expected that the future will bring a significant increase in large-scale land consolidation projects that include multiple different interests. Such projects are termed multi-purpose land consolidation.

Up until this point the existing projects seem to follow this scheme:

i) Project preparation – delimiting the project area. In this first phase, the circle of stakeholders is identified and a decision about a tentative boundary delimiting the project area is taken.. ii) Land consolidation feasibility study: In this phase, the specifics of the projects are worked out. Possibilities and perspectives are investigated in cooperation with the stakeholders. iii) Multi-purpose land consolidation: Multi-purpose land consolidation is the tool with which the projects are realized. By conducting a land consolidation project, which includes a wide array of stakeholders it is ensured that the different interests at play are heard and met. iiiii) Realization of the project: Physical facilities are established (e.g. new pathways, shelters etc.) and the cadastral borders are corrected.

A range of challenges pose a threat to the realization of these projects. First, the land consolidation projects are implemented in a fully voluntary process in negotiations with the land owners. Second, scarcity in grants is a challenge. Third, there is a shortage of land professionals with experience in land consolidation in Denmark.