

# Multipurpose Cadastre: An Under-utilized NGDI Dataset

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## SUMMARY

Cadastre started simply as a public register of land boundaries and later went on to include the various other interests in the land. The twin concepts of planning and management were introduced over the ensuing centuries and millennia and required the incorporation of other available information concerning the land parcel. From this stage, what had started simply as cadastre became multipurpose cadastre. This development substantially increased the usefulness of cadastre and made it much more relevant to the needs of the society. However, it became impracticable to have so much information on one map or to handle and combine too many map themes of the same geographical area. With the introduction of computers into multipurpose cadastral processes it became possible to hold the various map themes in different layers, attach attribute data to them using Database Management System and combine or disaggregate them in a GIS environment according to any desired purpose. But multipurpose cadastre is ordinarily limited to only a single land parcel. In order to derive maximum benefit from multipurpose cadastre it is necessary to take cadastre beyond the single land parcel and to cover the entire country in a national multipurpose cadastre. In this way, multipurpose cadastre can become one of the most widely and frequently used datasets in a National Geospatial Data Infrastructure. This paper explains some of the numerous benefits envisaged from multipurpose cadastre as a fundamental dataset. It discusses the essentials of a national multipurpose cadastre, evaluates the status of these essentials in Nigeria and points out where the prevailing conditions cannot support national multipurpose cadastre. In such situations, it proffers solutions. In addition to technical issues, the all-important question of sustainability is also addressed.