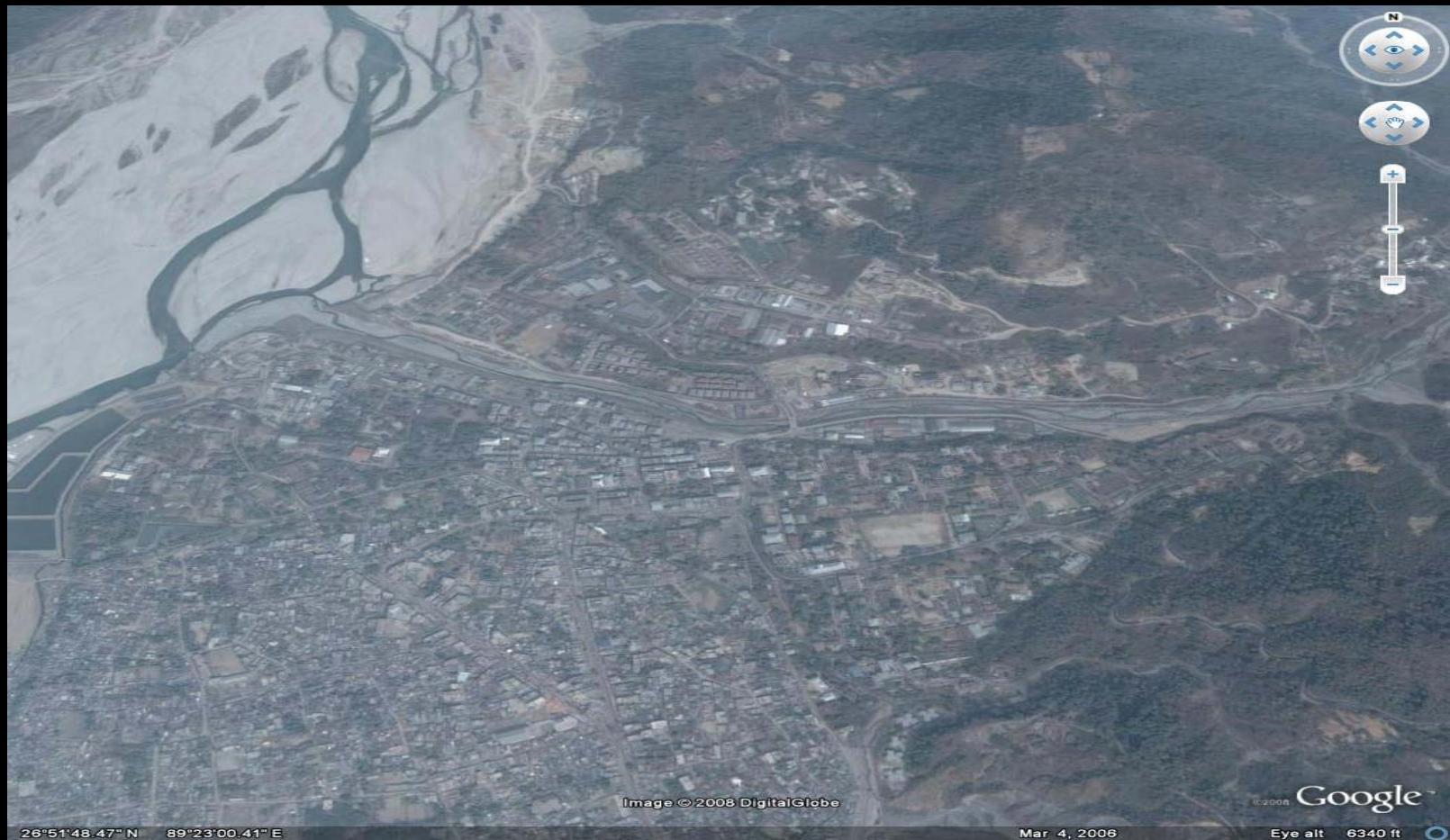


Urban Issues & Policies:

