

Round Table 4: Land Administration

Land Administration Services'

Enhancing Land Management, Land Development and Construction



المؤتمر العربي الثاني للأراضي

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Social Appeasement and Land Administration

Modernization and Reform of the land Allocation system in Oman

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Background of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Planning

History

- Ministry of Land Affairs was first established in 1972
- The Ministry was given sole authority over Land Governance and Land Administration
- The Land Allocation(Lottery System) was established by Royal Decree in 1986 and gave the Ministry the job of allocating free 600m² plots to Omani citizens
- The Ministry is responsible for handing all land applications, surveying, plot allocation, and zoning

Current State of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Planning

Vision

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning is undergoing significant change working towards its new vision for “... comprehensive transformation to achieve sustainable spatial development for prosperous societies.”

Mission

“... to move the housing and urban planning services to advanced levels of place making principles in collaboration with both local and international partnerships”

Institutional Structure

- New changes in the structure and their implications

Challenges in Land Administration

- Lack of proper technology for land surveying(LEICA)
- Incompetence in plot allocation(eg. giving two deeds for one plot)
- Giving lands away in environmentally sensitive/unsuitable areas
- Lack of participatory planning
- Lack of integration between stakeholders and other Ministries



Social Appeasement and Land Allocation

Land Allocation

- The Land Allocation or Land Lottery system was established in an effort to distribute oil wealth, gain tribal loyalties, consolidate the state, and mix and unify tribes.
- Land was viewed as social welfare and was given as an entitlement to all eligible Omani citizens
- Currently, (Land Allocation though proven to be highly unsustainable) continues and frustration from citizens and social pressures on the Ministry are rising.
- There is an urgent need to stop land allocation or find a more sustainable solution but the social impacts have not been properly studied.

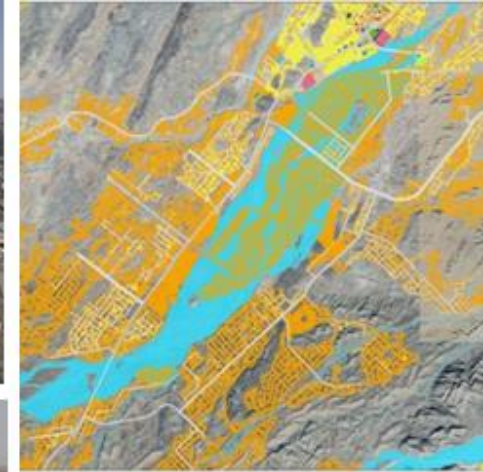
Social Undermining of The Land Administration System

Land Acquisition

- Citizens are unhappy with the incompetence of Land Administration and allocation and many times they try to find informal ways of acquiring land or taking advantage of the system
- The usage of “*wasta*” to get higher class lands and the holding of lands for social elites
- In the past, citizens have been able to expand the size of their plots, obtain deeds for ineligible people, and sometimes avoid policies or processes through their social networks

Land Challenges in Oman

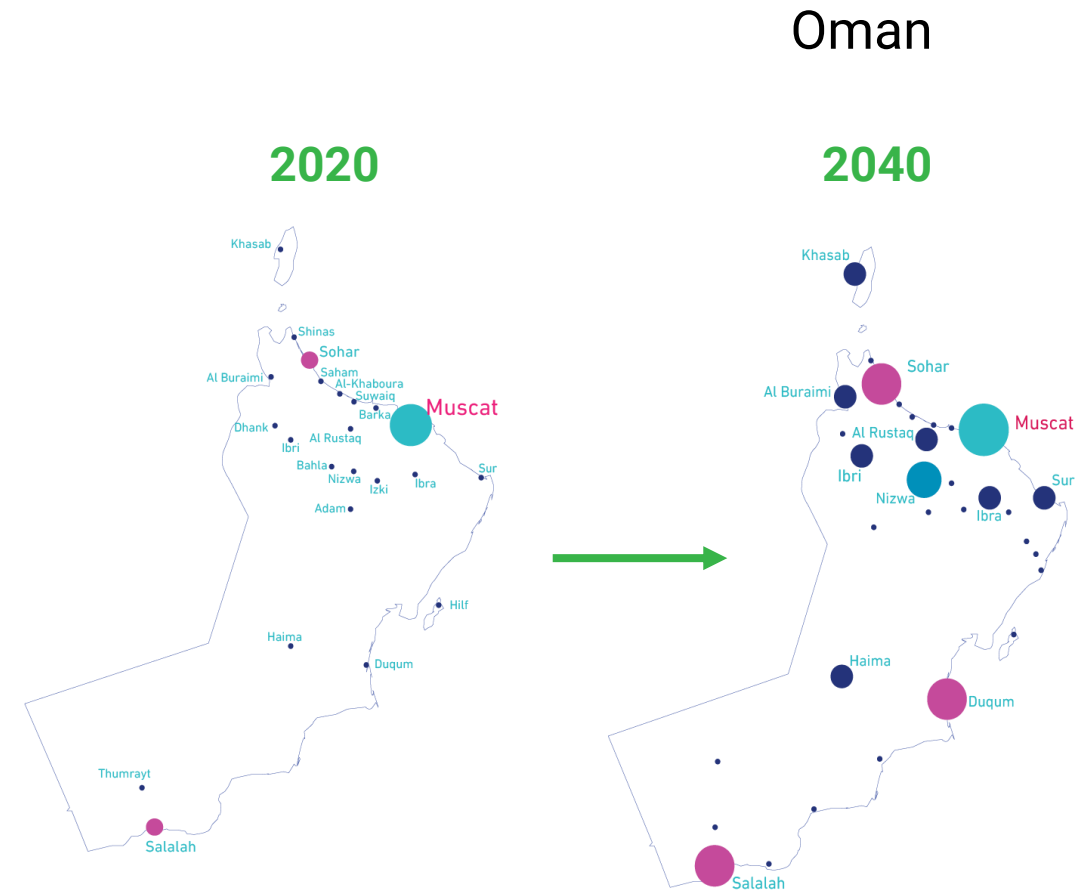
- Lack of proper land management practices and tools
- Random plot allocation in sensitive or unsuitable areas
- Extensive Urban Sprawl
- White Land
- High percentages of privately owned undeveloped land
- Environmental damage to mountain/ scenic areas



