

## Cadastral and sub surface infrastructures



In my years as a student, my law professor used to talk the last minutes of his lectures about his visions. One of his (many) wishes was the creation of a law on the registration of underground cables and pipelines. He was not heard. In the eighties however a sort of subsurface registration law came under discussion within the ministries. Finally, a law on the registration of grid operators was submitted to the Dutch Parliament. Before the voting could take place, the responsible minister withdrew the bill, saying that the operators were expected to solve the registration issue by themselves. I must say that the keepers of cables and pipes tried their best to fulfil the requirements. They established five Cable and Pipeline Information Centres (KLIC's) and the saying 'prior to

excavating, always call the Centre' became well known. With the growing number of cables and pipes however, politicians began to worry. By then, 1.75 million kilometers of cables and pipelines were buried in the ground, determining more and more the performance of the economy. Politicians became a little bit nervous, realising that this part of public space was managed totally by utility companies, energy companies and ICT companies, part of the private sector with a profit goal. This subsurface infrastructure was regarded too important for the economy and for social welfare to leave it to the private sector. Since 1 October 2008, a new law has come into force. This new Underground Cables and Pipelines Information Exchange Act obliges grid operators, parcel owners and excavators to notify each other as meticulously as possible in the event of excavation works. It remains the responsibility of grid operators to record exact positions. The KLIC's have now become part of Kadaster, which was assigned to implement the new law. A new electronic system is in place (KLIC-online). I am happy with the new system, as -indeed- also my personal life appears to be increasingly dependent of undisturbed underground supplies. I can recommend it to other countries. ■ PAUL VAN DER MOLEN



Puerto Cortés

## Collaboration in Central America

Recently an agreement was signed between the Municipalities of Tela, Omoa and Puerto Cortés in Honduras, Puerto Barrios in Guatemala, and the Netherlands' Kadaster. In the cross-border coastal zone of Honduras and Guatemala, there is much pressure on land. Economic (tourism), environmental and social interests have to be managed carefully, making good land administration indispensable. The activities to be executed will lead towards an improvement of the existing registry and cadastre. A second objective is the improvement of the regional planning. During the coming years Kadaster will assist the municipalities in the processes of registration, mapping and updating of the existing rights, automation, land tax and regional planning. The project is financed by the European Commission and has a duration of four years.

■ MARTIN WUBBÉ

## Russia online

During a Dutch trade mission to Moscow last year, the Minister for Economical Affairs agreed to support the Russian Ministry of Economical Development in the development of information products for the Russian society. Under this agreement, two projects relating to cadastre and land registration were defined. Before surveying new boundaries in the field, Russian surveyors need information on names of owners of rights and existing cadastral boundaries. This can be obtained from Rosnedvizhimost, the organisation responsible for cadastre and land registration. For this purpose, surveyors need to physically go to the office and collect this data. In order to provide efficient access of the data through the Internet, Federal Cadastral

Centre Zemlya is building such an online application. Kadaster experts prepared the architecture for the IT-solution and will advise during the follow-up activities. At present Russian law allows very limited access to ownership data. A part of the assignment is also to propose changes to the law so that all private citizens can acquire information on land rights. A second project is the development of a spatial data infrastructure. Geo-information products and services need to be defined, for a broad platform of users. This information can then also be made available online, ideally via the same web shop as the cadastral information.

■ RIK WOUTERS