



MICRO-CREDENTIAL

LAND MANAGEMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA

8.- State Role in Land Resource Management

State Land Policy

LM-W08-V50

Core relevance

Land is strategic because it is:

- finite and spatially fixed
- used by competing sectors at the same time
- a base for food, housing, infrastructure, and ecosystems
- an asset whose misuse creates long-term costs

State perspective

- sets the rules for access, use, and protection
- balances public interest with private incentives
- reduces uncertainty, conflict, and hidden costs

Why this matters in Central Asia

- agriculture and irrigation remain land-intensive
- climate stress increases pressure on soil and water
- urban growth requires clearer planning and cadastre

Concept

State land policy = public goals + laws + institutions + instruments used to allocate, register, use, protect, and monitor land.

RIGHTS

- tenure security
- registration
- restrictions and obligations

USE

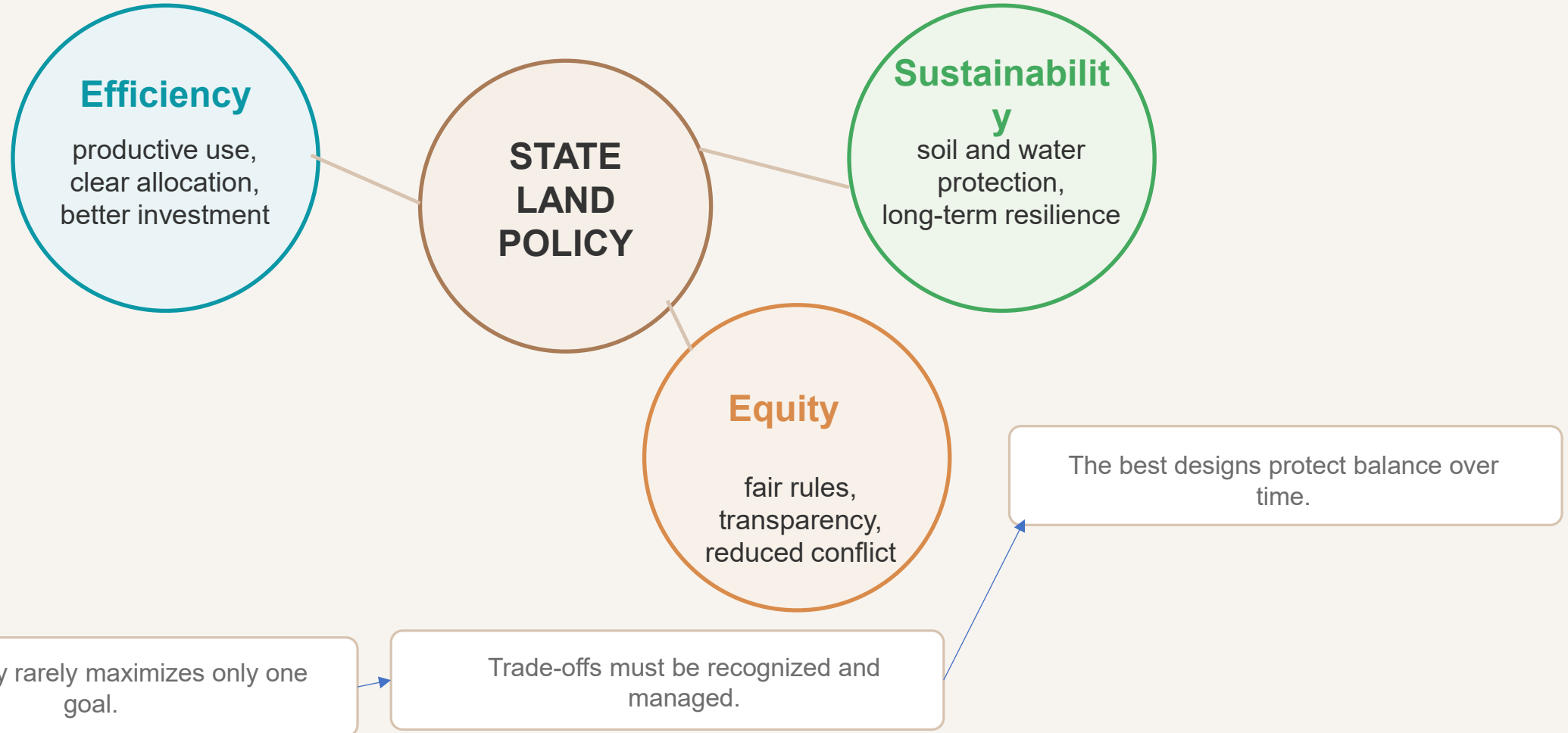
- planning and zoning
- sector allocation
- compliance with purpose

VALUE

- valuation and taxation
- rent and fees
- investment signals

Policy answers “what should land achieve?” Administration answers “how will it be implemented?”

