CADASTRE 2014 has originally been published in 1998 as a result of a working group of FIG Commission 7. The working group had the mandate to identify trends in the cadastral field and to suggest where the cadastre might be in 20 years time. It came up with six vision statements on technical, institutional, conceptual and financial issues, which were provocative for some, innovative for others. The translation into 28 languages, however, is testament to its role in the cadastral journey and the commitment of the whole Commission 7.

With the approach of the year 2014, it is a fitting occasion to reflect on CADASTRE 2014 once more. This publication with the title “CADASTRE 2014 and Beyond” not only reviews and evaluates the six statements, but puts them in a present-day context. Twelve authors give their views on CADASTRE 2014, on what has been achieved, on what can be learned from, and also on what is beyond the year 2014. Some contributors point out that the effects of the original six statements will still go on for some more years, but will also have to be amended and complemented by new issues and topics. One author in particular suggests six new questions, which the cadastral community ought to consider in finding answers to the challenges that our societies are facing today. Namely the discussions recently initiated by the UN to develop a “Post-2015 Global Development Agenda” will be very relevant and crucial to follow and to participate in.

In that sense, CADASTRE 2014 resembles a Swiss army knife: it has many tools to offer, from a conceptual as well as a technical point of view, and still provides a sound basis for discussion.
1 THE CADASTRE 2014 JOURNEY

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It is with regret that I cannot be in Kuala Lumpur to personally congratulate Jürg Kaufmann and Daniel Studier on their excellent work over many years in bringing the CADASTRE 2014 vision to fruition. Jürg was the Chair and Daniel the Secretary for the Commission 7 Working Group from 1994–98 that produced CADASTRE 2014. However their contribution was much more than coordinating the working group for the CADASTRE 2014 vision and concept. The resulting FIG report on CADASTRE 2014, co-authored by Jürg and Daniel, reflected many of their own ideas and concepts, but just as importantly showed their on-going passion to better understand the evolving cadastral concept. Thank you Jürg and Daniel for a job well done.

However an understanding of the CADASTRE 2014 journey requires an appreciation of the evolving nature of Commission 7 over a ten year period spanning the 1990s. This period saw the Commission evolve from being European centric concentrating on land consolidation to a global focus on cadastral, land administration and sustainable development in both the developed and less developed worlds. This evolution paralleled the growth of the FIG itself from a Northern hemisphere focus to a truly global organisation with the election of an Australian President, Earl James and an Australian Bureau, the first in the Southern hemisphere and the first in the Asia and Pacific region, in the early 1990s.

Due to difficulties with the Bulgarian Chair of Commission 7 fulfilling his duties, I became acting Chair of Commission 7 in 1992 and was elected Chair for 1994–98. The secretariat of the Commission also changed from a permanent home in Paris to Australia, a change that initially caused some concerns but was welcomed over time. During this period, Commission 7 transitioned to having a global focus on cadastral, land administration, land management and sustainable development.

The first major step was changing the name and focus of the commission to "Cadastral and Land Management." This was accompanied by a broadening of the mandate of the Commission, a major hotly debated in FIG. This was not an insignificant development since it reflected a change of focus from the "old world" to the "new world." The change in name was also reflected in a major campaign to promote the Commission but also to clarify its role and consolidate its mandate.

It is important to acknowledge at this stage that this change and transition would not have been possible without the strong support of the President and Bureau of FIG, and particularly the support and vision of country delegates such as Professor Jo Henssen from The Netherlands and Professor Andrzej Hopfer from Poland, two of the fathers of Commission 7.

Another key step in the process was a request from the FIG Bureau to clarify the definition of "cadastral." This was critical since there were almost as many interpretations of what constituted a "cadastral" as there were FIG member countries. After many discussions spanning several Commission 7 meetings the FIG Statement on Cadastral was approved in 1995 as FIG Publication No. 11 (available in 11 languages). The graphic (Figure 1) that reflects the concept also gained a life of its own and has been universally used.

Commission 7 continued to explore the role of the cadastral in land management, land administration and in sustainable development, together with the United Nations. This resulted in the joint FIG-UN Bogor Declaration as part of a United Nations Interregional Meeting of Experts on the Cadastre in 1996 that set out a cadastral vision and listed a range of cadastral issues (FIG Publications Nos. 13A and 13B). This was followed by the joint FIG-UN Bathurst Declaration on Land Administration for Sustainable Development with the theme "Land Tenure and Cadastral Infrastructures for Sustainable Development" in 1999 (FIG Publication No. 21).

During this period the Commission continued to discuss and better understand the cadastral concept and the role of the cadastral globally. This included a major focus on benchmarking cadastral systems, again an initiative that Daniel Studier and Jürg Kaufmann were heavily involved. This initiative was the focus of the Commission 7 Annual Meeting in Malaysia in 1997 with the results causing considerable animated discussion. The work was continued by Daniel and Jürg with the Commission 7 Working Group report on "Benchmarking Cadastral Systems" being presented to the FIG General Assembly in 2002.

Figure 1: The cadastral concept.
The above are only some of the key reports and initiatives, on trying to better understand the role of cadastres globally. They reflect the changes that were occurring in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s with the move from command to market economies and the role of the European Union in promoting sustainable and market driven land administration systems, with the UN-ECE Guidelines on Land Administration (ECE/HBP/96) being central. It also reflects a change in technology that saw the creation of state and national digital cadastral databases that eventually supported the growth of spatially enabled societies. It was in this context and environment that Commission 7 decided to establish a Working Group in 1994 to research and debate what a future cadastre would look like in 20 years i.e. in 2014. The Working Group was chaired by Jürg with Daniel providing critical support as secretary. It brought down its major report in 1998 at the FIG General Assembly in Brighton UK. CADASTRE 2014 has now been translated into 28 languages. However the concept and vision gained a life of its own and has gone from strength to strength, not least due to the drive and commitment of Daniel and Jürg (www.fig.net/cadastre2014).

Commission 7 continues to research and debate the role of the cadastre in both developed and less developed countries. One ongoing initiative is the Cadastral Template where different countries complete a standardized template so that it is possible to compare and contrast strengths and weaknesses (www.cadastraltemplate.org). The cadastral template was mandated by a UN Resolution at the 16th United Nations Permanent Committee for GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific at the time I was Chair of the Permanent Committee’s Working Group on Cadastre. To date 47 countries have completed the template (www.fig.net/cadastraltemplate/). The Cadastral Template has been jointly managed by the FIG and the Centre for Spatial Data Infrastructures and Land Administration, University of Melbourne, however a huge thank you must go to Daniel Steudler for maintaining the Template and keeping the vision alive. Thank you Daniel!

The above is just a snapshot that gives an insight into how the cadastral concept continues to evolve and highlights the central role that the FIG and particularly Commission 7 has played. This cadastral journey has been assisted by all delegates to Commission 7, past and present and is testament to the commitment of the chairs, office bearers and working group chairs and members, of the Commission. However there is no doubt that CADASTRE 2014 has played a central role in this evolution and in this regard Jürg Kaufmann and Daniel Steudler stand out as the key players providing the drive and commitment to allow the CADASTRE 2014 vision to come to fruition.

Thank you Jürg and Daniel!