

Sub-urban  
development  
on prime  
agricultural  
land, Toronto,  
Canada



Charlie Clark

## the **Integration** of Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture into **Planning**

**In regions of the world characterised by economic collapse, such as those in East and Southern Africa, the last decade has witnessed a tremendous increase in total city area under informal urban food production. Associated with this has been an unprecedented increase in worldwide attention to urban agriculture (Bakker et al. 2000; Mbiba 2001). Yet, the overall picture shows that formal recognition and integration of agriculture into urban planning and city development has hardly changed, save for a reduction in prohibitive or anti-urban agriculture interventions.**

*Editorial*

**P**roblems and conflicts remain that constrain integration into planning. In many urban areas, the transformation of city responses from prohibitive models towards permissive or enabling ones has hardly materialised nor been formalised. The perceptions and responses to urban agriculture among actors in a certain city at any given time are not consistent, and conflict remains the norm.

In this context, the following questions are pertinent:

- ❖ Why does urban agriculture remain marginal in the urban planning process?
- ❖ What factors determine urban agriculture's integration into urban planning and sustainable development?
- ❖ What is being done, or what should be done, to facilitate the integration of

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urban agriculture into urban planning in different contexts of the world?

- ❖ In the few instances where integration is taking place, how has this resolved questions of land - access and use - conflicts? What lessons if any, can we learn from these instances?

### **DETERMINANTS FOR CHANGE**

The change from prohibitive to facilitating approaches and integration of urban agriculture into urban planning and development requires (and is dependant

**A differentiated and flexible approach is needed**

upon) structural changes in perceptions, in institutional regimes that govern or manage cities and in social values upon which production and consumption in cities is anchored. The cases in this volume highlight, as other cases do, that these structural changes do not arise primarily from people's simple exchange of ideas and verbal assent. Instead, structural changes (and hence the need for integration of agriculture into city development) is partly a consequence of some sort of crisis in a given context; this could

be drought, economic collapse (as in East and Southern Africa today), or political and economic change (like in Bulgaria), lack of confidence in current agricultural practices (the Netherlands), waste disposal problems (as in West Africa – see no. 3 of the *UA-Magazine* – and in the Philippines) or food insecurity.

If we accept this “crisis” model, the question that arises is “what would happen to (the attention on) urban agriculture, once the crisis is over?” The European scenario of allotment gardens from World War 1 to the present (see Howe and White on page 11 and Mbiba 1995) suggest that the activity will decline as the crisis disappears. However, gardens will re-emerge to serve new needs such as leisure and education (see the article on Portugal and Brazil in this volume), or integrated with other uses of the land (see the case on Delft, the Netherlands). Planning might cease to give it significant standing and planners will move on to deal with new crisis issues. Hence even in European cities where urban food production was once a key aspect of national survival strategy (see Garnett 1996) most planning departments have no ‘space’ for urban agriculture. As concluded by Martin and Marsden (1999: 389) for England and Wales, planning departments are hardly engaged in the broader aspects of the politics and local economy of urban food issues and there is a progressive decline in allotment provision. In the capitalist production-consumption environment

prevailing today, urban agriculture as a land use will be left to compete against other potential users of the same urban spaces (as is illustrated in the case of Lusaka, Zambia). It is an environment where power prevails and planning has to be understood accordingly. There is a need for innovative approaches in the urban planning process to enhance a sustainable and equitable development of cities.



### URBAN AGRICULTURE SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR Madhyapur Thimi Municipality in Nepal

Traditionally, municipalities in Nepal are defined on the basis of (the accumulation of) non-farm activities. Agriculture is considered to be a rural activity, which is one constraint to the promotion of urban agriculture. How this problem was overcome is narrated in this article, which describes the integration of urban agriculture into the land-use planning of Madhyapur Thimi municipality located in the centre of Kathmandu Valley in Nepal.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE FOR CITY AUTHORITIES

According to Fainstein (1999) the reality of planning is one of conflicting interests in a very unequal society; planning provides justification to the interests of the powerful while giving token attention to the rest. The testimonies from articles in this volume endorse a picture where urban agriculture is marginal to/in city



### URBAN AGRICULTURE AND CITY PLANNING IN BULGARIA

Current urban planning and development in Bulgaria does not take into account the existence of urban and peri-urban agriculture. The SWAPUA project, operating in 10 cities in five CEE countries, has identified characteristics of the various types of farming and the main problems associated with urban and peri-urban farming, with an emphasis on soil and water management issues. Here, the case study of the Bulgarian city Trojan is presented.

