

Highlights of the International Meeting for the Hellenic Cadastre in June 1996, Athens, Greece

Dr. Chryssy Potsiou, Lab. of Photogrammetry, N.T.U. Athens, Greece

1. Preamble

In June 1996 an international meeting concerning the «Hellenic Cadastre» was held in Athens. This meeting was organised by HEMCO (Hellenic Mapping & Cadastre Organisation) and Com VII of FIG, with the support of the European Committee. For this meeting, 15 distinguished colleagues were invited to comment on the project.

The documents provided to all participants were :

1. The Proposal for the Hellenic Cadastre (HC)
2. The Technical Specifications for the HC
3. A list of Costs & Fees
4. Law 2308/95
5. The Draft Law for the HC
6. A series of presentations, detailing the implementation of the complete project, by HEMCO representatives

2. Summary of the main comments on the HC made by the participants

The most important comments were made by 16 colleagues, whose names are shown in Table I. A study of these comments suggests the following :

- Some of the comments revealed areas of conflict which will need moderation by HEMCO
- Some were supported by more than one participant
- The participants were restricted to general comments and did not proceed into details as they were not familiar with the whole concept and history of the HC.

Donalt Grant
Paul van der Mollen
Francis Troupel
Jan Polman
Tommy Osterberg
John Leonard
Ian Williamson
Gary Hunter
Jens Wolters
Helena Panaritis
Andrezei Hopfer
Andreas Kotsonis
Kornarakis
Repoulis
George Poulis
Tasos Kouris

Table I. Names of participants

In Table II a categorisation of the comments is given. A few major comments from each category are given very briefly.

1. Aim of the HC
2. General Instructions
3. Legal Matters
4. Financial Matters
5. Administrative Matters
6. Technical Matters
7. Additional Information
8. Corporate Matters
9. Maintenance of the HC
10. Informatics-Data Base
11. Education
12. Availability of Cadastral Information

Table II. Categorisation of the comments

1. *Aim of the HC*

- The purpose of the HC is not clearly defined in the documents provided, and moreover there are no priorities established & no legal measures providing for their validity and implementation. For example an enquiry was made concerning the relative priorities of : building a GIS at national level, improving the land market, or creating a base for a taxation system.
- All available alternative solutions should be forwarded to the Government together with an analysis of their benefits and the respective expected costs of their compilation and maintenance.
- HEMCO would be well advised to follow established marketing practice and assist both the State and the public in understanding what is really needed and how each will benefit from the HC system.
- Top priority should be given to the improvement of the land market.
- An improved deed registration system linked to a geographical base might be an easier alternative, but titles registration is stronger.
- The benefits for both the citizens/users and the State should be equally emphasised.
- The construction of a digital GIS at national level is an extremely broad concept which should be realised gradually, in very manageable steps.
- The HC should be used as a basis for an equitable taxation system for landed property.

2. *General Instructions*

- Results should be made available as rapidly as possible.
- Decision making should be as flexible as possible to account for changing conditions.
- Adaptation and adoption of proven ideas from elsewhere is recommended.
- Unpopular decisions should be implemented rapidly.
- An account should be given of reasons for previous failures.
- Hi Tech isn't everything, education & enthusiasm count for a great deal.
- Find out who your friends are!

3. Legal Matters

- Administrative solutions are preferable to judicial procedures.
- The adjudication period should be as short as possible.
- Safeguards should be adopted to prevent the development of narrow professional interests, the disruption of existing peaceful ownerships and the arousal of unnecessary conflicts between the individual and the State.
- Cadastral Law should be aligned with the general legal tenor of the State.
- The use of each individual Cadastral Number should have universal application.
- Cadastral graphical data should be subject to copyright.
- Registration of transactions should be compulsory.
- Unsatisfactory maintenance of the data should be punishable.
- The Law should allow for partial co-ownership of land parcels but not for their physical fragmentation.

4. Financial Matters

- Recovery fees are advisable but should reflect the total cost of each registration per landparcel and the quality of the service offered by the HC.
- Recovery fees might be maximised by initial government payment & example or by gentle escalation of fees towards delivery of final titles. However, transaction fees should be kept low by all available means.
- The amount involved in a unified system, as proposed, would be disproportionately excessive, perhaps significant savings might be made by recourse to tendering procedures rather than by a system of fixed fees.
- Maintenance of land-use data and its updating will be prohibitively expensive. Thought should be given as to who will be responsible for covering this expense.
- Infrastructure accounts for 1/3 of HC overheads. Care must be taken to curb administrative proliferation.

5. Administrative Matters

- Existing organs e.g. mortgage offices should be incorporated over a suitable transition period into the general system and not be allowed to overlap and thus impede the HC.
- Select experienced HEMCO personnel should be administratively involved, as of now, in both the establishment organisation of the HC and in the maintenance organisation which will rapidly ensue.
- What considerations should be given to allow for moderate decentralisation and local involvement in keeping with the necessary centralised supervision?
- Limited privatisation seems, at present, to be desirable, but measures should be adopted to ensure the confidentiality and accuracy of the data. It is advisable that the responsibility for the maintenance of the data belongs to the State.

6. Technical Matters

- Building and land boundaries should have the same levels of accuracy.
- Control points are unnecessary for the updating of boundaries in urban areas.
- What procedure is to be followed in assigning code numbers to new land parcels.
- The use of Polygonometric networks is passe
- Quality Control mechanism services must be set-up, perhaps involving the private sector.
- Technical matters and accuracy should not assume overriding importance over general considerations

7. Additional Information

- All items accessed to the system must be cost-effective. Core data should be State-produced and further data such as land uses, soil types, etc should be provided by the interested parties.
- Market price considerations should be included but not directly stated.

- Redundant information should be avoided, such as personal details additional to the identity card number.

8. Corporate Matters

- All efforts, should be made to facilitate: information flow, involvement, ease of operation and access between all parties involved in the production of information. None should willingly be left to feel excluded or undervalued.
- All the above should come within the purview of competent public relations and personnel management staff.
- Information about Cadastre should be incorporated into general educational concepts at the most fundamental level e.g. in the schools.

9. Maintenance of the HC

- Provisions and responsibilities for the updating and maintenance of the system are unclear.
- The managerial complexities of such a complex LIS seem to be underestimated.
- What sanctions will be invoked against failure to provide the system with the necessary & correct information and cooperation it will require.

10. Informatics-Data Base

- Data should be recorded using compression techniques and all effort should be made to avoid duplication of information.
- A special S/W package must be developed to cope with the management of the system.

11. Education

- An academic infrastructure, both vocational and theoretical, at all levels from undergraduate to professional, in matters concerning Cadastre, should be developed.
- Perhaps 5% of the Cadastral funds should be devoted to this.
- The establishment of a specific Cadastral Institute concerned with the regulation, education and furtherance of cadastral matters is highly desirable.

12. Availability of Cadastral Information

- A balance should be sought between availability of cadastral information and the protection of individual confidentiality.
- However private individuals will not have to prove necessity in order to justify requests for information included in the data base.