

Land policy of Russia – millennium experience

Sergey N. VOLKOV and Galina V. KOVALEVSKAYA, Russia

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this work is presentation of Russian land use planning as a social and economic phenomenon in the course of its historical development, from the first geodetic actions in the Old Russian state to land tenure and land use planning conditions in modern Russia.

The result of this research is revealing the objective regularities of land use planning development as a basic mechanism of land relations regulation and the main part of land administration in the state at regional and local levels.

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Land is the main national property and wealth of Russian people. During centuries this heritage has constantly grown and served national interests of Russia.

Throughout all history Russian land with its spaces, woods, waters, minerals, fertile fields attracted conquerors, it was a subject of envy, and a cause of political conflicts, land disputes, and even wars.

Defending the vital space at all times, Russia has succeeded more than other countries of the world in land consolidation, expansion and protection of its borders.

From the moment of the Old Russian state formation - Great Russian land, the consolidation of Novgorod and Kiev by prince Oleg in 882 (which was founded by consolidation of Novgorod and Kiev by prince Oleg in 882), and up to our days Russia has struggled for its geopolitical and national interests.

For nearly 400 years, from Ivan the Terrible till the end of Joseph Stalin's ruling, the territory of the country continued to be increased greatly. However, political and socio-economic factors, aggravated in 1980s, have led to disintegration of the Soviet Empire and formation of the Russian state of modern borders.

Nevertheless, for January, 1st, 2013 the territory of Russia is still the biggest in the world. It consists of 1709,8 million hectares of land and 420 million hectares of the continental shelf.

Russia occupies 12,9 % of the Earth's land, that is 9,5 % of all cultivated lands and 21 % of forests of the world.

Our country has 55 % of the most fertile soils of the world, 50 % of fresh water and 60 % of coniferous woods. Besides, there are large supplies of minerals, fuel-energy and other resources in Russia.

For land management, establishment of borders and areas of land properties and land tenures as well as expedient organization of territories, from the moment of the Russian state origin land use planning actions began to be executed reflecting land policy of the country. They were realised by educated people, later on as experts-professionals, united in the uniform state land (surveying) service.

For management of Ancient Russia's lands and councils of land affairs great Russian princes kept around people who were special attorneys and the most educated people that time - "land surveyors". At Prince Vladimir's time (X century) they were in Kiev, used to survey land in Pskov and Novgorod, Vladimir and Suzdal, and later - in Moscow and Smolensk.

Originally surveying was a family business. In the period of principdoms surveying works were carried out by known princely and seigniorial families. Surveying business was hereditary for many of them as well. Land surveying skills and abilities were passed from father to son.

In 1550s for execution of land orders Ivan IV (the Terrible) founded the first state land surveying establishment managing the country's land affairs - the Estate Department.

This establishment was quite big and totaled more than 500 clerks. It also had a surveying school for 50 persons.

The Estate Department had existed in Russia for more than 150 years.

Under the rule of Peter I (1682-1725) considering significance of land administration issues for the state the status of land surveyors was raised. He paid them salary, trained to use the most advanced measuring and calculating devices, opened new surveying and navigating schools.

Empress Elizabeth Petrovna (1741-1761) gave an absolute power to land surveyors for execution of land laws and land surveying works. She *introduced the death penalty for an attempt on life of a state land surveyor* carrying out his functions.

At Catherine II (1762-1796) with a view of strengthening the state influence on regions of Russia and land policy implementation, territorial land use planning (surveying) authorities (offices) were formed and they gave rise to the state surveying service. At the head of this service there was the Surveying Office (since 1765), which had managed land affairs in Russia for more than 150 years and totalled over 500 experts of land surveying. In 1779 the special surveying educational institution - Konstantinovsky surveying school (subsequently Imperial Konstantinovsky surveying institute) was created for the first time in Russia.

Emperor Nikolay I (1825-1855), considering special value and geopolitical importance of surveying (geodetic) business, militarized the state land surveying service and gave it the functions of military management and the state character.

The laws of that time emphasized an importance of land surveying works: *«Surveying of lands is a business not only concerning the advantage and calmness of every owner, but also the State for imperial glory and advantage of law and order in whole State. That's why it is enjoined to do their duty to all people concerned with loyalty and diligence as it is required».*

Under Nikolay II (1894-1917) huge means were allocated for land surveying and resettlement that allowed to change land relations and an agrarian system in Russia during P.A.Stolypin's reform, which was executed on the basis of the Law «About land surveying», approved by the State Council, the State Duma and confirmed by the tsar on May, 29th, 1911.