## Dear Readers

Again, the amount of articles submitted to the magazine was very high, for which we thank you. It was decided to accept quite a lot of these articles, since the wealth of experiences is illustrated and the broad topic could only be covered sufficiently this way. The guest editor for this issue was Beacon Mbiba from Zimbabwe, Co-ordinator of PeriNET (Peri-Urban Transformations Research Network), South Bank University, London, UK. Further input was received from Axel Drescher, from the University of Freiburg, Germany. The latter reports on the FAO-ETC E-Conference session on Planning (held in September 2000) in this issue. We offer you sixteen articles on a diversity of topics surrounding the theme; Integration of Urban Agriculture into Urban Planning. Articles cover all regions again, although West-Africa is not represented sufficiently this time.

Great news from Latin America: the first edition of the UA-Magazine in Spanish has been released by our colleagues in Quito, Ecuador. Spanish readers are suggested to contact UMP-LAC (see page 35).

You are invited to contribute to future issues of the Urban Agriculture Magazine. Some of the topics considered for 2002 are given on the back-page of this magazine. As suggested in the Editorial Board we welcome your contributions on any subject. Articles would ideally be up to 2,500 words in length, and preferably accompanied by illustrations (digital and of good quality), references and an abstract.

Looking forward to hearing from you.  
The Editor

## Efforts towards engaging rather than abandoning planning

planning; of no importance to city leaders, not competitive *vis à vis* other urban land uses such as housing, and remains incidental rather than a primary consideration in city programmes. The questions generally asked have to do with what city authorities and planners should do for urban agriculture to flourish. However, the way forward may be to ask the question from the other side: “what can urban agriculture do for cities, city authorities and planners?” For example, what difference can it make to the fortunes of a local councillor and to the city budget? It is furthermore important to understand the planning process, the constraints and opportunities, and how urban agriculture could assist in improvement. From the case study of St Petersburg (and others) the problem of insufficient budgets is highlighted. Agricultural activities could assist in overcoming part of this problem (see also the case study on Trojan, Bulgaria, and the proposal to re-develop suburban areas in Toronto, Canada). The evidence from the papers is that, unless urban agriculture can perform better on these questions than other, competing activities, its integration into planning will not materialise.

### THE NEED FOR A FLEXIBLE APPROACH AND DIFFERENTIAL TARGETING

The papers in this volume further illustrate that regional- and local-level diversity influences the success of integration of urban agriculture into planning. But, there is more to it. Proponents of urban and peri-urban agriculture tend to present these activities as one homogeneous industry and expect wholesale acceptance and integration of the activity into cities; this is not reality, nor will it



PAGE 33

ever work. What seems to work, and what will lead to integration is a more differentiated approach. Firstly, this should be considered per activity; for example, crop production versus livestock, but even further: vegetables versus cereals and large animals versus poultry, and so on. The cases and other papers in earlier issues of the *UA Magazine* clearly show that authorities and by-laws favour crops in the city, especially vegetables; cities world over will not promote livestock within their borders, but rather envisage animals (save some poultry perhaps) in the peri-urban areas: see for instance in Accra, Hubli-Dharwad, Havana and Dar es Salaam (Bakker et al. 2000).

Secondly, there is a need to differentiate by spatial focus; the consideration of urban agriculture in built-up areas (on-plot), on large city spaces (off-plot) or on the more rural interfaces (peri-urban). Again city authorities and planners have always promoted peri-urban agriculture and on-plot vegetable production. It is in the off-plot category where there is greatest disagreement. Consequently, to a very large extent the city cases show that urban agriculture (if specified) has already been dealt with in urban planning worldwide.

