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Assessing the Current State of Compensation, Support, and Resettlement upon State Land Recovery in Thanh Hoa Province

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Abstract
Industrialization, urbanization, and the rollout of key infrastructure projects in Thanh Hoa province in recent years have driven large-scale land recovery, while compensation, support, and resettlement remain a sensitive task that directly affects residents' rights and project timelines. This study assesses the current state of this work in Thanh Hoa province during 2023-2025, since the Law on Land No. 31/2024/QH15 took effect, identifying achievements, limitations, causes, and appropriate solutions. Using desk research to synthesize and analyze secondary data from legal documents, reports of provincial land-management agencies, and published news and statistics, the study finds that Thanh Hoa has achieved positive progress in land clearance for key infrastructure projects, while limitations remain in land-price determination, uneven progress across localities, resettlement-site quality, and post-resettlement livelihoods. Building on these findings, the study proposes solutions tied to specific implementing authorities at the provincial and grassroots levels, contributing to improving compensation, support, and resettlement work and to reconciling the province's socio-economic development goals with the lawful rights of residents whose land is recovered in Thanh Hoa province.

Keywords: Compensation, Support, and Resettlement, Land Recovery, 2024 Law on Land, Thanh Hoa Province

1. Introduction

During 2021-2025, Thanh Hoa province has identified the development of socio-economic infrastructure as one of three strategic breakthroughs, under the orientation of "infrastructure leading the way," focusing on transport infrastructure, the infrastructure of Nghi Son Economic Zone, and the system of industrial parks and clusters across the province (Đại biểu Nhân dân Newspaper, 2026) [1]. In the first half of 2025 alone, the province approved investment policies for 61 projects, attracting nearly VND 17,900 billion in registered capital, of which the trade-services and infrastructure sectors accounted for more than 80 percent of total capital (VnEconomy, 2025c) [16]. Industrialization and urbanization proceeding at such a pace inevitably drive large-scale land recovery to implement public-investment and infrastructure-development projects, placing increasingly high demands on compensation, support, and resettlement work upon State land recovery.

This is a sensitive task in state land administration, as it directly affects the lawful rights of land users whose land is recovered, while also influencing the pace of site clearance - that is, the process of recovering land, relocating assets, and handing over cleared sites to investors - as well as local social stability. Practice in many localities shows that a gap between legal provisions and implementation outcomes persists. A study by Do Thi Tam *et al*. (2018) [4] assessing land recovery and allocation at two projects in Yen Dinh district, Thanh Hoa province, found that although the basic procedures complied with regulations, compensation land prices remained lower than market prices, compensation and support plans were implemented mainly in cash, while vocational training and job-placement support for people whose land was recovered remained inadequate. Similar findings were reported by Nguyen Tran Tuan and Hegedűs Gábor (2022) [6] in Da Nang city, where households whose land was recovered expressed dissatisfaction mainly due to the gap between compensation prices and market prices, as well as the policy's insufficient livelihood-restoration support measures. Taking an information-access-rights approach, Nguyen Tran Tuan (2023) [5] found that compensation levels for agricultural land were typically significantly lower than for other land types, while households' right to specific information about compensation plans was not adequately guaranteed.

Overall, domestic and international studies on this topic can be grouped into three main approaches: A legal approach, analyzing changes in the land-law framework over time, exemplified by studies analyzing the new provisions on

compensation, support, and resettlement in the 2024 Law on Land compared with the 2013 Law on Land (Pham Thu Thuy, 2025; Nguyen Thi Nga, 2025) [8, 7]; a land-economics approach, focusing on the mechanism for determining compensation land prices and the gap with market prices; and a social-security approach, assessing the ability of resettled households to restore their livelihoods and stabilize their lives. However, most existing studies are either limited to the district level with relatively old survey data, or confined to commentary on new legal provisions without reference to a specific locality. Meanwhile, since the Law on Land No. 31/2024/QH15 and Decree No. 88/2024/ND-CP dated 15 July 2024, which details compensation, support, and resettlement upon State land recovery, took effect, the Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee has issued Decision No. 63/2024/QD-UBND dated 3 October 2024, specifying compensation, support, and resettlement upon State land recovery within the province, replacing the previous regulation. This is precisely the research gap this paper seeks to fill: No study has yet systematically and up-to-date assessed the current state of implementation of this work in Thanh Hoa province under the newly applied legal framework.