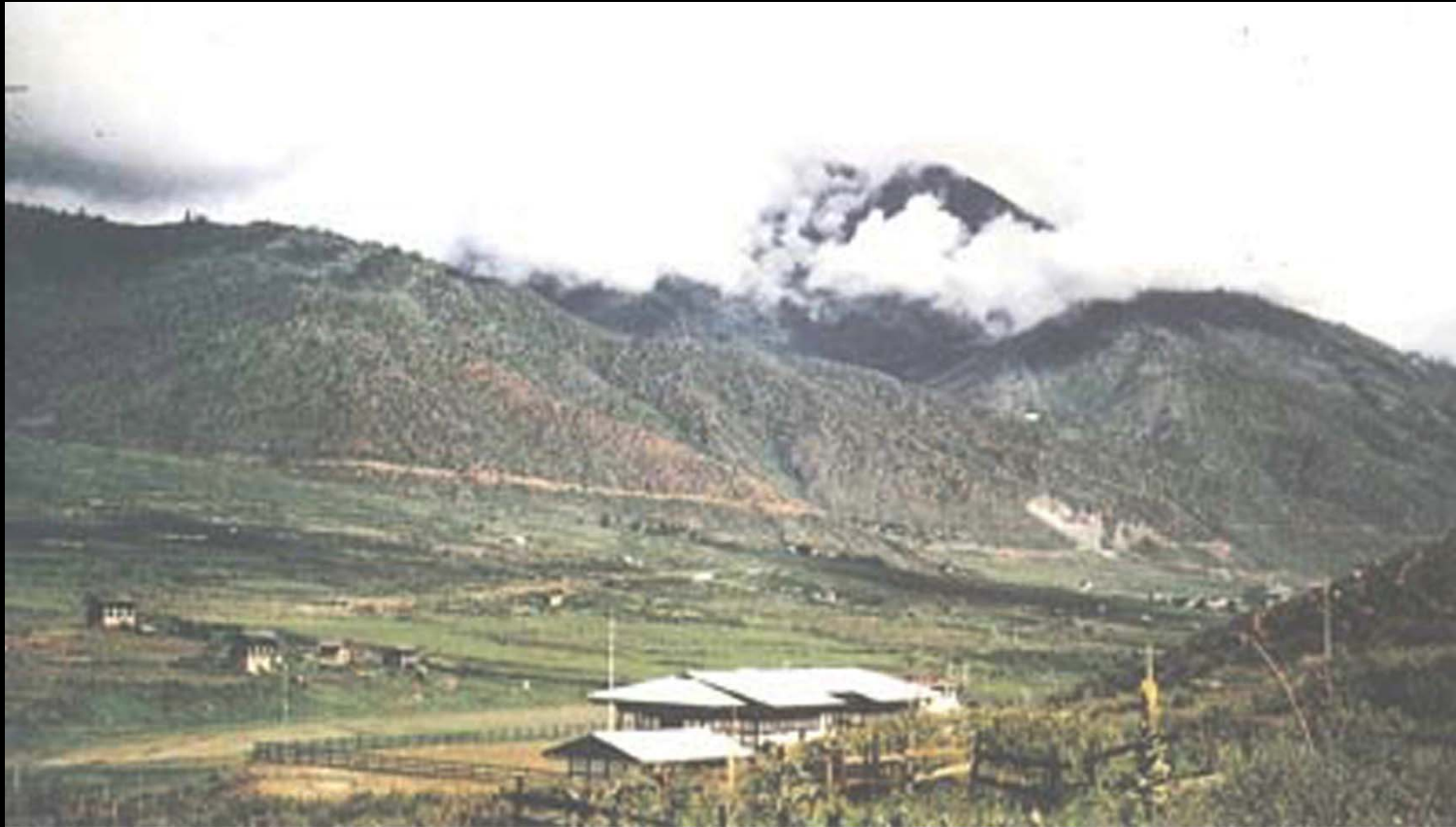


Presentation By: Meghraj Adhikari, Chief Urban Planner, DUDES

Rapid urbanization & land requirement

- **30% of population live in urban areas, as of now (as per PopIn Census 2005)**
- 50% would live in urban areas by 2020 according to Bhutan 2020 report
- 73% urbanization level in 2020 according to BNUS 2008
- At present urban popIn density, by 2020, 17,000 Ha of additional land required to meet the demand.
- i.e. 27% of entire arable land, when arable land itself is just 8% of the total country area.
- **Such trend is highest by any standard & yet we are least bothered because we think it's a natural phenomenon.**

