

# **Agenda 21 – The Challenge to Sustainable Local Authorities: Conclusions of a Countrywide Evaluation in Bavaria**

**Rolf MEINDL and Holger MAGEL, Germany**

**Key words:** local Agenda 21, evaluation, civil society, sustainable development

## **SUMMARY**

Since the Earth Summit in Rio 1992 local authorities have been in charge of for the successful implementation of sustainable development policies. In Johannesburg, at the conference Rio + 10 in 2002 the aims of sustainable development have been affirmed. The role of the surveying profession by the implementation of sustainable development is described in the "FIG Agenda 21". The surveying profession plays its part through, inter alia, the planning and management of land, sea and water resources, the surveying, and registration of real property, and the handling of geographic information.

The evaluation researched all Bavarian local authorities with and without Agenda 21 processes. The goal of the evaluation was to review the local Agenda 21 and to make suggestions for a conceptional further development.

In order to implement the order of Rio and Johannesburg all participants have to change one's views. The local Agenda 21 is a good chance for economy and particularly citizens to get involved in political decisions as partners. This means for the elected municipal officer, the administration and the citizens to change the perception and understanding of their work. Civil society is the new approach.

# Agenda 21 – The Challenge to Sustainable Local Authorities: Conclusions of a Countrywide Evaluation in Bavaria

Rolf MEINDL and Holger MAGEL, Germany

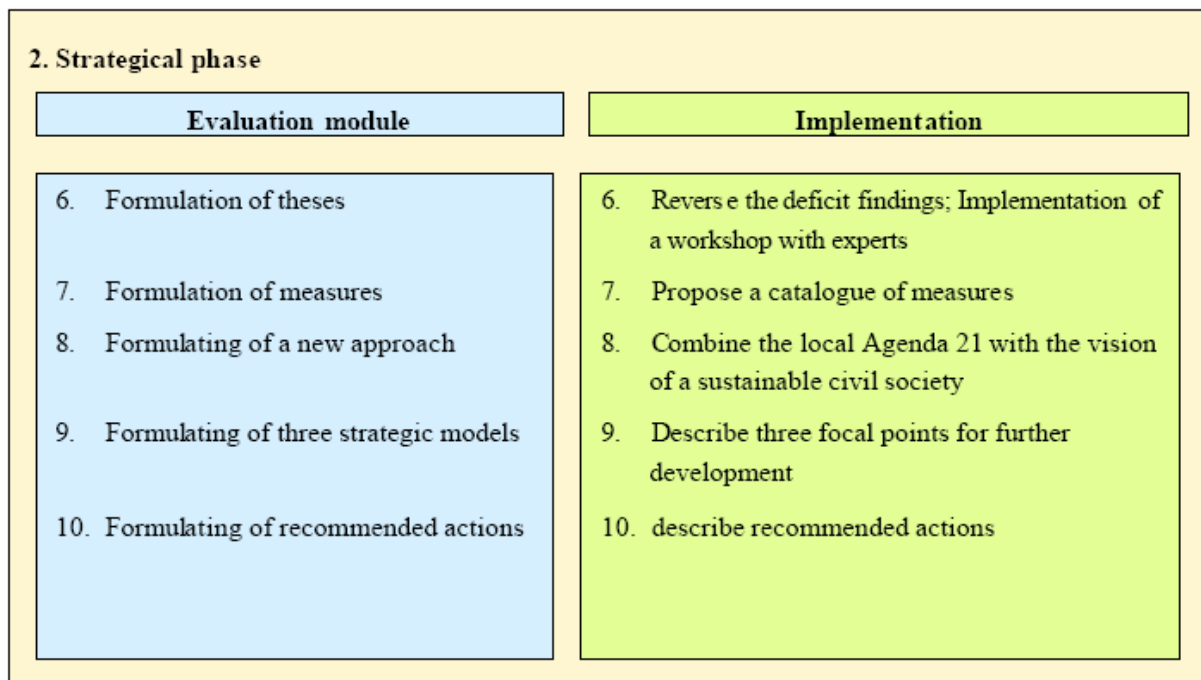
## 1. BACKGROUND

Since the Earth Summit in Rio 1992 local authorities have been in charge of for the successful implementation of sustainable development policies. In Johannesburg, at the conference Rio + 10 in 2002 the aims of sustainable development have been affirmed. The role of the surveying profession by the implementation of sustainable development is described in the "FIG Agenda 21". The surveying profession plays its part through, inter alia, the planning and management of land, sea and water resources, the surveying, and registration of real property, and the handling of geographic information. More than 800 local authorities in Bavaria have started with a local Agenda 21 process. As result of the complexity of Agenda 21 its development was totally different. But there often is no kick left. Often the impetus of the time of commencement is long gone. In many processes we can find symptom of fatigue as well as wear and tear. The impact to a sustainable development shall often deem to be low.