For these reasons, this paper aims to assess the current state of compensation, support, and resettlement work upon State land recovery in Thanh Hoa province, to answer the research question: What achievements has this work attained in the province, and what limitations remain, in both legal and practical implementation terms? The research scope is spatially limited to Thanh Hoa province, and temporally focused on the recent period associated with the transition from the 2013 Law on Land to the 2024 Law on Land. Based on desk research combining synthesis, analysis, evaluation, and comparison of secondary data, the paper expects to contribute an updated, systematic picture of this work in Thanh Hoa, while providing a practical basis for local state management agencies in implementing the 2024 Law on Land, thereby helping to reconcile the province's socio-economic development goals with the lawful rights and interests of people whose land is recovered.

2. Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Under Article 3 of the Law on Land No. 31/2024/QH15 (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2024), land recovery is the State's decision to take back a land user's land-use right in accordance with the law; compensation for land is the State's restitution of the value of the land-use right over the recovered land area to the person whose land is recovered; support upon State land recovery is a State policy to help affected people stabilize their lives and production; and resettlement is the State's arrangement of residential land and housing for people whose residential land is recovered and who must relocate. Although defined separately, these four concepts are closely related: Compensation addresses the consequence of lost asset value, support offsets indirect livelihood losses, and resettlement is the condition for people whose land is recovered to stabilize their housing.

On a theoretical level, the State's recovery of land for defense, security, and national or public-interest socio-economic development purposes draws on the theory of compulsory acquisition for public purposes (eminent domain), under which public power may limit private property rights provided that fairness, openness, transparency, and adequate compensation are ensured. Phan and Spitzer (2022) [9], comparing constitutional provisions on land acquisition across multiple countries, found that the legitimacy of land acquisition depends on three core factors - the purpose of acquisition, the procedure followed, and the adequacy of compensation - and recommended that Vietnam define the concept of national and public interest more specifically to limit the risk of abuse of the land-recovery power. This theoretical framework underpins the paper's assessment of not only procedural compliance but also the substantive adequacy of compensation, support, and resettlement work in Thanh Hoa province.

Viewed historically, the legal framework for compensation, support, and resettlement has undergone continuous refinement. Compared with the 2013 Law on Land, the 2024 Law on Land adds several breakthrough provisions, such as the principle of completing approval of the compensation, support, and resettlement plan and arranging resettlement before issuing the land-recovery decision, expanding support items, and diversifying forms of compensation (Pham Thu Thuy, 2025; Nguyen Thi Nga, 2025) [8, 7]. Building on Decree No. 88/2024/ND-CP dated 15 July 2024 of the Government (Government of Vietnam, 2024), which details compensation, support, and resettlement upon State land recovery, the Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee issued Decision No. 63/2024/QD-UBND dated 3 October 2024 (Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee, 2024) [11], specifying the content within local authority. This decision is precisely the link connecting the national legal framework with implementation practice in the province.

Based on the above analysis, the paper builds an analytical framework around a three-component relationship: (i) the legal framework on compensation, support, and resettlement, operating through (ii) the implementation process of local authorities at various levels in Thanh Hoa province, to produce (iii) outcomes and impacts on the rights of people whose land is recovered as well as on project implementation progress. This analytical framework is illustrated in Fig 1, which presents the nine-step sequence for carrying out compensation, support, and resettlement under current regulations, from the land-recovery notice, inventory, drafting and approval of the plan, and resettlement arrangement, to the land-recovery decision, payment, and site handover.

