

STUDIES IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Towards Sustainable Regional Economic Development - The case study of Iskandar Malaysia -

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ABSTRACT: Regional development is one of the main key players in accelerating the rapid changes and processes in Malaysia. Since after the independence, the implementation of regional development policies and strategies has sped up the urbanization and development including the rapid changes in economic growth. Development of regions emerged due to various reasons including the integration of geographical and physical features, the need for cooperation beyond local jurisdiction area and also due to the needs of local and national development.

In Malaysia, there are diverse development concepts of regions implemented to accelerate the economic growth of the country. There are five economic regions namely Iskandar Development Region (IDR), North Corridor Economic Region (NCER), East Corridor Economic Region (ECER), Sabah Development Corridor (SDC) and the most recent is the Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy (SCORE). There is also the growth triangle region that is based upon international integration of economic development such as the Northern ASEAN Triangle (INT-GT), the East ASEAN Growth Triangle (BIMP-EAGA) and the Southern Growth Triangle (IMS-GT).

Reviews of literatures identified sustainable regional economic developments as a development concept in balancing between development and natural ecosystem. Reviews also suggested that sustainable regional economic development were affected by the well-being of its residents. The sustainable development process is a virtuous circle that involves every aspect of living in the region.

This paper presented a review on the approach towards promoting sustainable regional development in Malaysia. The review will also discuss on issues related to sustainable regional development implemented in other countries. Thus, measures and strategies are proposed to provide a critical insight for planners, professionals and policy makers in the promoting sustainable regional economic in Malaysia.

Keywords: regional economic development, sustainable, concept, development, strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Regional development is one of the main key players in accelerating the rapid changes and process in Malaysia. Since after the independence, the implementation of regional development policies and strategies has sped up the urbanization and development including the changes in economic growth. There are various definition of regional development based on diverse concept of regions.

Diverse concept of regions can be identified into subjective and objective view (Glasson, 1974). According to Glasson (1974), in the subjective view, the concept of regions is derives from particular purpose while objective view identified regions according to geographical and physical features. However, in the early 1980s, definitions of region are based upon development approaches (Glasson & Marshall, 2007; Dawkins, 2003). Moreover, others identified the concept of regions based on functional that relate to operational concern (Glasson, 1978; Edwards, 2007), formal concept due to homogeneity of an area (Glasson, 1974) and administrative concept that relate to aspect of development (Edwards, 2007). Nevertheless, the concept of regions also emerges upon the needs of local economics and national development and emerges as 'regional policies' or 'local program' (Collits, 2008).

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