## 2. METHOD

The evaluation researched all Bavarian local authorities with and without Agenda 21 processes. The goal of the evaluation was to review the local Agenda 21 and to make suggestions for a conceptional further development. The results of the evaluation based on guided interviews of 40 experts and standardised questionnaires. These questionnaires were sent to all local authorities (more than 2000) in Bavaria. In order to obtain the required informations to fulfill the research objectives a case study in seven selected local authorities was carried out. Finally the results were discussed in a workshop.

1. Analytical phase	
Evaluation module	Implementation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Analysis of the starting point</li><li>2. Analysis of the evaluation of the local Agenda 21</li><li>3. Analysis of structure and process</li><li>4. Analysis of factors of performance</li><li>5. Editing of the findings</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Analysis of relevant literature</li><li>2. Interview of experts</li><li>3. Interview of all local authorities with questionnaire</li><li>4. Analysis of seven local authorities</li><li>5. Summary of the findings</li></ol>

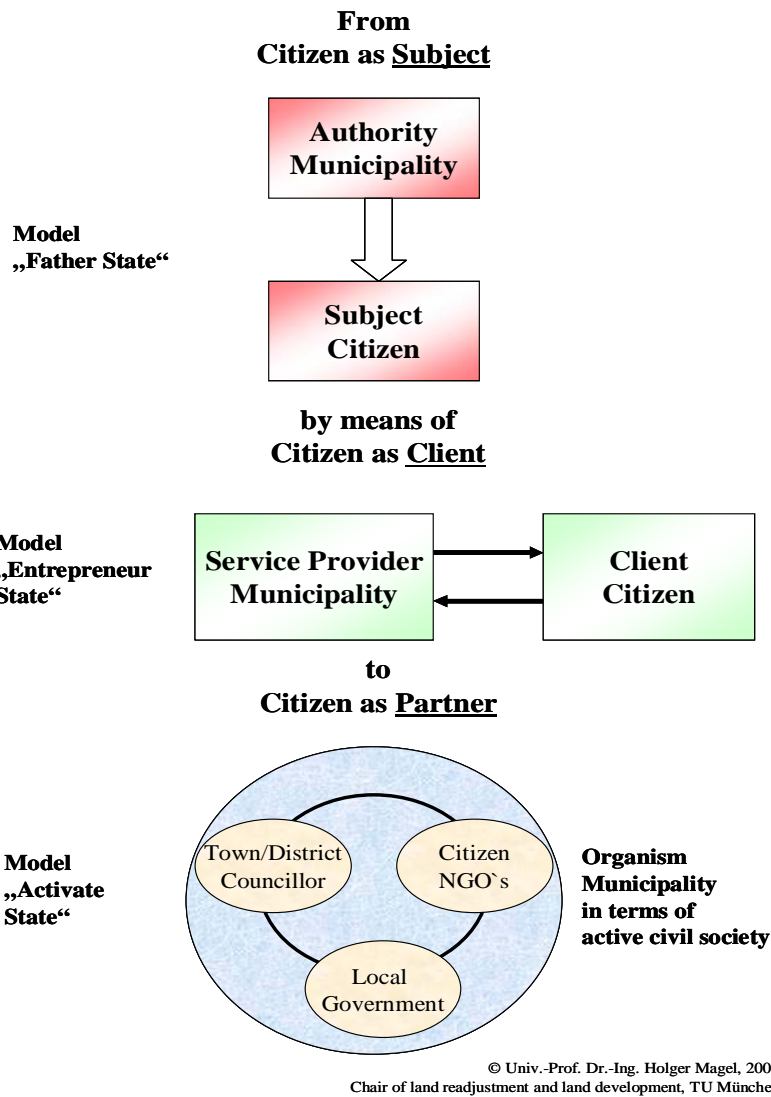


Design of the evaluation, Heintl 2004

### 3. RESULTS

What do the results mean for the local authorities? In order to implement the order of Rio and Johannesburg all participants have to change one's views. The old model of policy of the "Father State" and also the following model "Entrepreneur State" have retired. For the accomplishment of the challenges like the disastrous financial situation, excess of age of society, continuous shifting of burden on the municipalities etc. all forces are to be bundled, in order to animate the new community between state and society, demanded by Alois Glück (Glück 2004). The local authorities have to create new opportunities with active offers for consultation and communication for the common organization of the future. They have to activate and use the existing potential of the citizens and honorary commitment in the best possible way. Representative decision forms have to be supplemented with direct democratic and cooperative forms of the democracy (Bogumil, Holtkamp 2002).