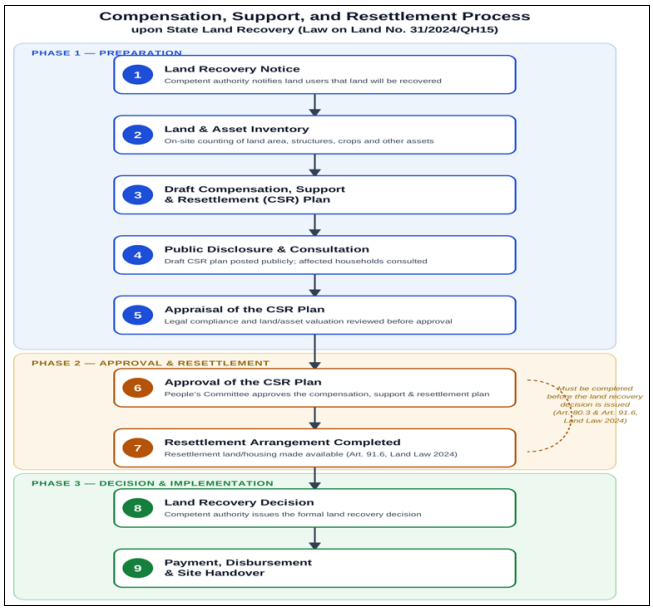

Fig 1: Process flow for compensation, support, and resettlement when the State recovers land, as set out in the Law on Land No. 31/2024/QH15 and Decree No. 88/2024/ND-CP (15 July 2024); provincial detail per Decision No. 63/2024/QD-UBND of Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee (03 October 2024) [11]. Diagram prepared by the author

2.2 Research Methodology

This paper uses desk research and does not collect primary data through field surveys. Secondary data are drawn from four main groups: First, the system of legal documents on land, including the 2024 Law on Land (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2024), Decree No. 88/2024/ND-CP (Government of Vietnam, 2024), and Decision No. 63/2024/QD-UBND of Thanh Hoa province (Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee, 2024) [11]; second, reports on compensation and site-clearance work by Thanh Hoa's land-management agencies; third, Thanh Hoa provincial statistical yearbooks over the years; and fourth, published studies related to compensation, support, and resettlement in Vietnam.

In terms of analytical technique, the paper applies systematic document-content analysis, in which materials are read, extracted, analyzed, and distilled following a sequence similar to the READ approach proposed by Dalglish *et al*. (2020) [3] for policy research - comprising preparing the documents, extracting data, analyzing data, and distilling the findings - thereby ensuring the systematicity and verifiability of the secondary-document analysis process. On this basis, the paper conducts a temporal comparison between the provisions of the 2013 Law on Land and the 2024 Law on Land to clarify continuities and new provisions, together with a comparison between legal provisions and practical implementation data in Thanh Hoa province to identify the gap between policy and implementation. The entire analytical process is cross-checked against the three-component analytical framework built in section 2.1, which allows the paper not only to describe the current situation but also to explain the causes of the achievements and limitations identified.

3. Current State of Compensation, Support, and Resettlement upon State Land Recovery in Thanh Hoa Province

3.1 Overview of Land Recovery for Socio-Economic Development in Thanh Hoa Province

During 2023-2025, site clearance linked to compensation, support, and resettlement in Thanh Hoa province has taken place on a large scale, spanning hundreds of projects each year and serving both public-investment projects and enterprise-investment projects. In 2023, the province cleared 2,286 ha out of a planned 2,369 ha across 726 projects, reaching 96.49 percent of plan - assessed at the time as the highest completion rate on record (VnEconomy, 2024a) [12]. Moving into 2024, the plan was raised to 778 projects covering more than 2,166.874 ha, and by year-end the province had completed more than 2,297 ha, reaching 102 percent of plan, with enterprise-investment clearance exceeding its plan by 11.1 percent and rising 16.9 percent compared with 2023 (VnEconomy, 2025a) [14]. This trend is presented in detail in Table 1.

