

Urban Resource Management and Public Participation in a Decentralization Context for Self-Sufficiency Future

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Abstract: A long call for decentralize power and resources from the hand of central government to local authorities and communities in Thailand are now being answered in the form of budgeting structure. Public housing or urban development plans and projects will likely be funded if it has been requested by local authorities and has “public participation” as a process. However, case studies in this paper suggest that to ensure a successful decentralization and to reach the best resources management goal, simply having public participation process (as it has been wildly practiced) is not enough. In the context of our society and that of most developing countries, the concept and goal of public participation has to be sensitively explained, intermediate steps and institutions needed to be introduced. An alternative keyword of public mobilization and open information are then suggested as steps in the process which may help improve local empowerment goal of the decentralization policy.

Keywords: Urban Management, Public Participation, Decentralization Policy, Self-Sufficiency Future, Sustainable Development, Bangkok, Rayong