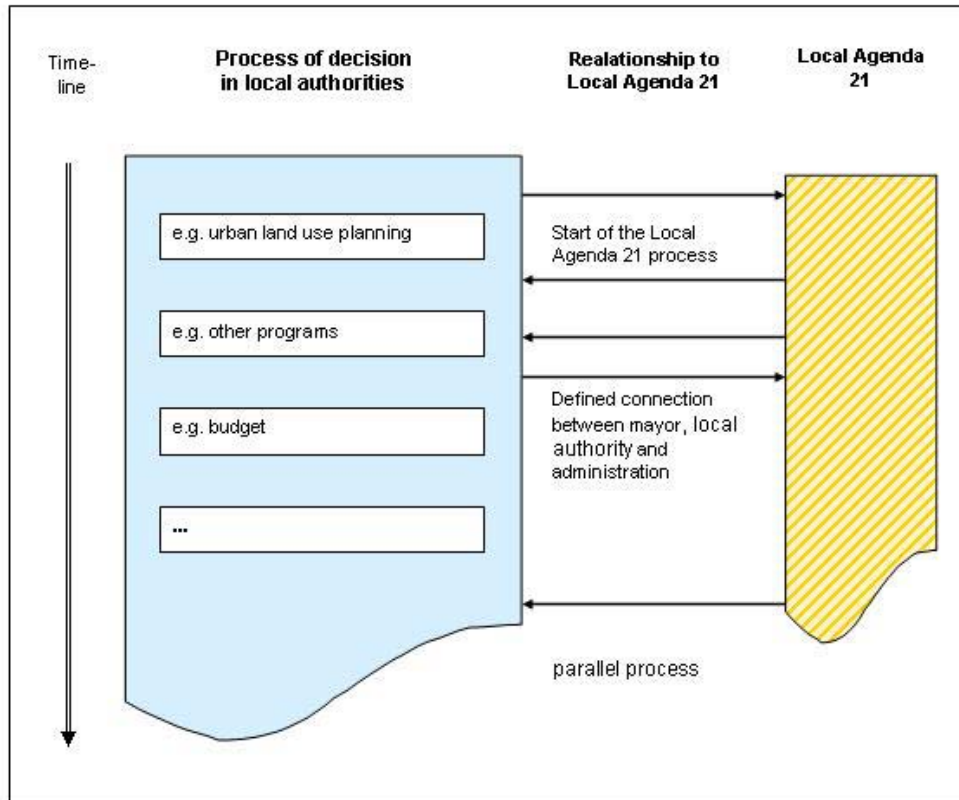
The local Agenda 21 is a good chance for economy and particularly citizens to get involved in political decisions as partners. This means for the elected municipal officer, the administration and the citizens to change the perception and understanding of their work. Civil society is the new approach.



