



FIG Working Week 2024

19-24 May Accra, Ghana

Your World, Our World: Resilient Environment and Sustainable Resource Management for All

FIG 2024 Special Session for African Traditional Leaders and Other Stakeholders

Date: Monday, 20 May 2024

Title of the Special Session: The Quest for Good Land Governance in Africa: Connecting the Modern and Traditional Land Administration Systems to Bridge the Chasms.

Concept Note

Land governance in Africa can be summarized as a melting pot where various interest groups put high stakes on how and for what purpose the land is accessed, allocated, and used within the context of local and the larger national prisms.

These mixed and divergent interests form part of the ingredient of land administration systems across all countries in the continent. The interests are however, mostly expressed and manifested in incoherent, uncoordinated, and conflicting manner such that they rob the continent from realization of developmental goals via the good land governance.

The wide chasms between traditional and modern approach to land administration at all levels of governance; the agitation for inclusivity and opening of access to land for women, youth, ethnic minorities and socially disadvantaged groups in hierarchical male dominated societies; the conflicts between indigens and settlers; farmers and herders; communities and nations over physical boundaries and distribution of land resource are becoming more frequent, costlier, and deadlier across the continent.

Many African countries grapple with the fundamental need to respect and secure continuum of land rights especially for unregistered land, the landless, the squatters, and temporary occupiers, however, in the drive to fast-track provision of physical infrastructure via top-bottom, quick-fix planning approaches often trample those rights at all levels of governance. This exacerbates the existing discontent, widens socio-economic disparity, and increase environmental risks.

These systemic failures in land administration system across countries are urgent calls for land professionals in Africa to reevaluate the existing mechanisms for land governance in the continent. Drawing inspiration from wisdom of the ages and traditional ways of land management can provide the magic wand and viable options for countering those challenges and assisting the national governments in the drive for the attainment of SDGs and Africa Agenda 2063.

Land and tradition in an African context are synonymous with ways of life. The WB (2013) estimated that 90 percent of Africa's rural land is held and administered through traditional and communal practices. Nwilo (208) put the figure at 97 percent for Nigeria's total landmass. Unfortunately, national land laws often relegate, and even ignore, the roles of traditional





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institutions in land governance and subsume local land tenure practices under some rigid alien arrangements.

The FIG Special Session will disaggregate and unbundle these issues by building upon the presentations made at the plenary by traditional leaders. The session

- **panelist will explore** the significant roles traditional leaders play over land governance and expose how the often-neglected traditional land administration can be infused with modernity to provide springboards for attainment of a sustainably developed, interconnected, peaceful, and prosperous Africa.
- **The session discussion** shall open new highways for communication and create avenues for partnership between tradition and modernity; traditional leaders and government officials and the whole gamut of interest groups, including representatives from youth in Mayors.
- **Participants** at the special session will have the opportunity to deeply interrogate land questions in Africa and add values to the quest for broad-based, inclusive, and sustainable ways to manage the land for the benefit of the planet, people, peace, and prosperity in the continent.

Aim of the special session

The session aims to build upon the presentation of traditional leaders at the plenary session to create awareness on the need to connect modernity with tradition for a sustainable land governance in Africa.

Statement of Objectives

- Build the delegates' understanding of the critical role of traditional institutions in the actualization of good land governance in Africa
- Develop acceptance and support for land management systems based on fusion of modernity with traditional values and customs
- Identify actual and potential threats to community-based land management system in Africa and offer sustainable solutions
- Stimulate further discussions and develop strategies for promotion of traditional values in land governance system in Africa.

Expected Outcomes

- Stakeholders are expected to become more aware and conversant with the role of traditional institutions in providing good land governance in Africa
- New partnerships will be established and lead champions will emerge to propagate the mission at regional, national, and local levels





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Organization of the Special Session

The panelists and Discussants

The panelists will be made of eight persons

1. Paramount chief Nana Kobina Nketia V. (Ghana)
2. His Royal Highness Chief Chamuka VI Morgan Kumwenda (Zambia)
3. HM King Adedapo Aderemi Adeen (Nigeria)
4. Mayor Adama Sarr (Senegal) to present city government's perspectives
5. Mrs. Godelive Phanzu Bitaka (DRC) to present women perspectives
6. Oumar Sylla (UN-Habitat)
7. Mr. Eric Asembo Nyedimo (Kenya) to represent land professionals' perspectives
8. Innocent Antoine Houedji, Coordinator of Youth Initiative for Land in Africa (YILAA)

Others include the Anchor and the Scribe

The Participants and Target Audience

Government officials responsible for land matters

Traditional leaders

Land professional associations

Women and youth groups

Commissions and Taskforces

CSOs

Delegates and WW participants

Corporate partners

General Public

Academic and Researchers

Media

Method of Delivery

The session will be conducted in form of presentations, panel discussion, and interactive session between the target audience and the discussants. The panelists will brief the audience about their sectoral perspectives **specifically** based on the presentations made by the traditional rulers during the plenary session. The panel discussion follows and the anchor prods and interrogates the panelists. The aim is to collect all shades of opinion and to provide deeper insights on the role of traditional leaders in land governance and to draw appropriate implementation strategies for seamlessly connecting/streamlining traditional and modern systems of land administration across Africa.