Urbanization Trends – photo evidence



Thimphu in late 1960s

Photo courtesy: Geley Norbu, 2008

Urbanization Trends – photo evidence



Thimphu... now

Photo courtesy: Geley Norbu, 2008

Implied issues of rapid urbanization

- Pressure on land resource, particularly agricultural land for conversion,
- Land sustainability???
- Adequate funding resource
- Urban governance and management....??
- Housing problems
- Poor infrastructure...
- Poor sanitation....
- Urban poverty...un-employment,
- Youth related issues

Can't say about others, but at least, Planners are haunted by these issues

Is planning required?

- Planners think, YES, a big yes.
- Because of the scenarios we have just seen in previous slides
- Not only planning but better policy on human settlement supplemented by Planning and Development Laws, political will/commitment, public awareness, government funding, adequate human resources.... are required....
- Because urban areas belong to all Bhutanese and MoWHS is responsible agency for planning for human settlements and infrastructure(s).

Policy analysis – Proposed urban system

As per BNUS 2008:

- 2 national cities – Thimphu & Phuntsholing with full autonomy
- 5 regional towns (proposed for progressive autonomy) for regionally balanced development
- 16 Dzongkhag towns (District HQs towns)
- 12 Satellite/medium towns – with progressive autonomy
- 23 small urban centres/service centres (under geog administration)

Policy analysis – Constitution

Only 2 types of town or thromde are recognized by our Constitution (article 22):

