

Farmland Conversion and Protection Policy in Berlin-Brandenburg

According to the national sustainability strategy of Germany, land conversion for urban development should be reduced from currently 120 ha per day to 30 ha per day by 2020. All states and municipalities in Germany are expected to develop instruments to contribute to this objective.

The Master-Thesis shall review the farmland conversion for urban development and the respective farmland protection policies in Berlin and Brandenburg from 1991 to 2008. The thesis should analyse the main determinants of farmland conversion and the effectiveness of farmland preservation policies in Berlin and Brandenburg using secondary at the state level and primary data for a selected municipality in Brandenburg.

The Master-Thesis is embedded in the project “Governing Farmland Conversion in the Quest for Sustainability. Comparing China and Germany”, which conducts comparative case studies between the city of Nanjing, China and the metropolitan area of Berlin-Brandenburg, Germany. The thesis will be supervised by Dr. Volker Beckmann, Humboldt University Berlin and Ph.D. candidate Rong Tan, Nanjing Agricultural University, China. The thesis should be written in English. However, for doing the empirical work excellent German language skills are required.

Students who are interested in this subject should contact Dr. Volker Beckmann, Email: v.beckmann@agrار.hu-berlin.de

Reducing the Bureaucratic Burden of Farmland Conversion? Transaction Costs Analysis of Farmland Conversion in Berlin-Brandenburg

The conversion of farmland for urban development is an activity that is highly regulated in many countries of the world. In Germany, the administrative procedures put a lot of bureaucratic burden to landowners, developers, investors and the public administration. Given the aims of the German government to reduce the bureaucratic burden to enhance investments and businesses, the question arises whether the procedures of farmland conversion could be reasonably simplified.

The Master-Thesis aims at developing a framework to analyse the bureaucratic burden of the administrative procedures of farmland conversion in Germany. First, the thesis should identify the administrative activities involved in farmland conversion including their costs and functions. Second, recommendations should be developed on how to reduce the administrative burden of farmland conversion without facing significant losses. The empirical research should be based on a case study in Berlin-Brandenburg.

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