

Land Consolidation in the Netherlands.

Henk Leenen (Netherlands)

Key words: Land management; Legislation; rural development; land consolidation

SUMMARY

Land consolidation in the Netherlands has a long and strong tradition. Land consolidation has been a key land management instrument, not only for the development of agricultural but for broader rural development and facilitating public investments in large-scale land reclamation and in recent decades in integrated rural development with investments in infrastructure, nature and environment.

The first land consolidation law was adopted in 1924. The land consolidation legislation has significantly evolved during the decades with major amendments in 1938, 1954, 1985 and 2007, adjusting the law to the changing circumstances and preferences in society and gradually transforming the instrument into a powerful driver for rural development. With the introduction of the Land Development Act of 1985, the term “land development” replaced “land consolidation”. The 1985 law, which was introduced in response to public pressure, saw the legal establishment of multi-purpose land consolidation. However, the basic system of land consolidation under the Land Consolidation Act of 1954 did not change essentially until 2007. The main objective of the new land consolidation act, entered into force in 2007, is to simplify and speed up the legal procedures for land exchange. In the period from 1924 to 2004, nearly 1.4 million hectares in approximately 480 projects were affected through the instruments of the land consolidation and land development.

Since 2015, the twelve provincial administrations have been in charge for implementation of the instrument. The interest of the provinces in land consolidation is significantly reduced. Nevertheless, land consolidation is a helpful instrument for the actual problems like nature protection and conservation, climate adaptation, infrastructure, energy transition.

The presentation provides an overview of evolution of land consolidation legislation in the Netherlands with considerations for the

future.

KEY WORDS: Land consolidation, land consolidation legislation, Netherlands.

PRESENTER (AUTHOR):

Henk Leenen, Senior Legal Advisor, Province of Noord-Brabant, Netherlands

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