Thirdly, the beneficiaries have to be clear: it must be specified whether the activity is for subsistence and for the poor, or for the market and exports. Evidence from the articles in this magazine underlines that when urban agriculture produces for the latter ends, city authorities are ready to integrate the activity and increase land security to the farmers (cases in Gabarone and Bulgaria). In this form, the

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 4 Interviews
- 7 Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture on the Policy Agenda, Report of the E-Conference
- 9 Why We Need New Urban Planning Concepts; *Insights from South Africa*
- 11 Awareness and Action in the UK
- 13 Support for Urban Agriculture in St Petersburg
- 14 Using Urban Agriculture for Sustainable City Planning in Bulgaria: the Case of Trojan
- 17 The Urban Planning Dilemma in Harare, Zimbabwe
- 18 The Women and Land Lobby Group in Zimbabwe
- 19 The Marginalisation of Urban Agriculture in Lusaka
- 22 Integration of Agriculture in City Development in Dar Es Salaam
- 25 Incorporating Urban Agriculture In Gaborone City Planning
- 28 Urban Agriculture Support Programme for Madhyapur Thimi Municipality in Nepal
- 30 Urban Farming and Land-Use Planning in the Dominican Republic
- 32 The El Panecillo Pilot Project in Quito, Ecuador
- 33 Multifunctional Land Use: an Opportunity for Promoting Urban Agriculture in Europe
- 36 Planning for Urban Agriculture in Suburban Development in Canada
- 38 Supportive Policies from Two Distant Cities: Lisbon (Portugal) and Presidente Prudente (Brazil)
- 40 Planning in a Changing Environment: the Case of Marilao in the Philippines
- 42 Further reading
- 44 Websites
- 45 News and Networking

### MULTIFUNCTIONAL LAND USE: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PROMOTING URBAN AGRICULTURE IN EUROPE

Politicians and planners are faced with many competing claims for the use of scarce land in and around cities in industrialised countries. Multifunctional land use – combining different functions within one area – offers a solution. On the basis of a case study in the heavily populated west of the Netherlands, the authors aim to demonstrate that urban agriculture can be promoted as one element land-use offering valuable functions to society.

activity has something positive to offer to the city balance sheet. But as confirmed by the Gaborone paper, where UA is commercial and capital investments are high, the participation levels decrease and claims of direct benefits to the poor become more doubtful.

### ENGAGE WITH PLANNING, NOT ABANDON IT

Comprehensive land use planning is still dominant in the cities reported here, and evidence suggests that this will remain so in the near future. In this context, efforts should be towards engaging with, rather than trying to abandon, planning. Urban agriculture could be integrated better if efforts were to be made to increase the participation of diverse groups in the planning process to determine what goes

### PLANNING IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT: THE CASE OF MARILAO IN THE PHILIPPINES

Marilao, located on the fringe of Manila in the Philippines, faced a typical peri-urban dilemma a few years ago, when its mayor

could not find affordable land for a new waste disposal site. There were more than 850 business firms and housing projects that competed for the use of municipal land. Not only the question of where to bring the waste was a problem, also what to do with recycled waste and changes in policy and urban management needed to be tackled.

into those plans; for example in the by-laws (Gaborone, Dar es Salaam, Quito and Santiago de los Caballeros). Also, innovation in conflict resolution comes up as a recurring theme in the articles (e.g. Marilao, Lusaka). Cities are domains of

maximum differences where, according to Healey (1997: 3), planning is about “managing our co-existence in shared space”. Rather than *claiming* space for urban agriculture, ways to *share* urban space with other users has to be sought.



## Views from Municipalities

### Interviews with planners and policy-makers

For this issue on integration of urban agriculture in planning, we asked our partners to interview planners and policy-makers of a number of cities and ask them about urban agriculture and planning related issues.

What follows are quotations from the interviews, brought together by the editors under specific questions.

The interviews we received are from Ghana, the Philippines and Zambia with:

- **Dr. Daniel Sackey**, head of the Directorate for Food and Agriculture, Accra, Ghana (interview by Dagmar Kunze and Pay Drechsel)

- **Mayor Duran**, Marilao Philippines, (interview by Joseph Batac)

- From Lusaka, Zambia: **Mrs Judith Simuzya**, Councillor for Lubwa Ward; **Mr Fisho Mwale**, Ex-Mayor, Lusaka City Council; **Mr T. Hakuyu**, Assistant City Planner; **Mrs Phiri**, Housing and Community Services; **Mr Enock S. Mwape**, Chief Housing Officer, Peri-Urban Areas (interviews by Beacon Mbiba).