Goal structure



Instruments

Laws and codes

define rights,
limits, and procedures

Cadastre & registration

identify parcels,
holders, legal status

Planning & zoning

guide location,
compatible uses

Valuation & taxation

create economic
signals and revenue

Monitoring & enforcement

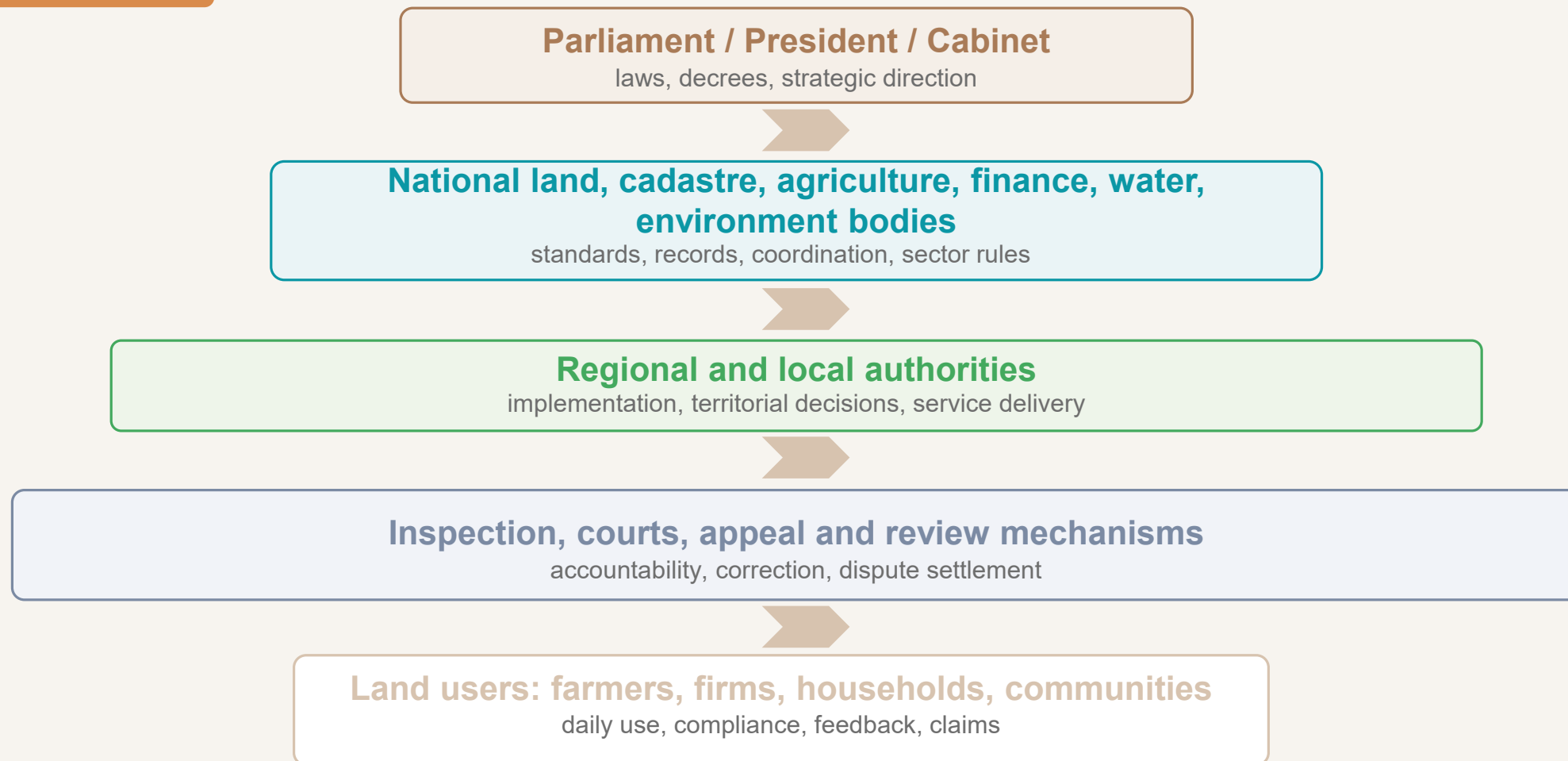
check compliance,
misuse, degradation

Dispute resolution

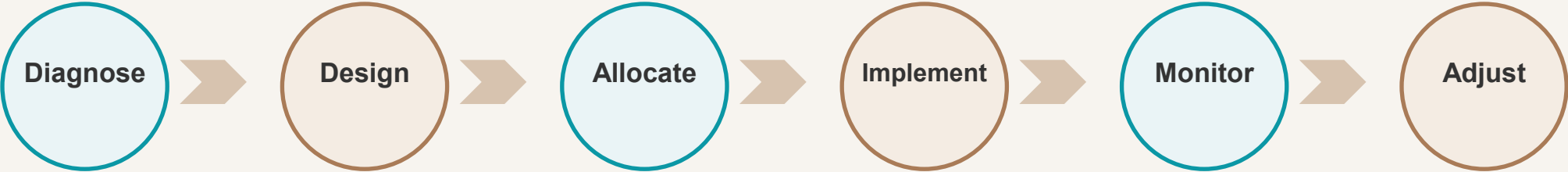
support review,
appeal, legal certainty

A functioning system aligns legal, spatial, fiscal, and technical tools.

Institutions



Policy process



Evidence first

cadastre, surveys,
monitoring, complaints

Adaptive correction

policy is revised
when results are weak

Learning system

institutions improve
through feedback loops

A static land policy quickly becomes outdated when climate, markets, technology, or population patterns change.

Rights matter

Recognize multiple forms of land rights

- public ownership
- long-term lease or use rights
- easements and access rights
- communal or customary arrangements
- registered restrictions and obligations

FAO Voluntary Guidelines message

Secure tenure rights and equitable access are central for responsible governance of land, fisheries, and forests.

