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China land use guarantees economic growth

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China's land use has guaranteed the country's economic growth and meanwhile has been subject to strict examination to guarantee the country's baseline of 1.8 billion mu (120 million hectares) arable land, a senior official said here on Tuesday.

As of April 1 this year, the total area of arable land stood at about 1.826 billion mu. The amount of arable land must be kept at 1.8 billion mu, a baseline the government set to guarantee the country's grain security, according to the 11th Five-year Plan on National Economic and Social Development (2006-2010).

Lu Xinshe, deputy minister of land and resources, said that from January to May, the country had approved the use of land covering 3.51 million mu, which accounted for 55.7 percent of the annual quota.

Land used for building communication, water conservancy and energy resources projects accounted for 83 percent of the total approved land in the five-month period. Most of the projects are among those designed to help boost domestic demand and guarantee economic growth against the backdrop of economic downturn, Lu said.

Lu said the ministry had been strict in approving land use to prevent irregularities. During the first five months, the ministry had rejected applications for land used to build 91 projects, which did not measure up to either industrial policies or land use regulations. Meanwhile, it had canceled use of 8,914 mu after double checks. Lu did not elaborate on the cancellations.

The ministry would try to ensure land supply match the stimulus package while maintaining effective control and management to guarantee the target of arable land protection, Lu said.

(Xinhua News Agency June 23, 2009)

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- A:** In order to put the protection of giant pandas and other wildlife under the law, the Chinese government put the protection of rare animals and plants into the Constitution.

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