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# Safeguard Measures for Implementation of New Round of Land Consolidation Planning

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**Abstract** We conduct a comprehensive analysis of the current situation of security system for implementation of China's land consolidation planning. The prominent problems in the process of implementing safeguard measures for planning are summarized as follows: the guiding ideology for planning formulation is imperfect; the legal basis is weak, and administrative means are not sound; the economic security mechanism is not brought into full play, and the social security measures still need to be further deepened; the technical safeguard measures are short. From laws and regulations, administrative management, economic security, social supervision, technology management and other aspects, we establish the scientific security system for implementation of land consolidation planning; put forth the recommendations for guaranteeing the implementation of planning in China.

**Key words** Land consolidation planning, Planning implementation, Safeguard measures

The implementation management of land consolidation planning directly affects the layout of regional land consolidation, development of ecological environment, economy and society. From the legal, administrative, technical and other aspects, the existing planning has formulated a series of safeguard measures, playing a significant role in guiding and regulating land consolidation, promoting efficient, economical and intensive use of land, strengthening the protection of farmland, especially basic farmland, *etc.*, but these results are achieved mainly relying on administrative measures, especially the administrative examination and approval means; social, economic and other means have not been fully utilized, to some extent affecting the realization of the planning goals. Therefore, strengthening the research on safeguard measures for planning implementation, and improving the safeguard mechanism for planning implementation, is of great significance<sup>[1]</sup>.

## 1 The current situation of implementation management of China's land consolidation planning

**1.1 The legal system of land consolidation is improved continuously** In 2011, China issued *Land Reclamation Ordinance*. *Land Management Law* (revised draft) that has been brought back to the State Council for consideration, has specially set up an article of "land consolidation". Through 10 years of development, the existing safeguard measures for the implementation of land consolidation planning have formed the organic security system with project management as the core, including land consolidation project management, project review, implementation management, acceptance (check) and

other relevant policies<sup>[2]</sup>.

**1.2 The land consolidation planning is basically established** To put requisition-compensation balance of farmland and dynamic equilibrium system of total farmland in place, China formulated the first round of land consolidation planning, namely *Land Development, Consolidation and Reclamation Plan* (2001–2010). 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities as well as most cities and counties, all complete the special planning of land development and consolidation, effectively guiding the healthy and orderly land consolidation all over China.

**1.3 The funding sources of land consolidation are constantly broadened** At present, the land consolidation funds mainly include paid use fees of new construction land, land reclamation fees, 15% of net land transfer income, *etc.* In recent years, the funds that can be used for land consolidation can be up to a total of 1 00 billion yuan annually.

**1.4 The land consolidation standard system is constantly improved** With increase in the number of land consolidation projects, the land consolidation standard system is also constantly improved. The current relevant codes of practice mainly include *Design Specifications of the Land Development and Consolidation Project*, *Acceptance Regulations of the Land Development and Consolidation Project*, *Budget Quota Standard of the Land Development and Consolidation Project*, *Construction Standards of the Land Development and Consolidation Project*, *Guideline for Formulating Land Reclamation Program*, *etc.*

**1.5 The land consolidation team constantly grows** Nowadays, the central-level, provincial-level, municipal-level and county-level land consolidation government management system in China has basically taken shape; the quality of relevant practitioners is continuously improved, who specialize in surveying and mapping, feasibility studies, planning design, con-

struction, supervision, auditing and accounting on the implementation of land consolidation project, and the team grows by leaps and bounds.

## 2 Analysis of issues concerning safeguard measures for the implementation of existing land consolidation planning

**2.1 The guiding ideology for planning formulation is imperfect** When the economy begins to overheat, and the arable land is occupied in a large amount, affecting national food security, the protection of the amount of cultivated land becomes the core content of planning, and the balance of farmland expropriation and compensation in the last round of planning becomes the dominant principle. With the lack of reserve resources, the platform role of land consolidation in the process of urban-rural coordination and urban-rural integration is increasingly prominent; efficiency increase of arable land and intensive economical use of construction land becomes the dominant principle of the new round of planning. Therefore, in order to revise the planning and ensure the realization of the planning objectives, it is necessary to have correct and rational understanding of the planning<sup>[3]</sup>.