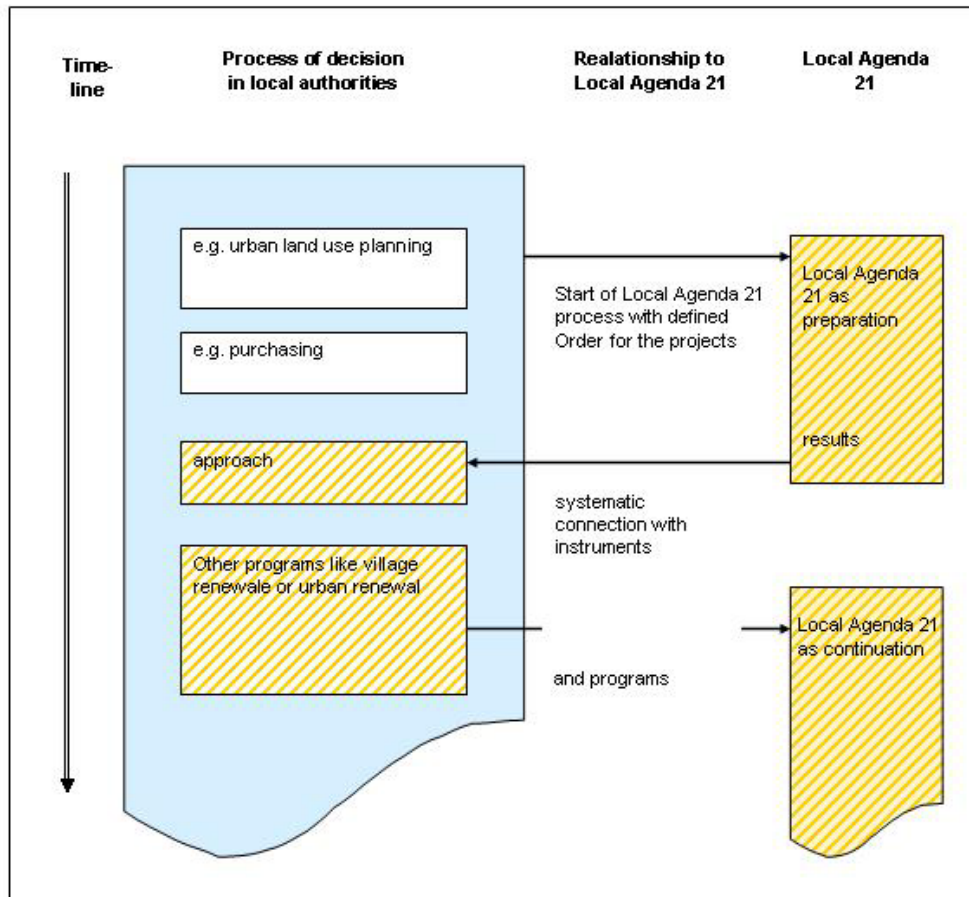
Local Agenda 21 as an ethically founded process and not only for a short time can be realised by building a clear profile (Magel 2004). Agenda Transfer, the agency for sustainable development of North Rhine-Westphalia came to similar results. The forum local agenda 21 in North Rhine-Westphalia treated the topic in December 2003 under the slogan "Quo vadis local agenda 21 - today and in the future?" (Agenda Transfer 2004).

The research team developed three strategic models. They give different answers to the question, which instruments and goals of the local agenda 21 have to be developed to create this clearer profile. The local agenda 21 has a different role in each case and receives a different profile. In all models the approach of sustainable civil society builds the basic. The differences of the models are defined by the role of the participants and their interaction as well as by the value of sustainable aims and by the co-operation structure in the local authorities.

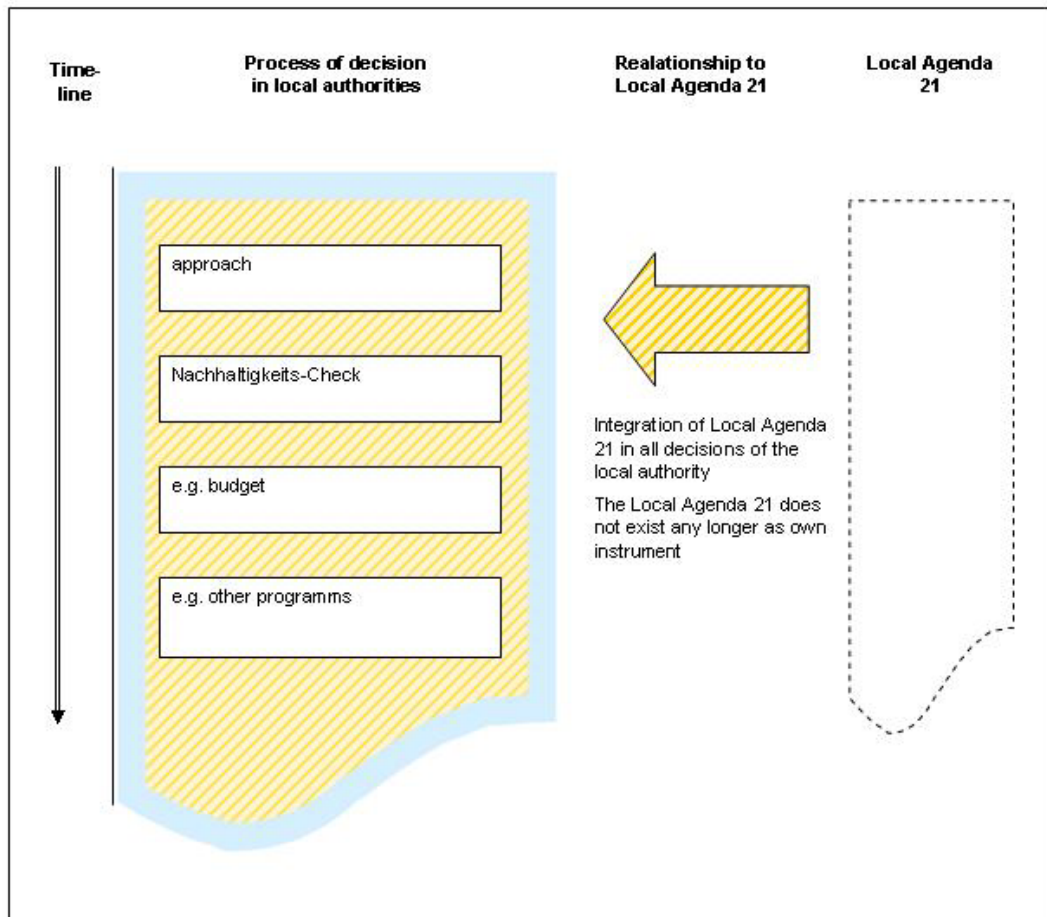
The first model is the optimization model. In this model the local agenda 21 remains as independent instrument. The process runs parallel to the local government policy. In particular the interfaces between politics, administration and citizen must be defined here however absolutely more clearly. Professional approach, Empowerment and activation of the citizens play a central role. The local agenda 21 is here not a new instrument. It continued to exist as voluntary, more informal process and with less formal regulations.