Full text interviews can be found on [www.ruaf.org](http://www.ruaf.org)

Dr. Sackey (left) handing an award to a farmer at the 2000

Farmer's Day  
Celebration



Min. of Information, Accra

#### What is your personal view on urban agriculture, and how did you get involved in the subject?

The solid waste disposal in the city was a major concern to me. When the solid waste management project was able to generate compost from biodegradable waste, I consulted non-government organisations and community residents if they were interested in bringing back some of the greeneries. When I got a resounding positive response, I knew urban agriculture would be defined and shared by this desire of my constituents. (Mayor Duran, Marilao, Philippines)

To me, urban agriculture is an issue of land. People grow vegetables for their own consumption, to be self-reliant. In my backyard I also grow cassava, okra, sweet potatoes and vegetables. Urban farmers are not supported because of fear of mosquitoes. (Judith Simuzya, Lusaka, Zambia)

Urban planning does not institutionalise agriculture in the city. To do that, there are profound changes in legislation necessary. And one has to consider the planning process, since it means re-planning the city all the time. Like any other form of agriculture, its urban form requires land, which has attained a value since 10-15 years ago. Few people will afford land for urban agriculture. (Fisho Mwale, Lusaka, Zambia)

Urban agriculture is firstly a small backyard garden, like mothers who go out on land not utilised. Then there are the weekend farmers, who live in town and go out to their plots on land leased from the government. The constraint is that land does not belong to the cultivators. One would be happy to have secure tenure, because agriculture contributes to food security. (Mrs Phiri, Lusaka, Zambia)

Urban agriculture is a means of securing incomes, and therefore has an important role in urban planning. Urban agriculture also converts idle laying land into green space, and green zones and green belts are important for the city authorities. (Daniel Sackey, Accra, Ghana)

#### How is urban agriculture perceived in the Council or Municipality?

In Accra, the biggest group practising agriculture is the group of fishermen and women. Their contribution to the economy of the city is very important. The livestock holders, we rather try to discourage within the city boundaries. They are

Generally, and more so in the case of urban agriculture, planning is continually criticised. Therefore, the editors had wished this volume to provide an exchange platform for planner practitioners and the other urban actors. Our efforts to get participation of urban planners have been limited. This is crucial for we know that criticism ignores that planners are overloaded with diverse demands, work in under-resourced offices and an environment that gives little time or encouragement to keep abreast with expanding knowledge frontiers upon which planning innovations depend. We were happy to receive the articles on Dar Es Salaam, Harare, Marilao written by, and other articles written with city authorities. Going with this editorial are excerpts from interviews with the representatives of Marilao,

Philippines, Accra, Ghana and Lusaka, Zambia, illustrating other issues not touched in this editorial, nor in the papers.

Planning is an environment in which there is little incentive to be a reflective

or deliberate practitioner but to remain very bureaucratic. Thus, if the breadth of new knowledge in urban agriculture is to make a difference in how cities are planned, we must address not only the politics, spirit and purpose of planning

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encouraged in the peri-urban areas. Many poultry producers are now moving into these areas, which is not so much an effect of our strict control, but more of their ability to acquire land outside their private grounds and to keep a proper hygienic and good environmentally healthy atmosphere to prevent Zoonosis. *(Daniel Sackey, Accra, Ghana)*

We see urban agriculture, including horticulture and forestry, as a more sustainable way for urban greening. Urban agriculture is the fruit of good solid waste management and a practical way of improving urban areas and addressing food supply and distribution. *(Mayor Duran, Marilao, Philippines)*

The council does not promote agriculture on open spaces, but on smallholdings 5km away from the city. Agriculture encountered on open spaces, is discouraged but we do not slash crops. Support for smallholdings is through NGOs. The major problems are water, street lighting and the lack of government grants. There is a problem of party cadres illegally allocating land, some even for financial gain. *(Judith Simuzya, Lusaka, Zambia)*

Firstly, there are smallholdings (5 to 20 acres) around, but within the boundary of, Lusaka, then there are the people in the peri-urban areas who rent land from the owners of open spaces in the city. People use it for agriculture until it is taken over by town planning. There are also kitchen gardens confined to the house. Within these areas, people are warned not to grow maize within the housing areas because of the mosquito risk. *(Enock S. Mwape, Lusaka, Zambia)*

#### **Is there an institute or institution, which facilitates (or facilitated) the process of integration?**

The Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) has a planning unit, to which all the yearly projects and budget proposals have to be submitted for approval. In respect of the by-laws as well as zoning, the Directorate for Food and Agriculture is playing a leading role. Generally, we have much support within AMA, but less support from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, especially in terms of funding. We are on the brink of getting a by-law for the green belt - green zone areas passed, which will allow these spaces to remain green and only permit farmers to use them, until the Government decides otherwise. *(Daniel Sackey, Accra, Ghana)*