Clear rights

promote investment

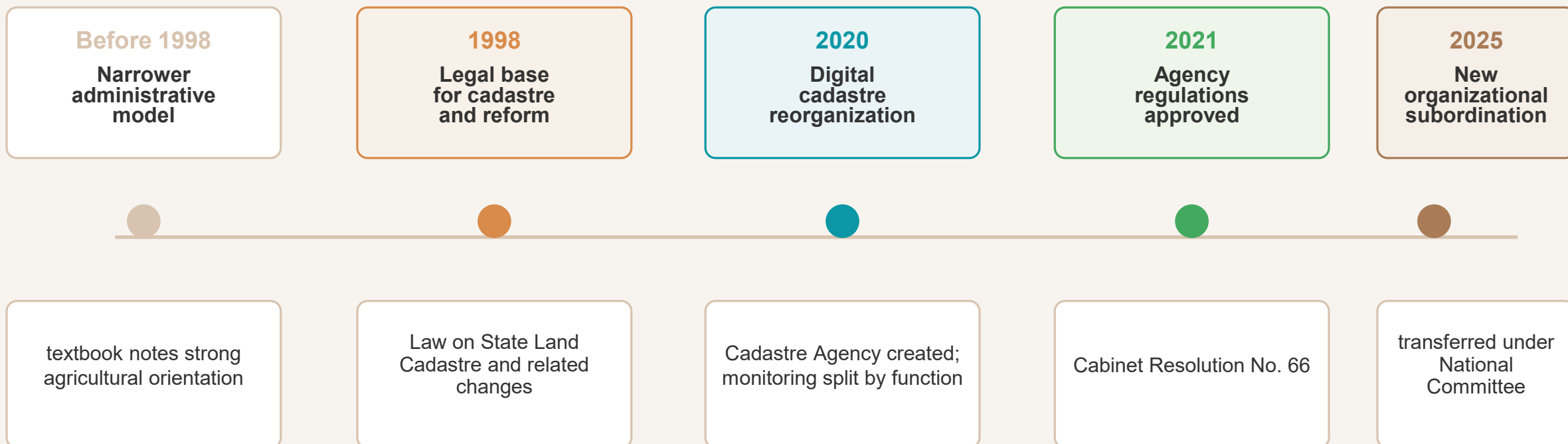
Unclear rights

raise conflict

Recorded rights

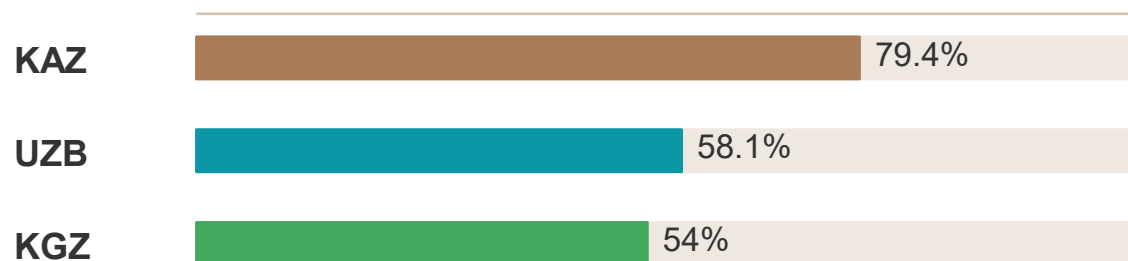
improve accountability

Reform path



Regional data, 2023

Agricultural land as % of total land area



Interpretation

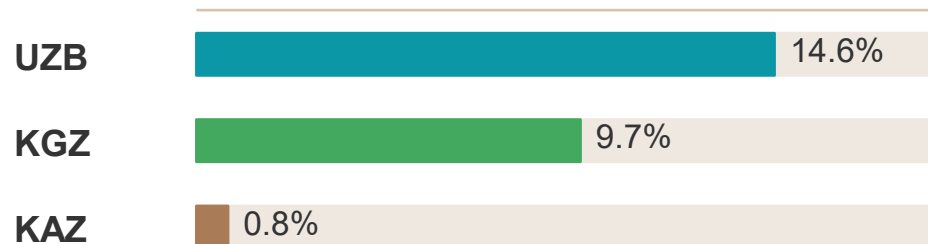
- Kazakhstan is land-abundant and extensive
- Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan face tighter land-use trade-offs
- policy instruments must fit national land structure

How Uzbekistan was derived

$$255,820 \text{ sq. km agricultural land} \div 440,650 \text{ sq. km total land} \times 100 = 58.1\%$$

Water–land link, 2023

Agricultural irrigated land (% of total agricultural land)



Policy message

- land allocation without water planning is incomplete
- drainage, salinity, and infrastructure affect land value
- coordination across agencies is essential

Regional reading

Where irrigation dependence is higher, state land policy must work closely with water allocation, canal maintenance, and land-quality monitoring.

Risk map

Unclear boundaries

more disputes

Weak registration

hidden assets, tax loss

Poor monitoring

degradation, salinity

Fragmented institutions

slow decisions

Informal expansion

planning mismatch

Low trust

less investment

Single technical fixes rarely solve a systemic governance problem.

Design principles

Integrated

land + water + cadastre + urban
policy

Transparent

visible rules, procedures, and
records

Evidence-based

maps, monitoring, and statistics

Fair

equal treatment and protection
against arbitrariness

Adaptive

responds to climate, growth, and
technology

Enforceable

real institutions can apply the rules

These principles align with FAO tenure guidance, World Bank LGAF, and UN-Habitat land-governance practice.

Key takeaways

Five things to remember

- land policy is broader than cadastre alone
- good policy balances efficiency, equity, and sustainability
- rights, use, and value must be managed together
- Central Asia requires strong land–water coordination
- evidence and accountability are as important as law

Class discussion prompts

- Which land-policy instrument is strongest in your district?
- Where is the weakest link: law, data, coordination, or enforcement?
- How should irrigation pressure change land policy priorities?

From state control to state stewardship: that is the core shift to understand.

Authoritative sources

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End of lecture



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