



LAND MATRIX

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BOLETÍN MENSUAL | LAND MATRIX- LATIN AMERICA FOCAL POINT

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Punto Focal



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MEETING BETWEEN THE RED TERRITORIOS VISIBLES AND LAND MATRIX

Managua, Nicaragua, hosted from October 27 through 29, the meeting of the Latin American Network of Land Observatories (Red Territorios Visibles), and the Regional Assembly of the International Land Coalition (ILC). Cristian Venencia, a member of the Land Matrix Latin America Focal Point (LM-LAFP) participated in this meeting with the following objectives:

- Disseminate the Land Matrix initiative among members of the Network in order to achieve greater integration and commitment from all parties.
- Critically analyze the activities performed so far, discuss the next steps focusing on the production of specific deliverables, and set a number of concrete work guidelines.
- Work with Nitlapan, the partner in Central America, and provide them with some training on information retrieval and uploading of land transactions onto the Land Matrix.

- Reach some agreements and establish some common objectives between the Network and Land Matrix in order to optimize the identification of land deals in Latin American countries.
- Present the progress made in the LM-LAFP to the members of ILC.



Mast on Ruben Dario's roundabout, Managua, Nicaragua

DEBATE ON THE USEFULNESS OF THE INFORMATION

A fruitful debate was held on the usefulness of the data in the Land Matrix as input or reinforcement for the local and regional activities of the members of the Network. The minimum size of land deals was a point of contention. In Central America, for example, not many land deals exceed 200 ha. However, the Land Matrix does not accept land deals below that figure. Other requirements of the Land Matrix database were also discussed.



Michael Taylor, from ILC, highlighted that the Land Matrix is supposed to be relatively neutral because information contained therein is used by governments, companies, researchers, and NGOs. The members of the Network are therefore free to decide the use they want to give to the information in the Land Matrix. He reminded the participants that, although the Land Matrix demands very specific information in order to accept land deals, other deals that cannot make it into the database can still be used in local processes by members of the Network.

AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN THE NETWORK AND THE LM-LAFP

The need to perform and disseminate joint studies was also discussed during the meeting. As a first step, members agreed to make an inventory of the different types of land transactions taking place in the region. Relevant cases from the past 5 years will be detected in the 7 countries currently within the Network. The generation of open databases will allow members and the public

to access more freely the information in the platform. Future cooperation will ensure full availability of all the information generated by local or regional initiatives. The financial sustainability of these projects will require additional funding, other than that provided so far by ILC ALC and Land Matrix.

MEETING WITH NITLAPAN AND TRAINING SESSION

A training session was held with Nitlapan on October 29th. During this meeting, members of Nitlapan indicated the problems they face in the region in order to access all the information required by the Land Matrix. The minimum area required to accept a land deal (200 ha) was one of the issues mentioned. Nitlapan is willing to incorporate its local associates in the search for information, something that will give more legitimacy to the data gathered. The University of Honduras, a new member of the Network, will help identify land deals in the region. During the training session, a couple of land deals detected by Nitlapan were transcribed to the form developed by the LM-LAFP and to the official Land Matrix website.



Information about a number of land deals will probably be available in

November 2014. Nitlapan will also contribute in upcoming newsletters with information and analyses relevant for Central America.

If you are in the region and want to contribute with this initiative, you can file a report on a specific land deal by clicking [here](#).

