

Challenges in East German States

Andreas Drees, Germany

Introduction

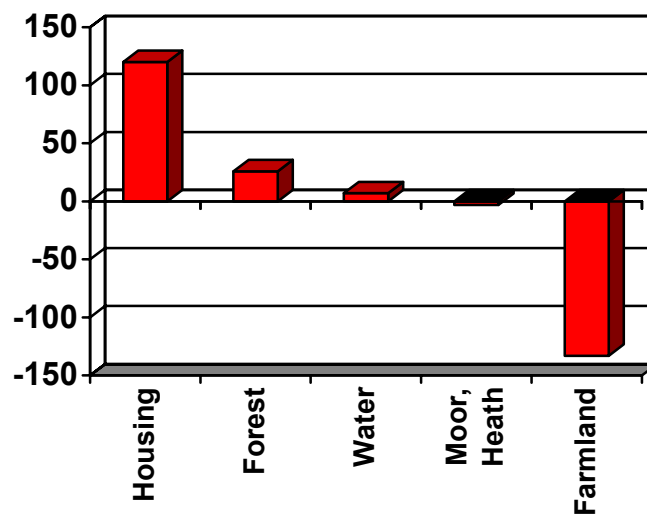
One of the main goals of European policy is to align life conditions between the different countries but also inside the countries between urban and rural areas. 80 % or more of a countries area are rural – even in industrial countries. Life in rural areas still is characterized by farming. The ongoing process of structural changes in the agrarian sector concern the existence of a large number of farmers. Many people give up farming and search for better chances in the cities. Young people leave their home villages for a professional education in the non-agrarian sector and most of them never come back. So the farming sector is held by more and more older people, the villages become deserted and problems of overpopulation in urban areas are getting worse. Without working against the difference between urban and rural areas will become bigger. So alignment of life conditions must happen by developing and strengthening rural areas. This means not only improvement of the agrarian structure but also support for the non-agrarian sector to get better conditions of agrarian production and a sufficient supply for jobs in other fields of work. But not only aspects of work but those of private living are to be considered for aligning life conditions. So infrastructure, environment and housing in rural areas are to be improved, too.

West Germany



East Germany

In former socialistic countries like East Germany people in rural areas are confronted with additional problems. The former state-owned co-operatives didn't consider property in their large area farming. After privatization of co-operatives and property there is a strong conflict between land use and ownership. Some of the owners want to start new farming existences. But mostly the private property is highly fragmented. The property of land and buildings standing on it often is splitted. All this hinders necessary investments in rural areas. Besides this large areas of farm land are consumed by planning for industrial or housing areas, motorways and other projects, in Germany about 150 ha per day. This causes land use conflicts.



Daily change of land use

Solution: Land Consolidation

Many of those problems can be solved by Land Consolidation. By re-allocation and exchange of property state-owned co-operatives can be privatized, new private farmers can be encouraged to start their own business and solutions for land use conflicts are available. With measurements of village renewal and development the attractiveness of rural living can be improved. Besides this the instrument of Land Consolidation delivers support for environmental and infrastructural projects and also for fields like housing, trading and tourism.

Need of Land Consolidation

The need of Land Consolidation is high. As an example: In the district of the Department for Land Consolidation in Neuruppin/Brandenburg with a total area of 643,000 ha 60 % is agriculturally productive land (398,000 ha). For 80 % of this measurements of Land Consolidation are needed. This means 320,000 ha. For a successful support for rural areas the tasks have to be done as soon as possible. So as much measurements as possible are to be driven parallel. And to be payable the measurements must be as cheap as possible.

In the example of the Department for Land Consolidation in Neuruppin/Brandenburg in 10 years since the German re-union 13 measurements with 34,000 ha are in process or in preparation. This is only 10 % of the actual need!

Organisation of Land Consolidation

In Germany Land Consolidation procedures are almost always dealt with by governmental authorities. For technical aspects of surveying often self-employed engineers are engaged. However, the German law does in fact allow for the extensive delegation even of other tasks to qualified non-governmental professionals. A necessary precondition for taking on such responsible tasks is a suitable professional qualification besides the knowledge of appropriate surveying techniques. At the moment there are only a few self-employed surveying engineers in Germany engaged in this field of activity. The author is licensed surveyor and valuer, manager of six municipal boards for urban Land Consolidation and authorized for rural Land Consolidation in Brandenburg and Thuringia. With two examples, one from the beginning of Land Consolidation activities in Brandenburg and one current, he wants to show the possibilities of the instrument and the learning process by handling the instrument.

“All inclusive” measurement “Meyenburg”

The measurement “Meyenburg” with 4,875 ha area and 850 participants was started 1993. After 8 years it was finished in 2001. In this measurement a comprehensive range of projects was carried out. Besides the re-allocation of land and the creation of a correct cadastre, additional aims in accordance with development of land use had been realized. The reorganization of land offers an ideal frame for a furtherance of ecological and infrastructural measures. In the “Meyenburg” measurement many owners of very small properties relinquished their right of allocation of land in return for financial compensation. In this way, sections of land became available and were used, by land exchange, for ecological and infrastructural measures in other places. The available area also was used to increase the stock of existing holders.