In the combination model the local agenda 21 is more regularised. In addition it becomes systematically combined with other instruments, e.g. the village renewal or other local development processes. On the other hand the process is more formalized. The participation becomes in this model a firmly established component of local practice. But the local Agenda 21 is still independent. The potential of consultation and participation is created. The administration must dispose to accept the participation in a formal way. The local authority can include the local agenda 21 structures into political practice.



The integration model is the model with the highest requirement. It established the strongest purchase between local agenda 21 and the approach of sustainable civil society. The local agenda 21 is no longer an independent instrument. The process of consultation and decision is a normal part of political actions of the local authorities. The goals and methods of the local agenda 21 are implemented in all decisions of the local authorities and the participation of the citizens is institutionally strongly secured. The local agenda 21 works in this model as "consciences of sustainability". All decisions of the local authorities are checked against sustainability. The local Agenda 21 is institutionally and with clear rules integrated into the decision-making processes.



#### 4. CONCLUSION

The result of research is that the local Agenda 21 can contribute the way of the implementation of sustainable development. In many divisions the Agenda 21 should be conceptual developed. In 12 fields of action the goals are summarized:

1. Local authorities need a comprehension of the necessity, goals, benefit, order and responsibility of Agenda 21.
2. Local authorities need standards for sustainable development in their field of responsibility. Local authorities must achieve real sustainable effects.
3. Local sustainability doesn't refer only to environmental topics. It must be at the same level with economic and social topics as well as global equity.
4. Local authorities have to combine the local Agenda 21 and other communal instruments.
5. The local Agenda 21 must be supported ideally, financially and personally.
6. Agenda processes need a closely cooperation with administrations, associations and citizens. Local authorities have to take over the active part in the process.

7. Agenda processes need an integrated conception with an overall concept, action program as well as quality management for the whole process.
8. Rules and responsibility have to be defined. They must be transparent for all participants.
9. Agenda processes need continual success control.
10. Contributions to sustainable development must be assessable and assimilable.
11. Agenda processes need methodical, professional and social qualified specialists in all phases.
12. Necessity and advantages of sustainable development must be communicated with the local participants.