**2.2 The legal basis of planning implementation mechanism is weak** The current land consolidation is based on *Land Management Law and Regulations for the Implementation of Land Administration Law*. The relevant regulations are scattered in the different legal provisions, having not formed the complete laws and regulations system of land consolidation, and particularly there is a shortage of *Land consolidation Act* or relevant implementing regulations, lacking authority.

**2.3 The administrative means in security mechanism of planning implementation are not sound** First, the authority and binding force of planning are not strong; the formulation of planning and implementation of planning are neglected, and the implementation is often carried out not according to planning, making the planning become a mere formality. In the implementation process, there are a lot of arbitrary amendments and adjustments of planning; the phenomenon of planning changing following the leadership and planning changing following the project is very serious.

Second, the planning review system is neglected, and the phenomenon of emphasizing project approval but downplaying planning review is widespread.

Third, it lacks the planning revision system. Inefficient planning adjustment, the shortage of corresponding supervision, evaluation and adjustment system in the process of planning implementation, seriously affect the implementation of the planning<sup>[4]</sup>.

**2.4 The economic security mechanism of planning implementation is not brought into full play** First, the implementation of land consolidation planning in China relies heavily on administrative means, and the use of market-based instruments seriously lags behind.

Second, the constraints on land consolidation mechanism make the social capital of various departments fail to be effec-

tively integrated, and fail to give play to the aggregation role.

Third, it lacks organic combination between planning and market, so that all parties' enthusiasm for participation in land consolidation can not be fully mobilized, and the basic role of market in allocating land resources is not brought into full play.

**2.5 The social security measures for planning implementation still need to be further deepened** First, the public participation in the process of the planning formulation is insufficient.

Second, the public participation in the planning is not wide and deep enough, basically staying at the level of publicity of project formulation results. The public are merely the passive recipients of planning, and the effective social constraint mechanism has not yet been established.

**2.6 The technical safeguard measures for planning implementation are short** First, the planning starts late, and there are few theories and methods that we can draw on for formulation, thus the planning is not scientific enough.

Second, the adaptability and operability of the planning is not strong. The emphasis of planning at all levels is not very prominent. The high-level planning is not strategic and forward-looking enough; the depth and operability of the grass-roots planning is insufficient. In terms of planning content, "offside" and "absence" coexist. In addition, due to restrictions on technical means and insufficient site survey, the basic data adopted are not full and accurate; in some parts, the map, number and actual situation are inconsistent, making the information of current situation asymmetrical.

Third, the information technology tools are not be widely used in the process of planning implementation, and the planning database construction is still in blank.

## 3 The construction of security system and safeguard measures for implementation of land consolidation planning in China

**3.1 Constructing scientific security system for implementation of land consolidation planning** According to the system theory and public management theory, combined with requirements and development trends of new round of planning implementation and the new situation of land consolidation planning, we establish the framework system of implementation security of land consolidation planning from the legal, administrative, economic, social, and technical aspects on the implementation of land consolidation planning (Fig. 1)<sup>[5]</sup>.