Table 1: Land-clearance results linked to compensation, support, and resettlement in Thanh Hoa province, 2023-2025

Year	No. of projects	Planned area (ha)	Area cleared (ha)	Completion rate (%)	Notes
2023	726	2,369.0	2,286.0	96.49	Highest completion rate on record up to 2023
2024 (plan)	778	2,166.874	-	-	Of which: 627 public-investment projects (≈1,056 ha); 151 enterprise-investment projects (≈1,110 ha)
2024 (achieved, as of 31 Dec)	-	2,166.874	2,297.0	102.0	Public investment: 1,008 ha (94.2% of plan); enterprise investment: 1,288.6 ha (111.1% of plan, up 16.9% from 2023)
2025 (plan)	686	2,590.0	-	-	Of which: 529 public-investment projects (≈1,485 ha); 157 enterprise-investment projects (≈1,105 ha)

Source: Compiled from VnEconomy (2024a, 2025a) [12, 14]

The continuous rise in planned area across the years shows that land-recovery pressure in Thanh Hoa province shows no sign of easing, and is in fact increasing alongside the progress of key national infrastructure projects running through the province, most notably the Quang Trach-Pho Noi 500kV Circuit 3 transmission-line project and the North-South high-speed railway project.

3.2 Current State of Land Compensation

Data from the Hac riverside new urban area project in Thanh Hoa city illustrate the current state of compensation payment concretely. In Ham Rong ward, as of the survey date, the province had cleared 21.57 ha out of the 27.39 ha to be recovered, paying VND 127.84 billion to 394 households - an average of about VND 324.4 million per household (VnEconomy, 2026) [17]; in Hac Thanh ward, only 0.23 ha out of 4.17 ha had been cleared, with VND 13.76 billion paid to 10 households and 1 organization (VnEconomy, 2026) [17]. The large gap in completion rates between two wards within the same project, despite being subject to the same compensation price framework, shows that the determination of compensation prices and the

degree of resident consensus are uneven across localities - partly echoing the earlier finding of Do Thi Tam *et al.* (2018) [4] in Yen Dinh district that compensation land prices lower than market prices is a common reason households do not consent to hand over sites.

At the province-wide scale, land-clearance results also vary unevenly by locality. As of 15 October 2024, the province as a whole reached 95.27 percent of its annual plan, but only 9 of more than 20 districts, towns, and cities met or exceeded their targets, led by Tho Xuan district with 115.92 ha, reaching 192.05 percent of its assigned plan, while many other localities remained below the 80-percent threshold (VnEconomy, 2024b) [13]. This gap shows that the capacity to organize compensation work among district-level localities within the province still varies considerably, even though all apply the same unified legal framework under Decision No. 63/2024/QD-UBND of the Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee.

3.3 Current State of Support Work

Besides cash compensation, practice in Thanh Hoa shows that non-financial support measures - especially information support, consultation, and mobilization - play an equally important role in building resident consensus. At the 500kV Circuit 3 transmission-line project section running through Thanh Hoa province, where 268 households with housing and residential land were affected, local authorities applied a coordinated set of support measures, such as publicly disclosing the compensation and support plan, forming mobilization teams that visited each household - including outside office hours and on days off - and deploying local leaders to be present on site to resolve emerging issues (VnEconomy, 2024a) [12]. As a result, households reached consensus to hand over their sites, and clearance was completed on 29 May 2024, meeting the province's committed schedule with the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (VnEconomy, 2024a) [12]. This case shows that when support and mobilization work is organized systematically and promptly, resident consensus can reach near-total levels even for a project without a special mechanism or policy of its own.

By contrast, at the Hac riverside new urban area project, support work and the resolution of emerging issues reveal many shortcomings: In Ket hamlet, Ham Rong ward, as many as 91 households have paid land-use fees but still have not been granted land-use right certificates, leading to prolonged complaints and disputes (VnEconomy, 2026) [17]. The contrast between the two cases shows that the effectiveness of support work depends heavily on how proactively local authorities organize implementation, rather than solely on the content of the support policy as written.