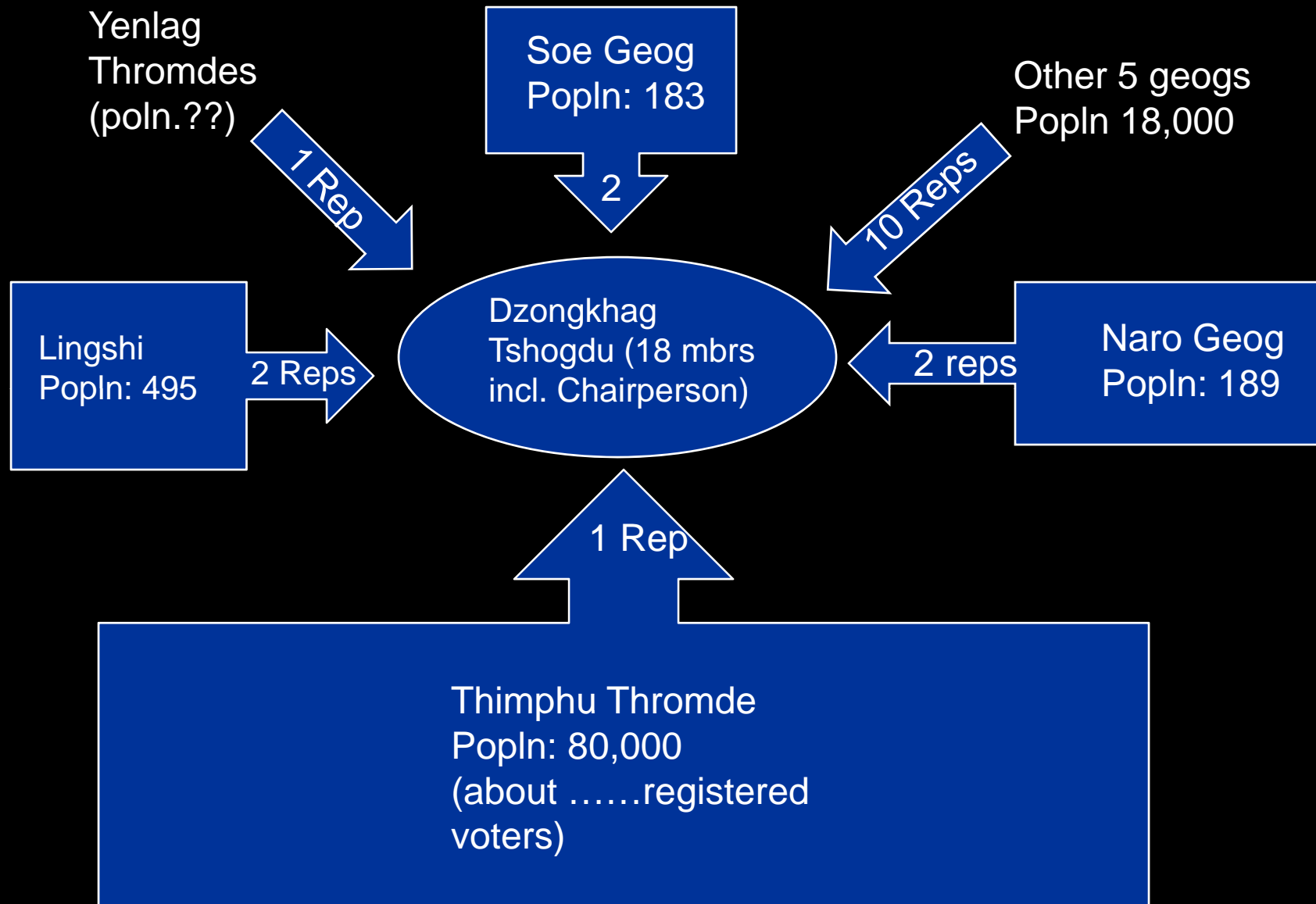
- Dzongkhag Thromde
- Yenlag Thromde

As a result, Thimphu, as the capital city of Bhutan, the Pride of all Bhutanese, where it belongs to people from every corner of Bhutan, and all walks of life, shall have to be designated as Thimphu Dzongkhag Thromde.

Same is the case with our commercial capital of Bhutan, Phuntsholing, which may have to be designated as Chukha Dzongkhag Thromde.

MoWHS is worried about Efficiency and Accountability of the new system.

Housing & population census of 2005



Is this equal representation?, Will there be balanced decision? What about the resource allocation, will thromde gets resource in accordance with its population proportion????

Policies analysis – Land Act 07 & Thromde Act 07

- Declaration of urban area or thromde: which one is appropriate???
 - NCLS – to government
 - MoWHS – to government
- Approval for municipal boundary: which one is appropriate???
 - NCLS – to government
 - MoWHS – to government
- Urban cadastral surveying function not delegated to City Corporation and MoWHS by NLCS
- Without survey map, planning can't be done.....thereby delaying service delivery
- Land or plot allotment – prerogative of HM the King through NLCS
- Post land pooling issues with NLCS in terms of reduced plot size, relative shift in plot boundary, land re-registration.
- Government directive of 2007 – identification of lead agencies:
 - MoWHS for strategic infrastructure only.....
 - NLCS for spatial policy, which is a planning for human settlements.....
- This directive needs to be reviewed.....

These problems – affect service delivery and efficiency

Policy analysis

- Nature and forest policy – 60% coverage at all times, and no encroachment into national parks
- Agriculture's food self sufficiency policy – protection for agricultural land – paddy land conversion restricted (Land Act 2007)
- Watershed management policy – catchment protection
- **Where is the additional land required for urban development to accommodate increasing urban population (50-70% by 2020)????**

Policy recommendations:

- Need to address the overlapping of policies (esp. between Land Act and Thromde Act 2007).....
- MoWHS to be lead agency for human settlements through legislation of Planning Act, Building Act, Land Use Act,
- RCSC need to provide additional planners and architects to MoWHS or local government
- Sectoral functions from NLC needs to be delegated as per Land Act provisions;
- Responsibilities should come with some executive authority, so that accountability is streamlined and also to maximize the efficiency in service delivery which is the priority for public and government.

Everybody should realize that urbanization cannot be stopped nor it is advisable to do so.....

We can only be proactive and prepare to face it through better policies, manpower, resource and planning.

Thank You