

International Academic Conference on 'Global Land Grabbing'

Farmland grabs by urban sprawl and their impacts on peasants' livelihood in China

LI Xiubin

(Chinese Academy of Sciences)

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Outline

1. Conversion of farmland to urban built-up land
2. Estimation of the number of farmers who lost their land
3. Property losses of farmers in the process of land acquisition
4. Livelihood of landless peasants
5. Land title

1. Conversion of farmland to urban built-up land (1991-2008):

Built-up land expansion:

Average annual increase of built-up land was about 351,000 ha, representing an average annual increase of 1%.

Farmland loss due to built-up land expansion:

Average annual loss of farmland was about 182,000 ha. Some 3.27 million ha in total for the period, amounting to 2.7% of the country's stock, close to the territory of Swiss.

Proportion of farmland in the newly increased built-up land:

It is estimated based on the official data that farmland contributes to 53% of the new built-up land.

But according to scholars estimation, 60- 80%.

2. Estimation of the number of farmers who lost their land:

Estimation according to the State Statistical Bureau's investigation:
54 million.

Estimation by Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS):
55 million.

equivalent to the population of a big country in Europe (UK and France, 60 m; Italy, 57 m)

3. Property losses of farmers in the process of land acquisition:

According to the law (Land Management Law 2004):

The compensation to farmers includes the land compensation fees, resettlement fees and ground attachments and young crops compensation fee.

< 10% of the land price at which the government sells on the market.

Actual compensation according to investigations:

Only 2-5% in the total land sale revenue..

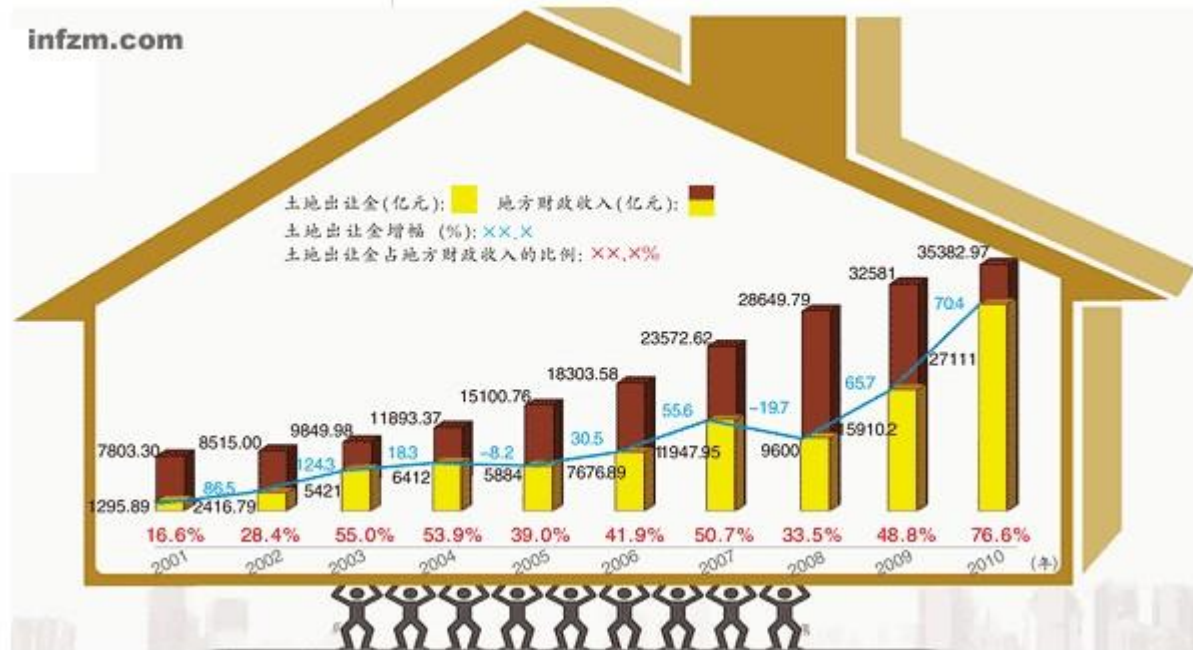
Official statistics (Ministry of Finance, 2009):

Only 1.4% of the total land sale revenue.

Scholars' estimation that Chinese farmers have lost some 30 trillion *yuan* in land assets during the past six decades.

Governments' land sale revenue:

It is growing rapidly in recent years. It reached as high as 2.7 trillion *yuan* in 2010, 20 times increase within one decade. The cumulated land sale revenue during the past 10 years is 8.37 trillion *yuan*.



4. Livelihood of landless peasants:

Land as insurance:

For farmers, the land has multiple functions like resources, assets, and insurance. Social security system only covers urban areas in China. It has not yet been fully established in rural areas. In this connection, the value of the land as insurance becomes one of the most important functions of the land for Chinese farmers. Once the land lost, farmers are likely to be in poverty.

Coverage of landless peasants by social security systems (SCDRC's survey in 2005):

Even in Beijing, only 44.3% of the landless peasants was covered by old-age insurance and those covered by health insurance, 60%. There was only 29.2% and 47.5% of the landless peasants covered by old-age and health insurance respectively in Sichuan Province.

The unemployment rate was 3.5% before but reached to 9.2% after land acquisition. Governments provided skills training for landless farmers in order to help and guide the transfer of employment. But the effort was not enough compared to the demand because it only covered 20% of the total laborers.

5. Land titling:

Bundle of rights in China:

Type of land	Title owner	Land zoning	Usage right	Transfer right
Urban land	State	Governments	Private; public	Private (usage transfer rights)
Rural land	Village community	Governments	Community Farmers (farming right, timber right) State (mineral right)	Farmers (farming transfer rights – rent - but no conversion rights) Governments (conversion rights – land acquisition)

In the process of urban expansion, ownership has to be changed before the collectively owned land can be occupied, no matter farmland or rural built-up land. Community-owned built-up land is not allowed to sell on market.

Conclusion and discussion:

Reform on the distribution system of land value-added

Vs.

Land titling ?

Thank you