

# Round Table Discussion About African Land Administration Issues

IGN France International is to preside a session dedicated to land administration issues in Africa during Geospatial World Forum, to be held on 23 to 27 April 2012 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The land issue is at the heart of agricultural policies, land use planning in urban or rural areas, management of natural resources and economic development.

Africa is increasingly aware of the underlying economic and social issues related to this topic and is beginning to see the need to define land administration policies while considering their specific needs and contexts.

Given the expertise that IGN France International has acquired in Africa in the land field, Nathalie Marthe Bismuth, general manager of the French IGN's (National Institute of Geographic and Forest Information) export subsidiary, will preside the session devoted to land administration issues in Africa. Her purpose will be to insist upon the fact that even though geographic information can be useful to the field's professionals, it is crucial to not focus solely on the technical aspects of land projects. The lack of or poor quality of cartographic reference data is the first hurdle opposing the success of sustainable land projects that correspond to the reality in the field. The lack of land titles, the deterioration of documents and the storage of official documents in poor conditions are also seen as challenges that cause numerous delays in transactions, fraud and conflicts that can hinder investments and directly impact the public's faith in the system and thus the country's productivity.

Nathalie Marthe Bismuth will point out that a technically successful project is not at all useful if the administrative staff does not learn how to use the new tools that are implemented or if the beneficiaries, both the general public or professionals, are not regularly informed of the new steps involved in the process.

Finally, her speech will present the opportunity to highlight that the land field requires a global approach that involves technicians, lawyers, administrative staff, the general public and most importantly political leaders because they are the ones who must provide the momentum needed to incite changes and carry out reforms.

Her speech will be illustrated by several projects in this field that IGN France International has led in Africa or elsewhere. In Namibia, for example, the company developed a land assessment application for the ministry in charge of land issues. In Serbia, IGN France International developed and delivered an IT application for the automatic calculation of real estate values to the Serbian Ministry of Finances.

Over the course of this round table discussion, representatives from several African countries such as Rwanda, Namibia, Morocco and Tanzania will report on their different experiences.