Open space policy is at two levels: a Central Governance Policy and City Council policy. In practice urban agriculture is excluded in the City Council policy. There is no regional plan to guide urban-peri-urban area relations. The Ministry of Agriculture has taken up the role to fill the vacuum left by the Ministry of Local Government and Housing. Planners do not control urban agriculture, and have not taken up the challenge. *(T. Hakuyu, Lusaka, Zambia)*

#### **Which issue triggered off the interest and what were the main activities by the Municipality?**

We wanted to teach the community how to grow vegetables as a source of micro-nutrients, as well as the benefits of the practice of segregation of household wastes. We handed out the compost substrate and the potted flowers and vegetable seedlings, with the message that these materials can be used to re-green their surroundings and to raise safe and nutritious food for the family and the community. At first, the farmers thought we were crazy, but now the urban growers are more than happy since this is additional income for them, and they are urgently requesting guidelines on the use of the compost and crop choice. *(Mayor Duran, Marilao, Philippines)*

Urban agriculture is regulated by by-laws, which regulate and support certain activities, such as vegetable production or fish handling and trading, and ban other activities, such as livestock keeping within the city boundaries. The Directorate collaborates with many of the other 31 Directorates within AMA. For example with the Directorate for Town and Country Planning, who are doing an aerial survey to determine all government land, which should be given to farming. So far, we have zoned 40 ha in Teshie and 60 in La area. Current activities are the construction of 6 markets, access roads and parking space under the Village Infrastructure Program. In conjunction with the Ghana Export Promotion, UNDP and the International Trade Centre, Geneva we are promoting a fish processing plant at Teshie, mushroom production for export to Europe and the USA, and the production and pre-packaging cut flowers, also for export. AMA further contributed financially to the supply of pipe born water to vegetable producers to avoid health hazards of the use of unsafe water in agriculture. A further step will be the aerial zoning plan of green spaces and government lands and the respective by-law that we are about to push through. *(Daniel Sackey, Accra, Ghana)*

#### **How did the urban farmers participate?**

The committee on export promotion under AMA consists of members from Town and Country Planning, City Engineers, Parks and Gardens, Architects, EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), Ghana Standard Board and our Directorate plus 2 farmers representatives who are active in this committee. The vegetable growers are represented by their General Association. The fishermen and women by their Community based Management Fisheries Organisation", which also includes the chiefs of the respective areas. The zoning of government land and the occupation of this land, is left up to the farmers to decide, since most land is already being cultivated. We only want to make sure that no additional house construction is taking place on government land. Women's role in urban agriculture in Accra is explicitly on the marketing side. In livestock and vegetable production they are a minority. Women are represented in the farmer's association. If loans are to be given, the

but also the internal environment within which planners work. Simply put, in many circumstances, our planner practitioners are not the villains but rather the victims of the systems within which they operate (see the article on South Africa). The need for more information for city planners on the subject is further shown in interviews held in the UK.

The contributions have a word on collaboration and partnership not only among local institutions or cities within one country (see the article on Marilao in the Philippines) but also among cities in different countries (the case of Santiago de los Caballeros in the Dominican Republic) and incentives by donors (see for instance the cases of Dar es Salaam and Harare). The articles underline that

integration is possible from multiple entry points that are very much context-specific. In the future, 'private developers' must also be engaged, whose activities and investment decisions influence how land will be developed and whether urban and peri-urban agriculture will have space in their development schemes. With the possible exception of the Toronto case, the articles have little to say on these crucial actors.

### PLANNING TOOLS

In our call for contributions, we asked for experiences on using zoning, GIS, and participatory approaches to integrating urban agriculture into planning. As can be seen from the different maps from Dar, Gaborone, Delft and Madhyapur Thimi, GIS is used extensively. Zoning for

urban agriculture is also highlighted in the Dar es Salaam, Madhyapur Thimi, and Gaborone papers. Drescher summarises the discussions in the FAO/ETC e-conference, and gives a range of other tools to facilitate the integration of urban and peri-urban agriculture into planning processes.