The V.I.Lenin's first decree, accepted by the Second All-Russian congress of Soviets on October, 26th (on November, 8th) 1917, was the Decree about land, which was realised on the basis of the «Statements about socialist land use planning and transition measures to socialist agriculture», confirmed by VCIK (All-Russian Central Executive Committee) on February, 14th, 1919. Even in the conditions of exclusive state ownership on land (land ownership) in the USSR and relative stability of land relations the Soviet country for a 70-year-old period of its existence recognised the importance of land use planning and land use planning service and made the state status to it.

I.V.Stalin sent land surveyors to Turkestan, Bessarabia, Transcaucasia, the Western Ukraine, Baltic, Siberia and the Far East.

At the time of N.S.Khrushchev (1953-1964) land surveyors were the first at development of virgin and fallow lands in Kazakhstan, republics of Central Asia, the Volga region, North Caucasus, Siberia and in the Far East of Russia. Subsequently, at participation of land surveyors there were scale reclamation works in Nonchernozem area of the RSFSR and other areas of the country.

The head of the USSR L.I.Brezhnev (1964-1982) - who was graduated as a land surveyor - compared land use planning works with «zero cycle in agriculture», making the base (contour) of a future effective agricultural enterprise.

Thanks to Russian land surveyors a new land system in China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cuba, and in a number of East Europe, Asian and African states has been established.

Land use planning actions were also principal in the process of land relations reforming in new Russia, which was carried out according to the «Republican program of land reform on the territory of the RSFSR». The given program, contained the section «Land use planning maintenance of the land reform», was confirmed by the decision of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR of January, 18th, 1991 № 30.

It is not accidentally that among the main awards of our state there is an honorary title «Deserved land surveyor of Russia».

Thus, in any society, as convincingly proved by historical experience of foreign countries and the Russian state, land use planning is the basic mechanism of land transformations. For this reason it is organised and supervised by the state.

Meanwhile, land use planning actions, being reflection of the state's land policy, can play both destructive and creative role. For example, the first head of the Soviet state V.I.Lenin understood that only by new land use planning it was possible to liquidate landowner and church land property and to create a support in village thanks to transfer lands to needy peasants.

In his work «Land use planning and the rural poor», speaking about the essence of Stolypin's land use planning, he wrote: «*Land use planning helps only the strong, but ruins the poors. Land use planning is a chariot in which the strong is sitting and pressing the defeated*».

By land use planning measures the rural community was collapsed, farms and allotments were formed during Stolypin's land use planning (1906-1916); landowner, church, monastic and other forms of land ownership were liquidated during nationalisation of land and land reforming (1917-1921) and collective and state farms were formed in the period of agriculture collectivisation (1928-1937); agricultural enterprises in the first stage of land reform were abolished (reorganised) (1992-1995) etc. At the same time, land use planning in Russia also played a considerable constructive role, especially during the General and special surveyings (1765-1861) when Russian land ownership and land tenure were arranged; during abolition of serfdom (1861-1883); during national economy restoration in a post-war period, development of virgin and fallow lands, agricultural production intensification (1946-1970); at transition to diverse forms of land property, land ownership and land tenure in a new Russia (1992-2013) etc.

However, in all cases in the course of land use planning the territory is surveyed and estimated; as well as there is a description of lands or drawing up plans and maps of a land use planning object; and also distribution or redistribution of land parcels and their assignment to land proprietors, land owners and land users. Later during land use planning works the territory is arranged depending on a purpose and kinds of permitted use of definite land parcels. For this goal dwelling and economic buildings are erected, roads are built, crop rotations take place, places for pastures and mowing are established, gardens are laid out, irrigating and drying channels are constructed etc. Earlier these actions were carried out on the basis of sketches, model schemes and drawings, and later - *on the basis of complex land use planning projects of legal, engineering-economic and nature protection type.*

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actions in the Old Russian state to land tenure and land use planning conditions in modern Russia.

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The world scientific and professional public is familiar with world history of origin and development of land management.

At the same time, Russian land surveying history is practically unknown to foreign readers. According to the author the knowledge of historical experience of origin, organisation and carrying out the state land management, research of various systems (models) of land administration and land management at change of socioeconomic structures (modes of production) in Russia; change of the spiritually-moral attitude to Land - the main source of life and wealth of Russian people, will render the invaluable help in creation of such land system which will function in the interests of all world community and the Russian state, and be based on century-long traditions of careful, rational use and protection of land resources of our people.

CONTACTS

Volkov S.N. Doctor of Economics, professor, academician of the Academy of Sciences
State University of Land Use Planning
15, Kazakova str., Moscow, 105064, Russia
Tel. +7(499)261-93-10
Fax + 7(499)261-95-45
Email: guz-rektorat@mail.ru
Web site: <http://www.guz.ru>

Kovalevskaya G.V. senior teacher
State University of Land Use Planning
15, Kazakova str., Moscow, 105064, Russia
Tel. +7(499)261-76-52
Email: kovalevskayag@bk.ru
Web site: <http://www.guz.ru>