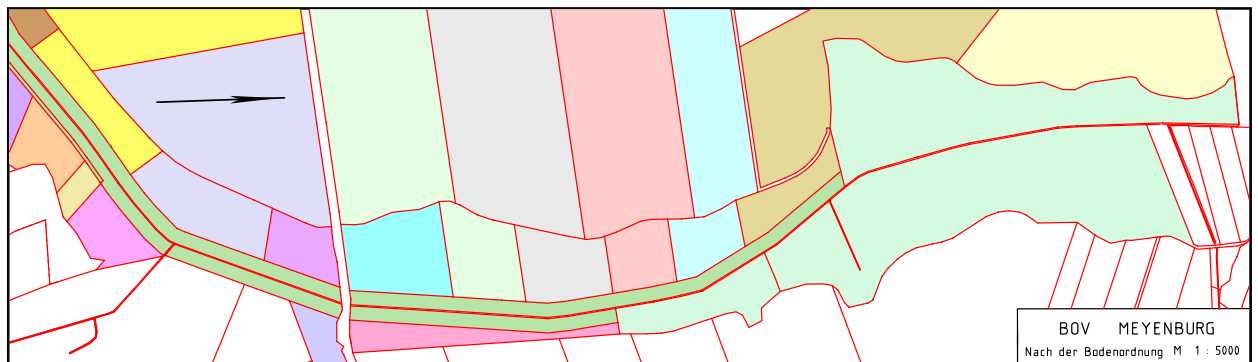
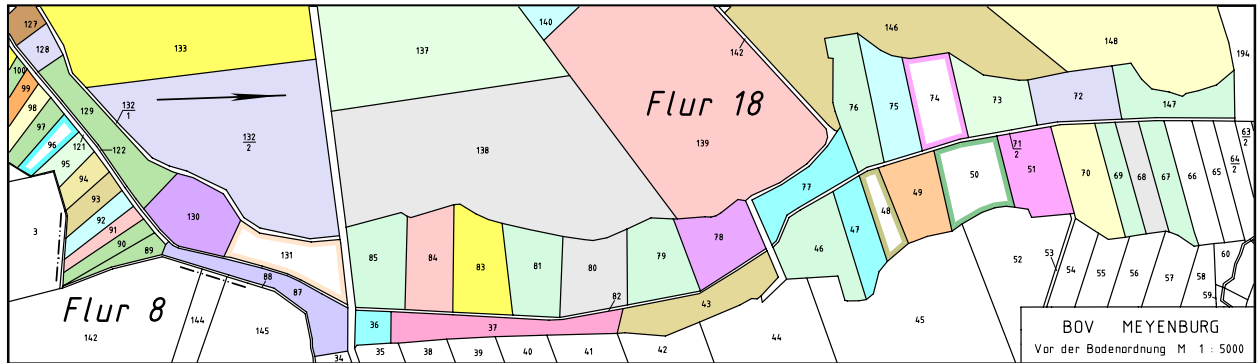
Examples

Village renewal plan:



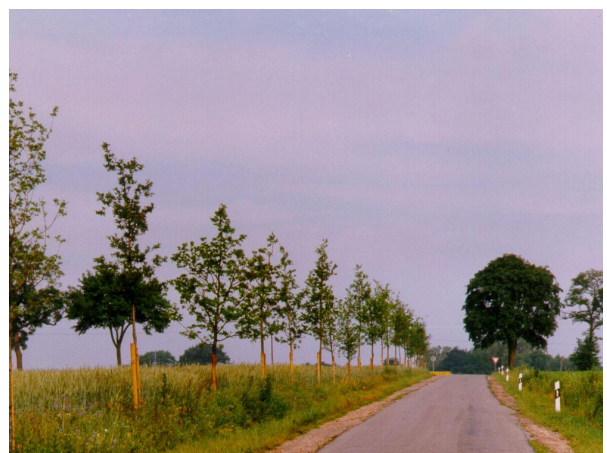
„Stepenitz“ project for nature conservation:

- before: private property up to the stretch of water
- afterwards: supply of area along the bank by exchange and relinquishing of land;
handing over to the municipality for the protection of the stretch of water