There are 16 experiences described in this issue, of which two from Asia, two from Latin America, five cases from cities in Southern and Eastern Africa, two from CEE countries, two West European and one from Canada. As a package, these articles elaborate on the complex web of variables that impinge on the integration of urban agriculture into planning.

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new government is now leaving the decision to the agriculture subcommittee to decide and men and women equally qualify. *(Daniel Sackey, Accra, Ghana)*

We build models in several areas. We bring the potential adopters of urban agriculture to these models and ask them how they can do the same. We subscribe to the old notion that people will do it when they see, feel and believe in it. We invest in the replication process by having staff for education campaign and logistics support. Also, we had to develop the compost substrate in a way that suites each type of crops. *(Mayor Duran, Marilao, Philippines)*

#### **What Factors Determined Success and Failure?**

To integrate agriculture into urban planning, you need some kind of established office with the responsibility to lobby for the farmers. Sometimes we have visitors from other assemblies, where agriculture has no voice and I am asked how I have been able to get the Food and Agriculture Department integrated into AMA. *(Daniel Sackey, Accra, Ghana)*

There is need for managerial and political appreciation of capacity problems. With a stronger institute, more pressure can be applied. People are not aware of town planning – even internally in the city council there is little awareness. This has caused lack of reviews of the 1975 plan - until the World Bank came in to draw up the Lusaka Integrated Development Plan. *(T. Hakuyu, Lusaka, Zambia)*

Slowly, the farmers are beginning to use the technology we have developed for urban agriculture, which include drip irrigation system, grafting, netting structures and green housing. The process is about doing, rather than talking. *(Mayor Duran, Marilao, Philippines)*

To secure land ownership and use of land, we are passing a by-law. We want the available land in Accra to be placed into a zoning plan, so it can be visible for everyone who intends to construct on this land to know that such a land is reserved for urban and peri-urban agriculture as well as parks and gardens. Generally, there is less risk for farmers to be pushed from the land, if they grow high value crops and contribute more to the urban economy. This is why we promote export crop production such as mushrooms and flowers. *(Daniel Sackey, Accra, Ghana)*

With secure land ownership, people invest: build houses and small shops and use these as income sources other than agriculture. Most of the land in Lusaka is title land, which is for a 99 year lease. There is competition for land in the city. The question is: "who are the stakeholders?" Is it the guy growing vegetables around his house, or is it the farmer in a designated small area around the city? I think the second case is more appropriate for Lusaka in terms of policy focus. *(Fiso Mwale, Lusaka, Zambia)*

No spaces are designated for agriculture except on the fringe of the city, as created by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. The City has no relationships with these smallholdings. The implications of the recent (1995) policy changes on land, is that everyone has to pay rates, meaning income for the city council, but also that now there is an open land market. Squatters move into areas that have not been developed. Evictions become an issue since the invasions are politically motivated at the local level e.g. by ward political leaders who want to wield power through land allocations. *(T. Hakuyu, Lusaka, Zambia)*

Ghana introduced the "Farmer's Day" as a national holiday 16 years ago, on which we honour our farmers and fishermen throughout the country and where awards are given to best urban and peri-urban farmers too. There are awards to individuals in the groups of local and exotic vegetable production, fishing, fish processing, poultry, the best IPM farmer, and also to the best Agricultural Extension Agent. In 2000 we introduced awards for the best farmers in secondary schools, since we want to promote agriculture for schools and we also introduced a category of rabbit and bee keeping and mushroom growing. Apart from the quality and quantity of the produce, we also judge the application of techniques, the use of safe water in vegetables, the hygiene in animal keeping, the type of shelter construction, fodder and water supply, and the degree of self-organisation. *(Daniel Sackey, Accra, Ghana)*

#### **Some summarising issues from the interviews are:**

- ❖ Interest from planners and policymakers is often triggered by personal interest or a crisis situation;
- ❖ This interested party is a major facilitator in the process of integration of urban agriculture in urban planning until a (usually one) lead institution can take this facilitating role;
- ❖ Land is the most relevant issue for planning in relation to urban agriculture;
- ❖ Urban agricultural activities seem more interesting for planners when related to crisis management or when the activity is an important economic activity (high output);
- ❖ In that sense one could say that urban arable farming is often allowed, livestock is generally pushed to the periphery, and greening/forestry, fishery or high value crops are stimulated and regulated;



Mayor L.S. Duran