



LANDac ANNUAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE  
**4-5 July 2019**

LAND GOVERNANCE IN TRANSITION  
How to support transformations that  
work for people and nature?

## **CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

**Theme 7:**  
**Land Governance and New Technologies**

## **PANEL**

### **Uniting global and hyper-local data for land**

*Rory Bowe (TIMBY) & Kate Dodgson (Data Science Initiative)*

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Lots of global data sets are now available to help us both assess and predict when land violations will happen, to name a few: The Land Matrix, Global Forest Watch, Moabi, MapHubs, high temporal and spatial satellite imagery from places like Airbus and Planet Labs and more.

These are incredible resources, but we advocate that they can be even more powerful if they are put into packaging that works for stakeholders on the ground.

TIMBY (This is My Backyard) is a set of digital tools that equips local groups working on land-based issues with global data, empowering them to do more effective monitoring. This data can then be fed back through channels of influence (paralegals, policy makers, government and journalists) for impact. Hague Data Science Initiative and Jusi.Py are exploring how machine learning can be used to predict vulnerability to land-grabbing. This tool could be used by NGOs in their programming and research, and by ethical investors to assess risk for land purchases.

This panel will discuss the tools and technologies being used both on the global and hyper local levels for land issues and strategies to make them work more effectively together. Discussion will also cover the importance of including local groups (who often are in offline areas and have limited digital literacy) in evidence gathering, not only technically but also ideologically.

*This session does not invite abstract submissions, yet welcomes active participation.*

## **INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP**

### **Land Lost In Translation: Interactive workshop**

*Lisette Meij, Land Portal Foundation (& discussing with Jean du Plessis, GLTN)*

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Land is a topic that is debated in many languages, across different (academic) disciplines and in all parts of the world. Furthering our collective agenda, sharing and learning from knowledge and perspectives from other contexts or transitioning technological innovations from one country to the other is complicated by - among many other aspects - language and terminology barriers. Many attempts have been made in the past to find common definitions and terminologies for any and all issues related to land, but a wide consensus or adoption has never been reached. Understandably so: one can only imagine the heated and controversial discussion to reach agreement on what we mean exactly when we use the word 'property'. It is a daunting and arguably an impossible task to reach global consensus.

We would like to argue though that terminologies and land concepts can be standardized without needing to reach a consensus on each definition or way to name a particular land concept. Land is different from context to context, thus so is its terminology. Rather than trying to harmonize all difference in one concept or definition, we propose to embrace and highlight the richness of these differences. There is no need to find one accepted phrase or definition of 'property', but highlighting the various different ways it is used across the world, will further our collective understanding and awareness of the many nuances behind this one concept.

Within the sphere of research repositories and among librarians, the notion of a 'standard vocabulary' has been around for many years. For agricultural research, FAO's agriculture vocabulary, AGROVOC, is a commonly accepted and widely used vocabulary for any concept relating to agriculture. The technical infrastructure behind such a standard vocabulary allows for integration of all these nuances of a concept into one concept with an infinite number of translations (more than one per language), definitions and relationships between terms. Think of only how many ways we know to name a certain plant or crop! The FAO has offered this infrastructure to the land community, to enrich, enhance and organize the land terms within this agriculture vocabulary to make it more useful to the land sector.

The Land Portal would like to facilitate an interactive workshop, together with partners and anyone who is interested to help us build a hierarchy, assess the 'inheritance' of concepts and translations from AGROVOC and build a practical tool for the land sector - to be used in apps, data repositories or as a reference tool - while embracing land issues for what they are: extremely rich, diverse and different in each context.

Conference theme: Consultation, advocacy and access to justice

Potential speakers: Land Portal, Jean du Plessis (GLTN)

*This session does not invite abstract submissions, yet welcomes active participation.*

## **INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP**

### **New Responses to New Challenges: A Land Technology Sandbox**

Organiser: Tim Robustelli, Program Associate, Future of Property Rights Program at New America

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Despite significant technological advances over the last decade, a quarter of the world's population still has insecure property rights. In the past, recording rights relied on labor-intensive methods carried out by a tiny caste of licensed professionals. Consider Uganda, where 15 million land parcels are unregistered: it would take the country's few dozen licensed surveyors more than 1,000 years to finish the job. But with modern technology, making quick, accurate maps, and creating trustworthy documents is no longer rocket science. The technology is here, yet it's not being used. Why?

One reason is the fundamental disconnect between policymakers and technologists. Actors in the land governance space—often lawyers, policymakers, and economists—may not have experience with emerging technologies. At the same time, many technologists fail to understand political and infrastructure challenges, and so their technologies are not as useful as they claim. This leads to a cycle of mistrust and cynicism.

Breaking this cycle requires an informal environment in which these two groups can freely converse and ask questions—a sandbox, if you will. In this low pressure setting, land administrators can tinker with tech toys, and the technologists can ask questions that may feel basic to political scientists. We plan to convene such a sandbox for the LANDac Annual International Conference 2019.

During this interactive session, three technologies will be introduced through lightning talks, and then participants will break into groups to demo the tech on a land-related use case, finally coming together to discuss the tools' strengths and limitations.

Presenters will include:

- Anne Girardin, Cadasta (Mobile Mapping Platform)
- Riccardo Sibani, ChromaWay (Blockchain)
- Walter Volkmann, Micro Aerial Projects (Drones)

Our goals include a better understanding of the technologies by policymakers; a better understanding of institutional and regulatory constraints by technologists; and demonstration of a workable sandbox model that can be scaled in other environments and used to approach communities in the field.

[This session welcomes abstract submissions.](#)