3.4 Current State of Resettlement Work

Thanh Hoa province's resettlement-organization capacity is most clearly demonstrated through the North-South high-speed railway project section running through the province. This project requires recovering about 605.33 ha of land, including 78.34 ha of residential land, affecting about 3,748 households that must relocate across 7 districts, towns, and cities - Thanh Hoa city, Nghi Son town, Bim Son town, and Ha Trung, Hau Loc, Hoang Hoa, and Nong Cong districts (VnEconomy, 2025b) [15]. To meet the resettlement needs of these households, the province has planned 41 resettlement sites totaling more than 300 ha, allocated according to the actual needs of each locality: Thanh Hoa city with 9 sites covering 155.43 ha, Nong Cong district with 11 sites covering 86.6 ha, Nghi Son town with 4 sites covering 10.4 ha, Hoang Hoa district with 8 sites covering 30.16 ha, Ha Trung district with 5 sites covering 24.64 ha, Hau Loc district with 2 sites covering 15.8 ha, and Bim Son town with 2 sites covering 5.56 ha (VnEconomy, 2025b) [15]. This proactive planning of a large-scale resettlement network, spread evenly across many localities from the project-preparation stage, properly reflects the principle that resettlement must be completed before the land-recovery decision is issued, under Clause 3, Article 80, and Clause 6, Article 91 of the 2024 Law on Land presented in Fig 1.

However, not every project achieves a similar degree of proactiveness. At the Hac riverside urban area project, although the resettlement land fund was planned back in 2006, it is still assessed as far too small for actual needs, as the project still has 182 households and 2 organizations in Hac Thanh ward, together with 315 households in Ham Rong ward, without an approved compensation, support, and resettlement plan after nearly two decades of implementation (VnEconomy, 2026) [17]. The contrast between these two cases shows that the current state of resettlement work in Thanh Hoa province is now fairly clearly polarized between a group of key national infrastructure projects, organized systematically from the land-fund-planning stage onward, and a group of urban and commercial projects implemented across multiple legal periods, where the resettlement land fund and policy have not been updated promptly to meet practical requirements.

4. Assessment of Achievements, Limitations, and Causes

The data analyzed in section 3 show that compensation, support, and resettlement work in Thanh Hoa province has achieved notable results in several respects. On overall progress, the province-wide land-clearance completion rate rose continuously, from 96.49 percent in 2023 to 102 percent in 2024 (VnEconomy, 2024a, 2025a) [12, 14], reflecting steadily improving implementation capacity. On support and mobilization work, the case of the 500kV Circuit 3 transmission-line project, where 268 households reached consensus to hand over sites on the committed schedule (VnEconomy, 2024a) [12], shows that when organized systematically, support work can achieve near-total consensus even without a special mechanism. On resettlement work, the proactive planning of 41 resettlement sites totaling more than 300 ha for the high-speed railway project from the project-preparation stage onward (VnEconomy, 2025b) [15] shows that the province has, from the outset, correctly applied the principle that resettlement must precede land recovery, in the spirit of the 2024 Law on Land.

However, alongside these achievements, the work still exhibits four main groups of limitations. On land-price determination, the gap in average compensation between localities within the same project, as in the case of Hac Thanh and Ham Rong wards (VnEconomy, 2026) [17], shows that compensation pricing is not yet truly aligned with reality and has not generated even consensus. On land-clearance progress, the large gap among district-level localities - from exceeding 192 percent of plan, as in Tho Xuan district, to below 70 percent in some other units (VnEconomy, 2024b) [13] - reflects uneven implementation capacity across the province. On resettlement-site quality,

the resettlement land fund at the Hac riverside urban area project is assessed as far too small for actual needs after nearly two decades of implementation (VnEconomy, 2026) [17]. On livelihoods and rights after resettlement, the situation of 91 households in Ket hamlet having paid land-use fees but not yet received land-use right certificates (VnEconomy, 2026) [17] shows that residents' lawful rights, after fulfilling their financial obligations, have not been guaranteed in a timely manner.