## REFERENCES

- Agenda Transfer 2004:** Quo vadis lokale Agenda 21 – heute und in Zukunft. Hrsg.: Agenda Transfer, Agentur für Nachhaltigkeit GmbH, Dokumentation Forum lokale Agenda 21 in NRW, Bonn Februar 2004
- Bogumil Jörg, Holtkamp Lars 2002:** Bürgerkommune konkret, Vom Leitbild zur Umsetzung. Hrsg.: Albrecht Koschützke, Stabsabteilung der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bonn 2002
- Glück Alois 2004:** Bürgergesellschaft und Nachhaltigkeit, Zwei Schlüssel für eine gute Zukunft. In: Nachhaltige Entwicklung von Stadt und Land, Materialiensammlung Heft 30/2004 Hrsg.: Dr.-Ing. Horst Karmann, Dipl.-Ing. Josef Attenberger, München 2004, S. 1101-102
- Heinl Walter 2004:** Evaluierung der Lokalen Agenda 21 Widersprüche erkennen und Veränderungen gestalten. In: Nachhaltige Entwicklung von Stadt und Land, Materialiensammlung Heft 30/2004 Hrsg.: Dr.-Ing. Horst Karmann, Dipl.-Ing. Josef Attenberger, München 2004, S. 127-136
- Magel Holger 2002:** Auf dem Weg in eine aktive Bürgergesellschaft. In: Mitteilungen des DVW Bayern e.V., Heft 4, 2002, S. 357-365
- Magel Holger et al. 2003:** Evaluierung der Kommunalen Agenda 21 in Bayern. Forschungsbericht im Auftrag des Bayerischen Staatsministeriums für Landesentwicklung und Umweltfragen, 2 Bände, Lehrstuhl für Bodenordnung und Landentwicklung, München 2003
- Magel Holger 2004:** Alles eine Frage der Nachhaltigkeit, Agenda 21 als Motor einer neuen Verantwortungsgemeinschaft von Kommunen und Bürgern. In: Bayerische Staatszeitung Nr. 30 vom 23. Juli 2004, S.1 und 5



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

### Dipl.-Ing. Rolf Meindl:

Mr. Rolf Meindl obtained his degree (Dipl.-Ing. Univ.) 1989 in surveying/Geodesy at the University of Bonn, Germany in 1989. After a two-years preparatory service as civil servant he started 1991 within the Land Consolidation Authority Munich as head of a section for Rural Development. He was chairman of the board of several bodies of participants in land consolidation and village renewal. Since 2000 Rolf Meindl works as scientific assistance at the chair of Land Readjustment and Land Development at the Technische Universität Munich from Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Holger Magel.

He is head of division at the „Schule für Dorf- und Landentwicklung Thierhaupten“ (an institute that teaches village and rural development) which was founded in 1991. The school is offering special seminars to stimulate the self initiative of the citizens and to enable them to be good co-workers.

He is deputy congress director of the FIG Congress 2006 in Munich.

### Univ. Prof. Dr.-Ing. Holger Magel:

- Studies of Geodesy at the Technische Universität München (1963-1968)
- Activities in the field of engineering survey and cadastre at a free lance survey company in Austria
- 1977: Obtaining the degree of a Doktor-Ingenieur
- 1978: Bavarian State Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry, chief of divisions for village renewal, landscape planning in rural development, monument protection, spatial planning and public relationship and for organization and personnel staff
- Consultant for rural development in the new German Länder on behalf of GD VI European Commission
- 1993: Honorary professor for rural development at Technische Universität München (TUM)
- 1995: Nomination as Director general of the Bavarian Administration of Rural Development
- 1998: Appointment as full professor and Chair of Land Readjustment and Land Development and as Director of the Institute of Geodesy, Geoinformation and Land Management

Functions, memberships and charge related to urban and rural Land Development and Land Management

- Program director of the international postgraduate Master's Program in Land Management and Land Tenure at TUM
- Chairman of the working group "Urban and rural Land Readjustment and Land Policy" of the Deutsche Geodätische Kommission (DGK) (German Geodetic Commission) at the Bavarian Academy of Sciences
- President of the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) 2003-2006
- President of the Bavarian Academy for Rural Areas since 1994
- Member of the advisory board of the Bavarian state spatial planning

- Member of the Bavarian environmental panel
- Chairman of the German working group for village renewal of the Bund-Länder Arbeitsgemeinschaft Landentwicklung from 1984-1995

## CONTACTS

Dipl.-Ing. Rolf Meindl  
Chair of Land Readjustment and Land Development, Technische Universität München  
Arcisstraße 21  
D-80290 München  
GERMANY  
Tel. +49-89/289-22574  
Fax +49-89/289-23933  
Email: [meindl@landentwicklung-muenchen.de](mailto:meindl@landentwicklung-muenchen.de)  
Web site: [www.landentwicklung-muenchen.de](http://www.landentwicklung-muenchen.de)

Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Holger Magel  
Chair of Land Readjustment and Land Development, Technische Universität München  
Arcisstraße 21  
D-80290 München  
GERMANY  
Tel. +49-89/289-22535  
Fax +49-89/289-23933  
Email: [magel@landentwicklung-muenchen.de](mailto:magel@landentwicklung-muenchen.de)  
Web site: [www.landentwicklung-muenchen.de](http://www.landentwicklung-muenchen.de)