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Land Planning and development of land resources involving all land stakeholders

Land-management by surface-dedication- and –development plans lies in the hand of the more than 2000 municipalities in Austria (local level). Due to the fact that there is no uniform law for biological land-protection and land management the competent authorities are federal as well as regional. The Austrian Conference for Spatial Planning was established to coordinate federal and regional interests.

On the basis of a voluntary agreement meetings of representatives of the Federal Chancellery, of the Federal Ministries, of the Federal Regions, of the Cities Association and of the Municipalities Association as well as representatives of the so-called Social Partners (Austrian Chamber of Agriculture, Austrian Economic Chamber, Federal Chamber of Labour, Austrian Federation of Trade Unions) are organized. The federal authorities are responsible for the legislation and execution of land protection in the context of forest-, water-, air pollution control-, waste management-, decontamination of contaminated sites- and mountain-law as well as in the context of trade and industrial regulations. Concerning land protection in the context of e.g. the agricultural settlements law and the plant protection law the federal authorities set the basic legislation and the regions are responsible for executive laws.

The regions are fully responsible for the central instruments of land management as spatial management laws, nature conservation laws and laws concerning housing development aid. Further planning is no major issue in this field at the moment. The involvement of stakeholders is governed by the already mentioned legal provisions.

Policies and laws to guarantee land and water use rights and legal security of tenure; strengthened role of land administration system

Since the 19th century the right to property is a fundamental principle of the Austrian legal system. The cadastre of land in Austria dates back to the time of the 18th century, with further developments up to the use of modern systems of ortho-photography and other remote sensing techniques integrating a full coverage of the territory with a digital cadastre map giving both widespread access to land use and ownership information as well as security of land ownership. Legal security of tenure and land-ownership is given by the system of the land register also covering the whole territory. Water use rights are determined in accordance with the federal water rights act ("Wasserrechtsgesetz").

Development and use of land-use indicators and related monitoring systems

Detailed land use descriptions are partially included in the cadastre mentioned above and in GIS applications used both for the implementation of agricultural support systems and for other uses. Additionally at a more global level, the CORINE land cover system was established at European level to coordinate information on the state of the environment in Europe for land use.

Strengthened information systems and use of GIS for integrated planning and management of land resources

In the context of integrated planning and management of land resources GIS integrates the information of land use and soil and enables the procedures and methods for systematic capturing, storing and managing data and associated attributes which are spatially referenced. GIS is used both by federal and Laender authorities to support planning and policy implementation.

One major application is within the administration of area-related agricultural payments especially in the field of agro-environment measures and compensatory allowances for

farmers in mountainous and other less favoured areas and areas falling under restrictions of use for environmental and nature protection reasons e.g. the NATURA 2000 network established in Europe.