Oman National Spatial Strategy

Background

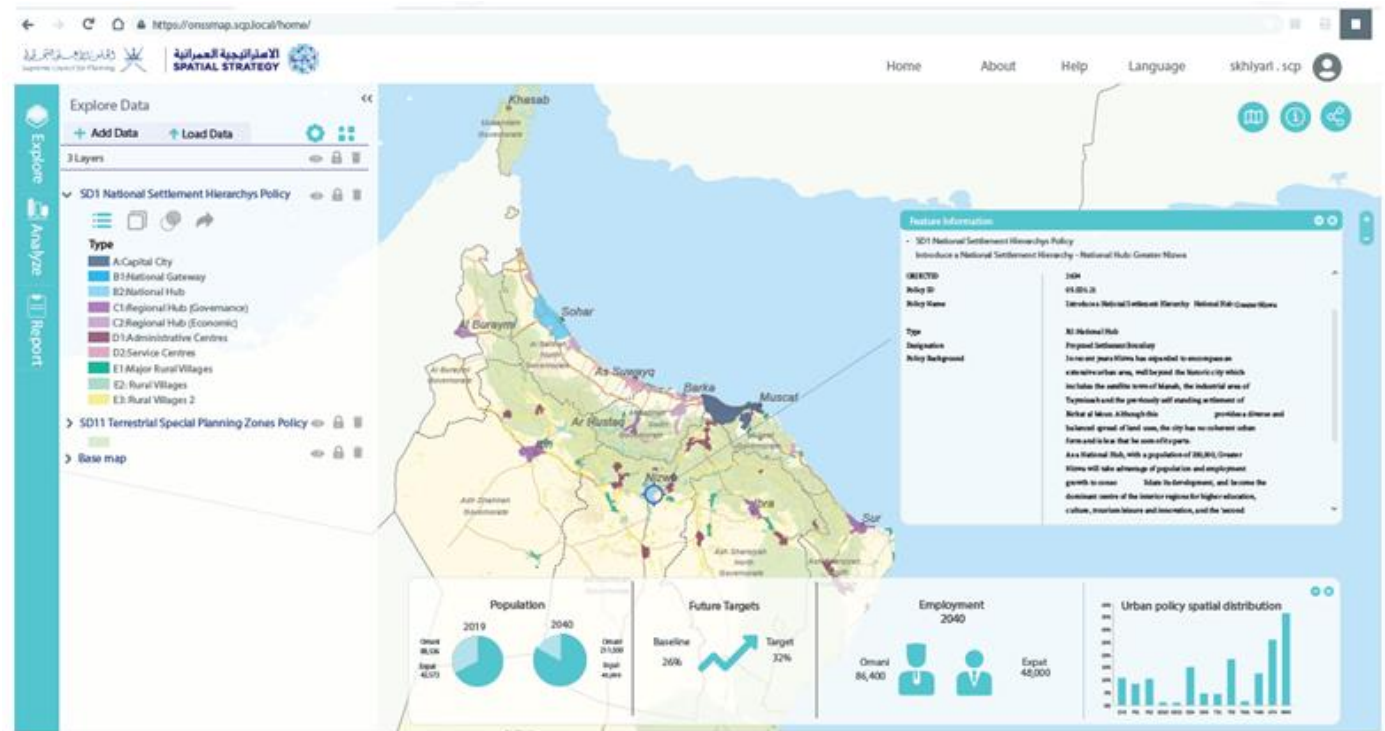
- First established in 2004
- Reinstated in 2017
- Fully completed in 2020 and sent for final approval by the Ministerial Cabinet in Feb 2021
- The strategy developed an overall national planning framework for the first time and aligned regional planning frameworks for each of the 11 Governorates.
- The main goal is to guide the spatial development for the coming 20 years in a sustainable way



CONCLUSIONS AND MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF RELEVANCE TO GCC Region

Modernization and Reform

- Institutional Reforms
- Capacity Building
- Legal Planning Framework(Transparency)
- Oman Planning Information System (OPIS)
- National Transport Model (NTM)
- Implementation/Investment
- Social Studies



THANK YOU FOR THE ATTENTION!