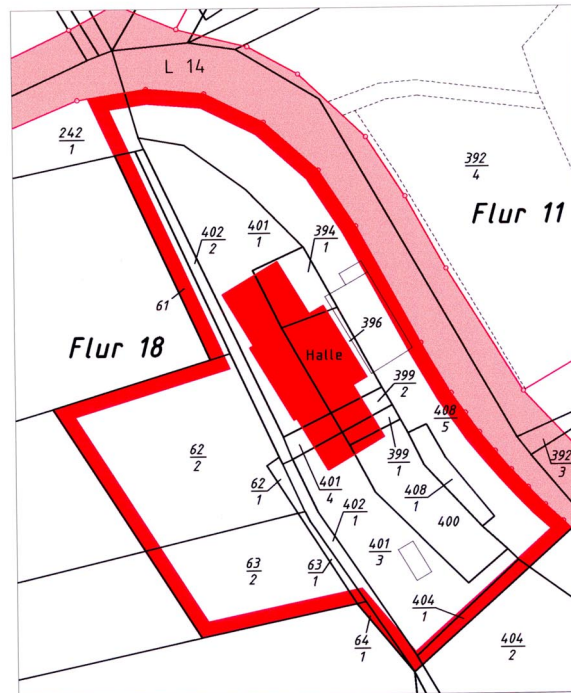
Planting of verges:

- before: structureless agricultural landscape
- afterwards: creation of the landscape shaping elements



New building for a factory:

- before: existing factory built on the property of different owners
- problem: application made for the expansion of the factory building could not be approved because of the unsolved problem of ownership
- solution: contracts of agreement with the affected owners in short-term



Experiences and consequences

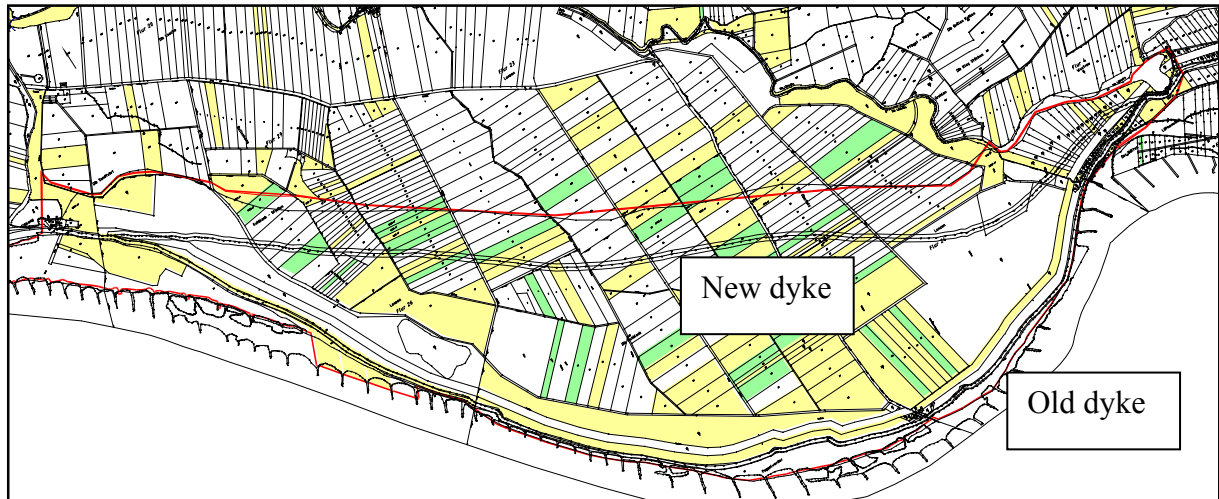
In the “Meyenburg” measurement costs for the management tasks took about 13 % of the land value. The costs of surveying summed up to about 500 € per ha or 20 % of the land value. So in total the costs come to 33 % of the land value. This level of costs made it necessary to think about ways to decrease the costs.

In the experience of the author there is not much potential for reduction of costs in the management part. “All inclusive” measurements require a lot of co-ordination on a high level which causes high costs. But this should not lead to the decision to reduce the range of projects in measurement. Because especially the integration of different projects has most impact on the development of rural areas.

For the surveying part on the other hand it was worked out on the basis of experiences in the field work in the “Meyenburg” measurement that costs could be decreased by lowering the surveying standards without a real loss of exactitude. The borders between different land use were measured with an exactitude of a few centimetre. But the precision of fixing those borders on the spot is only by 20-30 cm. So for next measurements it was decided to fix and measure the borders by photogrammetry without marking them in the field. This lowers the field work on the spot to a minimum – with a precision of about 7 cm.

Lower standards in measurement “Lenzen”

The measurement “Lenzen” was started in 2000. Beside all other tasks of Land Consolidation one main aim of this measurement with 3,600 ha and 520 participants is the shifting of the Elbe dyke to reopen natural flood areas. The surveying is done as decided mostly by photogrammetry. Thereby the costs for surveying will be decreased to only 10 % of the land value.



Conclusions

Land development in former socialistic countries is of high political importance and under pressure of time. To fulfil the demands

- as much as possible
- as soon as possible
- as cheap as possible

a strong administration is needed - assisted by authorized helpers. Just the transfer of previous strategies is not enough. The course of measurements must be tightened. As many steps as possible have to be run parallel instead of one after the other as traditional. The standards must be lowered. For all this land developers with high creativity are needed.

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