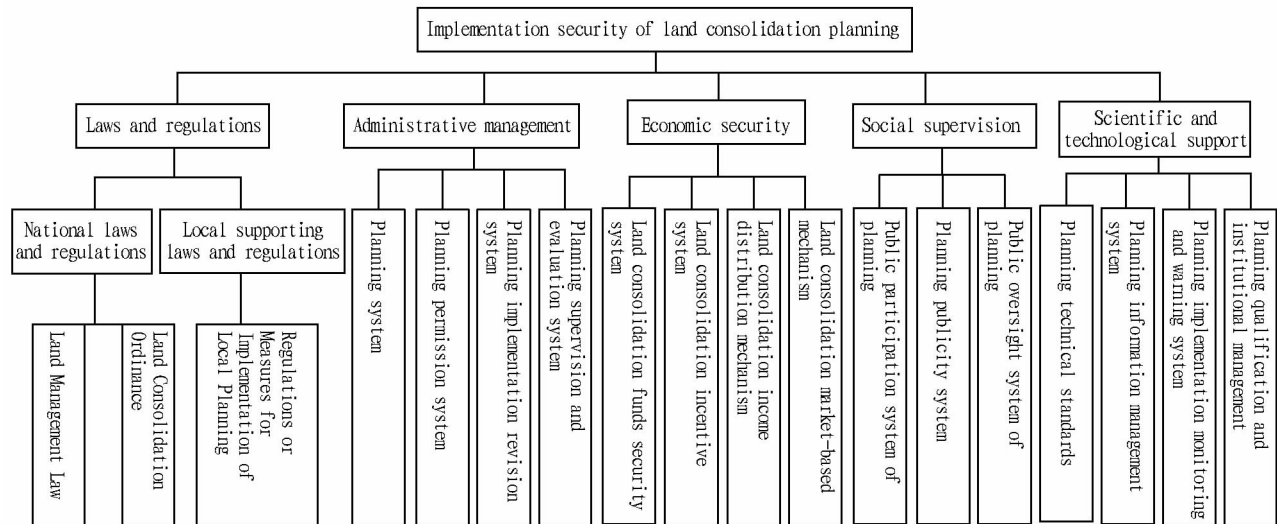
**3.2 Improving and innovating upon safeguard measures for implementation of land consolidation planning in China**

**3.2.1 The laws and regulations measures.** We should establish the legal operation system of planning implementation with laws and regulations as center, supported by special regulations and local laws and regulations; strengthen the construction of provincial and municipal local laws and regulations.

The central government should initiate the research and drafting work of *Land Consolidation Regulations* and so on as quickly as possible; the provincial and municipal local governments should also fully consider local conditions, to formulate

land consolidation regulations or planning implementation measures and other local laws and regulations, to make the work of

planning implementation enter into law-based track.



**Fig. 1 The framework system of implementation security of land consolidation planning**

### 3.2.2 The administrative management measures.

(i) Strengthening organizational leadership of the planning implementation. We should establish the government-led, departments-cooperative and public-participatory work mechanism; put the common responsibility of the land consolidation in place; establish the target responsibility system, to regard the completion of land consolidation objectives and tasks as the important content of assessment and appraisal on the local government's performance of land management.

(ii) Improving the land consolidation planning system. We should form the national, provincial, municipal, county, township land consolidation planning system. The land consolidation planning should be in line with the overall land use planning, and well connect with the main functional areas, industrial planning, infrastructure planning, water conservancy planning, woodland conservation planning, and ecological and environmental planning<sup>[6-7]</sup>. Based on the orientation of regional development functions, resources foundation conditions, the national regional development strategy and regional balance, we should rely on major projects and major programs, to implement differentiated management on the basis of payment of new fees in all regions, and decompose the land consolidation size hierarchically to the provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) for implementation.

(iii) Strictly controlling the implementation of land consolidation planning. We should establish the planning permission system including examination and verification of land consolidation project planning, and regulate the size, structure, layout and timing of land consolidation based on planning; strengthen supervision and inspection of planning; prohibit arbitrary amendment, to earnestly safeguard the authority and seriousness of planning; put the planning targets and tasks in place, formulate and implement the annual land consolidation plan; strengthen the assessment and evaluation of plan implementation, to safeguard the implementation of planning objectives.

(iv) Improving the revision system of planning implementation. The system must clearly revise and adjust the pre-conditions, make the procedures of planning modification and adjustment rigorous, heighten the threshold of planning modification and adjustment, and maintain the authority and seriousness of planning.

