

Power dynamics in environmental policy making at local level: A case study on air pollution policy making in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

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1. Aim

This paper examined the main actors/factors on air pollution policy making in Ulaanbaatar Mongolia and focused on the question “What are the internal and external drivers to push air pollution policies in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia?”

2. Data & Methods

For this purpose, descriptive study conducted based on the review of existing literatures, primary and secondary sources. While theoretical background and conceptual framework are based on literature review, case study itself illustrates the analysis of existing primary sources.

3. Results

The important role of global community and its agenda on the environmental issue was clearly seen from the study. Soft instruments such as guidelines and standard, monitoring the air quality across the world, and naming and shaming the worst affected cities influence the domestic policy makers as well as being a basic evidence to request fund from donor agencies. Moreover, as an external actor, development banks, and other international agencies have huge impact on local policy making, by contributing in problem capture, specification of the policy ideas, and funding the significant amount of budget on the programs, based on their technical and financial resource. National government has direct influence on local decision making, even though Mongolia is decentralized in terms of fiscally and politically. By its direct mandate within the frame of Law on Air, other government programs on air pollution, as well as decisions by Air Pollution Reduction Committee, it leaves only limited space for the Mayor and his office to initiate the decisions from local level on air pollution reduction.

4. Conclusion

From these findings, it can be concluded that traditional top down approach on governance can be clearly seen in this case on air pollution policy making at local level. Furthermore, when the issue gets more attention from the public, it gets higher on the political agenda at both local and national level, regardless of the political party. In terms of bottom up approach, specifically public movement has started emerging recently in Ulaanbaatar, started as a social network group, and later formed as NGO, since the issue is affecting the public well-being directly.

5. References

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