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Message from the Land Portal Team Leader



Dear Friends,

The COVID-19 crisis has made 2020 the most challenging year in our lifetime. It has demonstrated the need to ensure that sustainable and equitable land governance remains a priority on the international agenda. The pandemic also underscored the importance of digital platforms for both maintaining access to data and information and providing a space people can trust.

Over the past few months, the Land Portal Foundation, as a totally digital organization, pivoted to this new reality and provided innovative solutions to continue engagement of the land sector and beyond through **dynamic webinars** and **virtual conferences**. We are grateful for the confidence of so many partners in the Land Portal as we strive to elevate the voices of land stakeholders around the world.

Strong from the positive feedback of our users and partners - most of whom see the Land Portal as a source of innovation in the land sector - we have continued to make progress on the implementation of the **Land Portal's current strategy "Inform Open Debate"**, which provides the framework for our work. The Land Portal serves to inform the land sector by improving documentation, mapping and monitoring of

land governance and providing data, structured information, tools and services. The Land Portal is free and open to everyone and contributes to make land information more open and democratic. To the nearly 50,000 visitors who visit the **Land Portal** every month - most of which from the Global South - we want to say "stay tuned for the launch of our new 36 country portfolios, with a new compelling design and new content produced with the support of the Land Portal's **Local Knowledge Engagement Network**.

We democratize the information ecosystem by making it more open and supporting the creation of standards-based data infrastructure while building the capacity of information providers to manage land information. In partnership with FAO we recently launched **LandVoc 2.0** - the Linked Land Governance Thesaurus and established a **community of experts** to guide this work. Another recent highlight is the **State of Land Information in South Africa** report, which is the culmination of 2 years of investigation together with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in South Africa to unveil the country's land data ecosystem. In partnership with the **Global Data Barometer** in 2021 we will launch a land Module which will be offering a global analysis of policy and practice around responsible re-use of data. In 2021 we will also be working together with the Open Data Charter and GIZ to co-develop an **Open Up Guide on land** that identifies specific datasets that governments should make available as open data.

Finally, we promote, inform and enrich the global debate on key land issues, focusing on raising the visibility of national, regional and international partners. Together with a wide range of partners, we collaborated on two series of webinars focused on the impact of COVID-19 on land governance. The **Effect of COVID-19 on Indigenous People's Organizations and Local Communities** as well as a webinar series and discussion on the **Land Rights Implications of COVID-19** proactively collected anecdotes of the impact of this crisis and how to define a path forward. In support of LANDac, we facilitated the **LANDac Online Encounter 2020**, creating a

dynamic virtual conference in lieu of this important annual event.

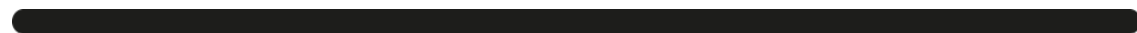
After 11 years of accompanying the Land Portal, Leon Verstappen, the Chair of our **Board of Directors** has stepped down. Leon is responsible for the Land Portal becoming an independent organization, leaving us with a strong legacy of transparency, participation and collaboration. We are sincerely grateful for his contributions and dedication to the success of the Land Portal. We also welcome three new members of the Board to the Land Portal: Professor Jaap Zevenbergen from the University of Twente, Chris Addison, an ICT and knowledge management expert, and Dr. Elizabeth Daley, a tenure specialist. The Board has elected Tim Fella as the new Chair of the Land Portal Foundation Board and Jaap Zevenbergen as our Treasurer.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ) and GIZ have committed core funding to the Land Portal Foundation for the next several years. This commitment will help us to continue our work and to increase our engagement at the country level.

Thanks to all Land Portal partners, donors and users for your continued support and confidence in our work.

Sincerely,

Laura Meggiolaro
Land Portal Team Leader





Interview with Leon Verstappen on his experience with the Land Portal over the past 11 years

Leon Verstappen, who is a professor of private law at the University of Groningen and deputy judge at the Court of appeals in The Hague, has stepped down as Chair of the Land Portal Board, a position he has held since the establishment of the Land Portal Foundation in 2014. Leon recounts his engagement with the Land Portal since its inception as a project over more than a decade and its evolution up to the present day. **Read more.**

Welcome to our new Board members!

Prof. Jaap



Zevenbergen

Prof. Jaap Zevenbergen is a land surveyor and a land lawyer who specializes in land tenure security and land administration. He co-authored many publications on those topics and acts as reviewer and editor for relevant papers as well. After many years at the Delft University of Technology he moved to the University of Twente in 2010, from where he sat on the board of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) and Cadasta Foundation, next to his teaching and supervision. His MSc and PhD students come from all over the world, esp. from Africa and South-East Asia.



Dr. Elizabeth Daley

Dr. Elizabeth Daley is a tenure specialist with a strong track record of research, publications and technical advisory work on land policy and administration. She is both a freelance consultant and a Principal Consultant of Mokoro Ltd, and leads Mokoro's WOLTS project, focused on developing and testing strategies to strengthen

gender-equitable land governance among mining-affected pastoralist communities. Dr. Daley has worked extensively on issues around large-scale land investments, customary tenure, and gendered aspects of land rights. She holds a BA(Hons) in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from Oxford University, and an MSc and PhD in Development Studies from London University's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).



Chris Addison

Chris Addison is a freelance development consultant. He has worked in the ICT and knowledge management for development sector for over 20 years. He has helped various development organizations in online knowledge management. He is co-author of the Agriculture chapter of the OpenAIRE report. Most recently at the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) he ran the blockchain and Data4Ag projects building evidence on the impacts of digitalisation for smallholder farmers. While at the International Food Policy

Research Institute, he oversaw publishing the Global Hunger Index data as a linked open data and the development of the online data portals. He is British and currently based in Brussels.



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