(v) Establishing the supervision and evaluation system of planning implementation. We should improve the major project implementation and demonstration construction management system; establish the mechanism of joint management of major projects and demonstration construction by the central and local government; strengthen the central government's supervision on the implementation of major projects and demonstration construction.

(vi) Improving centralized and unified land consolidation record-keeping system. We should establish the "trinity" regulatory system of the annual inspection, routine inspection and key inspection, and combine the special inspection and regular supervision and inspection, to improve regulatory quality and efficiency.

### 3.2.3 The economic security measures.

(i) Strengthening planning coordination, and effectively aggregating the capital. We should coordinate various types of relevant industrial planning and integrate agriculture-related funds; establish the government-led and effectively-integrated land consolidation fund raising and management system; take the way to make budget unchanged, the channel orderly and the use unchanged; concentrate the investment for the land consolidation projects, and give full play to the comprehensive efficiency of funds use; improve the use of funds, to form "competitive effect"; take major projects as grip, to prompt various provinces to use the new added fees for the major project areas at the national level, in the form of major project implementation, in order to form scale merit and change the status quo of low enthusiasm for the basic farmland consolidation in all

regions.

(ii) Establishing economic incentive mechanism of farmland consolidation. We should focus on the central and local financial transfer payment, and establish regional compensation mechanism; improve the distribution system of paid land use fee factor method of new added construction land; explore and establish farmland protection economic compensation mechanism, and fully mobilize the enthusiasm of the local government and farmers for protecting arable land and constructing high-standard basic farmland.

(iii) Exploring the land reclamation incentive mechanism. In accordance with the principle "who invests, who benefits", we should encourage and guide the social capital to participate in land reclamation. Based on the relevant provisions of the *Land Reclamation Ordinance*, we should comprehensively use some ways, such as returning the farmland occupation tax, complementing the farmland indicator incentives and giving financial subsidies, to mobilize the enthusiasm of people who reclaim land, the main body of social investment, land right owners, and the government for participating in land reclamation.

(iv) Improving the land consolidation benefit distribution mechanism. The irrational distribution of land consolidation income and land benefits, results in damage to the interests of farmers, which is the biggest challenge facing land consolidation. The next step we should urgently take is to improve the rural land system, and rationally allocate the land income.

(v) Exploring the marketization mechanism of land consolidation. We should research and explore the market-based funds operation mode of land consolidation; establish diversified investment and financing channels of land consolidation, to form the security system of land consolidation funds dominated by the government funds, attracting funds from society.

### 3.2.4 The social supervision measures.

(i) Expanding the scope and depth of public participation. The main body of participation should not only include the government and departments involved in planning, but also include the relevant interest groups in the consolidation.

(ii) Improving the working style of planning. We should establish and improve the expert advice system of planning formulation and department coordination system, and strengthen the argument and coordination of the planning.

(iii) Establishing and improving the planning publicity sys-

tem. After the land consolidation planning is approved, we should increase the transparency of planning implementation, implement "sunshine operation" of land consolidation, and consciously accept the public supervision and management on the planning implementation<sup>[8]</sup>.

### 3.2.5 The technology management measures.

(i) Improving the technical standard system of land consolidation. We should formulate provincial, municipal and county land consolidation planning, and the special planning rules of land consolidation, land planning and land reclamation.

(ii) Promoting the information-based construction of land consolidation planning management. Based on the "one map" project, we should use 3S technology, to establish the planning database and the planning management information system<sup>[9-10]</sup>.

(iii) Strengthening the building of practitioners and planning team in the land consolidation institutions at all levels.

(iv) Improving the dynamic monitoring and early warning system of land consolidation, and establishing the "monitoring – evaluation – early warning" system of land consolidation planning implementation, to form the system platform of planning – project – supervision.

(v) Establishing the regulatory system for ensuring the implementation of planning.

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