

Why (inter)national standards? Why LADM?

Many countries use national standards for land administration (LA) to ensure smooth collaboration between surveyors, notaries, local government, banks, and land administration authorities. So, why consider using an international standard as the basis for national systems and data exchange?

In the past, no such international standard existed. That changed in 2012, when the International Standards Organization (ISO) published ISO 19152, the Land Administration Domain Model (LADM). The standard was initiated by the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG). Note that the term 'land' broadly includes buildings, utility networks, natural resources, water, and spaces below and above the surface.

Since its publication, many countries have adopted LADM and shared their experiences at various FIG events. Organisations such as the World Bank, UN-GGIM, UN-FAO, and UN-Habitat endorse or use the standard in their projects. Several commercial and open-source solutions are also available.

Why has LADM been so successful? It offers multiple benefits. Standards make working together easier. Both within countries and across borders (for example INSPIRE Cadastral Parcels). They are built on international expertise, allowing countries to learn from one another. They also drive innovation, introducing new developments such as 3D representations, citizen participation in surveying, covering formal and informal rights, and combined approaches to land tenure, value, use and development. This helps to reduce costs for the land sector. LADM is also flexible, allowing adaptation to local needs. A good example is UN-Habitat's Social Tenure Domain Model implemented with open-source software (PostgreSQL, QGIS) and now used in nearly 20 countries.

ISO regularly reviews and updates its standards, and LADM has been recently revised. This resulted in minor corrections and improvements, but there were also fundamental extensions. LADM is now a multi-part standard covering not only land tenure (surveying, legal documentation, registration) but also land value (for fair taxation) and land use and development (spatial planning information). LADM Edition 2 is ready to support countries now and in the future, and the first implementations are already being reported.



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Motivated to introduce LADM in your own country? Or want to know more?
Read about the Land Administration Domain Model:



LADM An Overview



LADM In the Classroom