The causes of these limitations can be grouped into three categories. First, regarding legal provisions, the transition between the old legal framework, built in the 2010s, and the 2024 Law on Land has left some projects spanning multiple legal periods facing difficulties in applying a consistent compensation and support policy - consistent with the finding of Phan and Spitzer (2022) [9] that the adequacy of compensation depends on how specific and consistent legal provisions are. Second, regarding implementation capacity, the gap in progress among districts shows that personnel capacity, experience in resolving obstacles, and the degree of proactiveness of grassroots authorities remain uneven, even though all apply the same unified legal framework under Decision No. 63/2024/QD-UBND. Third, regarding socio-economic characteristics, Thanh Hoa province covers a large area, including mountainous, plains, and coastal regions with uneven levels of development, while the volume of projects requiring land recovery is rising rapidly in line with the pace of industrialization discussed in section 1, placing simultaneous pressure on the land-fund, financial, and personnel resources available for compensation, support, and resettlement work across the province.

5. Recommendations for Improving Compensation, Support, and Resettlement Work

On the land-price determination mechanism: The Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee should direct more frequent updates to the land-price schedule, closer to market movements, instead of applying a fixed price for an extended period. The provincial Department of Finance, together with an independent land-valuation organization, should conduct a specific land-price survey for each project before submitting the plan for approval, so as to narrow the compensation gap between localities, as seen in the Hac Thanh and Ham Rong case. The Provincial People's Council should consider establishing a separate financial mechanism to address land-price discrepancies arising in projects that span multiple legal periods.

On the quality of plan preparation and implementation: District-level People's Committees should standardize the process of public disclosure, consultation, and resident mobilization, following the model that proved effective at the 500kV Circuit 3 project, in which officials visited each household directly, including outside office hours. The Provincial People's Committee should conduct periodic assessments comparing progress across districts, in the manner of Table 1, drawing on the experience of leading units such as Tho Xuan, Yen Dinh, and Nga Son to replicate for localities still achieving low rates. The units and organizations carrying out compensation, support, and resettlement tasks should be strengthened with staff qualified in law and valuation, especially in districts with a large volume of projects.

On resettlement-site quality: The Provincial People's Committee should replicate the proactive approach of planning the resettlement land fund from the project-preparation stage, as in the model of the 41 resettlement sites for the high-speed railway project, extending it to long-running urban and commercial projects such as the Hac riverside urban area. District-level People's Committees should review and adjust previously prepared resettlement-site plans in accordance with the 2024 Law on Land, while accelerating the issuance of land-use right certificates to households that have fulfilled their financial obligations.

On sustainable livelihood support: The Provincial People's Committee should direct the integration of vocational-training, job-placement, and preferential-credit policies into the support plan from the plan-preparation stage onward, rather than relying solely on a one-off cash payment. District-level People's Committees should work with enterprises using the recovered land to prioritize hiring affected local workers. The provincial land-management agency should organize periodic monitoring and assessment of resettled households' living conditions, so that support policy can be adjusted in a timely manner.

6. Conclusion

This paper has assessed the current state of compensation, support, and resettlement work upon State land recovery in Thanh Hoa province, based on secondary data updated through 2025. The findings show that the province has achieved positive progress in land-clearance pace and resettlement-organization capacity at key infrastructure projects, while limitations remain in land-price determination, uneven performance among district-level localities, resettlement-site quality, and the timely protection of residents' lawful rights after land recovery. On this basis, the paper contributes an updated, systematic picture of this work in Thanh Hoa province in the context of the newly effective 2024 Law on Land, and proposes solutions tied to specific implementing authorities that are feasible and tailored to local conditions. Owing to the limitations of desk research, the paper has not directly measured the satisfaction and perceptions of residents whose land was recovered. Future research should therefore conduct a quantitative survey, using questionnaires and statistical modeling, to assess the satisfaction level and livelihood-recovery capacity of resettled households in Thanh Hoa province.

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