Urban transition in Vietnam: What we can learn from farmland conversion for urban development in peri-urban areas of Hue City?

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Abstract

The urban transition in contemporary Vietnam was accompanied by growing vulnerabilities for urban and rural residents. Many recent studies were concentrated in effects of disasters linked directly or indirectly to global warming and climate change on urban population life. Little attention was put in farmland conversion for urban development and its impacts from a governance perspective. This study was therefore conducted in peri-urban areas of Hue City to make a generally inventory urban growth and farmland conversion; illustrate the issues, causes and consequences. Three key conclusions were identified: 1) farmland conversion was a process of involving three main stakeholders, including: governments, investors, and villagers. While the participation of affected people was passive and weak, the governments applied its extension powers in the decision-making process; 2) farmland conversion for urban development projects significantly contributed to increasing the social differentiation among households and within family as well as marginalization; 3) In order to enhancing urban transition governance, the participation of multi-stakeholders had to involved in all the urban development policies. The government should pay a particular attention to local issues (e.g., employment, income, vulnerabilities) in the farmland conversion plans. Data and information was collected through documentary research, household surveys, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

Keywords: Urban transition, farmland conversion, social differentiation, peri, urban areas, Hue, Vietnam

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