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## **Political Economy of Environment and Sustainable Development; Local Governments and Multi-Level Governance**

*Political Economy of Environment and Sustainable Development;  
Local Governments and Multilevel Governance*

### **Summary**

In recent years, local governments have been given great authority in environmental issues in many countries. This situation can be evaluated as a result of the multi-level governance approach. Especially with the multi-level governance approach adopted by the European Union and decided to be widespread in member countries, local governments can be effective in environmental problems. Because local governments are successful in both organization and efficient use of resources. It is argued that a sound and effective approach and policy for the protection of the environment and restoration of natural resources should include basic features that reflect the harmony of national and global strategies expected for a sustainable society. Based on this, the main claim of this study is that efforts to ensure good governance in all its dimensions can initiate a rapid development process from local to national.

**Keywords;**Environment, Local Development, Local Governments, Multi-Level Governance

**Gel Codes:**H75, F64, O16.

### **Abstract**

In recent years, local governments have been given great powers on the environment in many countries. This situation can be considered as a result of multi-level governance understanding. Local governments can be active in environmental issues, especially with the multi-level governance approach adopted by the European Union and decided to be disseminated in the member states. Because they are successful in both the organization and the efficient use of resources. It is argued that a sound and effective approach and policy for the protection of the environment and the restoration of natural resources should include the basic characteristics that reflect the alignment of the expected national and global strategies for a sustainable society. From this point of view, the main claim of this study is that attempting to provide good governance with all dimensions, a rapid development process can be initiated from local to national.

**Keywords;**Environment, Local Development, Local Governments, Multilevel Governance **Gel**

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## Entrance

Increasing environmental awareness worldwide is pushing countries around the world to adjust their environmental policies. Developing countries are home to some of the world's most pressing environmental and natural resource problems, including air and water pollution that negatively impact the lives of millions of people each year, and deforestation, which contributes to biodiversity loss and climate change. The lack of political, financial and institutional resources means that traditional regulatory tools are unlikely to address these issues. Overcoming these constraints requires both well-trained policy analysts and rigorous, objective research to guide policymaking.

In recent years, local governments have been given great authority in environmental issues in many countries. This situation can be evaluated as a result of the multi-level governance approach. Especially with the multi-level governance approach adopted by the European Union and decided to be widespread in member countries, local governments can be effective in environmental issues. Because local governments are successful in both organization and efficient use of resources. It is argued that a solid and effective approach and policy for the protection of the environment and restoration of natural resources should include basic features that reflect the harmony of national and global strategies expected for a sustainable society.

The increasing awareness of governments and international organizations has resulted in several initiatives aimed at systematically confronting the overwhelming problems encountered in establishing a global policy for environmental management. This takes into account environmental changes, economic development patterns and socio-cultural factors. A sustainable society promotes the provision of basic needs with ample opportunity to satisfyingly desire a better life in the present and the future. It is emphasized that development measures must be supported by the resources available within the society for economic sustainability to be achieved. It is argued that the resource base in a sustainable society can be strengthened by the effective, efficient and equitable use of unwanted pollutants, available resources and economic growth.

### 1.Globalization, Environment and Sustainable Development

The concept of 'sustainable development' has a long history. The concept of sustainable development and sustainability is generally related to the ideas put forward by economists, philosophers, scientists and writers since the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Lumley and Armstrong, 2004:368). In this respect, sustainable development is a development model that can meet the needs of today's generations without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations. "Sustainable development" entered the world agenda towards the end of the 20th century and became a global implementation plan with international agreements signed in the 1990s.<sup>1</sup>The term was introduced by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 and has been used by politicians and civil society

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.surdurulelektrikkalkinma.gov.tr/kaynak-tanimlar/>

It was quickly adopted by organizations. It quickly became a central concept in national and international policy agendas, international negotiations, and political and popular discourse. The appeal of this concept, which promises to reconcile environmental sustainability, social welfare, and economic development, is easily understood (Stevenson, 2015:3). Although the literature on sustainable development is a separate genre in itself, the concept is better understood in terms of international issues that transcend borders, including energy security, water, and climate change (Vivekanandan, 2009:47).

On the other hand, in the globalization process, there has been a significant growth in the volume and value of global trade, investment and finance. Since international economic relations have been found to be linked to environmental quality, this situation has important implications for the natural environment. The extent to which international economic relations contribute to environmental problems or solutions to environmental problems is a subject of extensive debate (Newell and Paterson, 1998:680). Some argue that relations are largely positive, and that environmental benefits depend on the economic growth that global economic transactions seek to facilitate. For these thinkers, environmental policies should be able to address the negative consequences that may arise in ways that do not hinder global economic activity. However, others see the negative environmental effects that primarily stem from global economic relations and the economic growth associated with them. For them, it is important for environmental policies to restrict global economic transactions. A third view on this issue also gains importance by arguing that although global economic relations have some negative aspects for the environment, a balanced management of the global economy can provide both economic and environmental benefits. At this point, we see the negative environmental effects that primarily stem from global economic relations and the economic growth associated with them. (Clapp and Helleiner, 2012:491).

Sustainable development is an integrative concept that emphasizes the connections between environmental, economic and social aspects of development (George, 2007:110). Sustainable development supports economic growth on the one hand, while emphasizing biodiversity and poverty reduction, and supports short-term and natural resource-destroying strategies without using them. The concept of sustainable development is increasingly becoming a part of human living spaces and development decisions. This trend also affects local areas due to its environmental, social and economic impacts. The success of introducing sustainable development depends in part on the support and participation of the parties in the local areas. Although not all stakeholders need to be equally involved in the decision-making process regarding sustainable development, all their interests need to be identified and understood (Kapera, 2018:584).

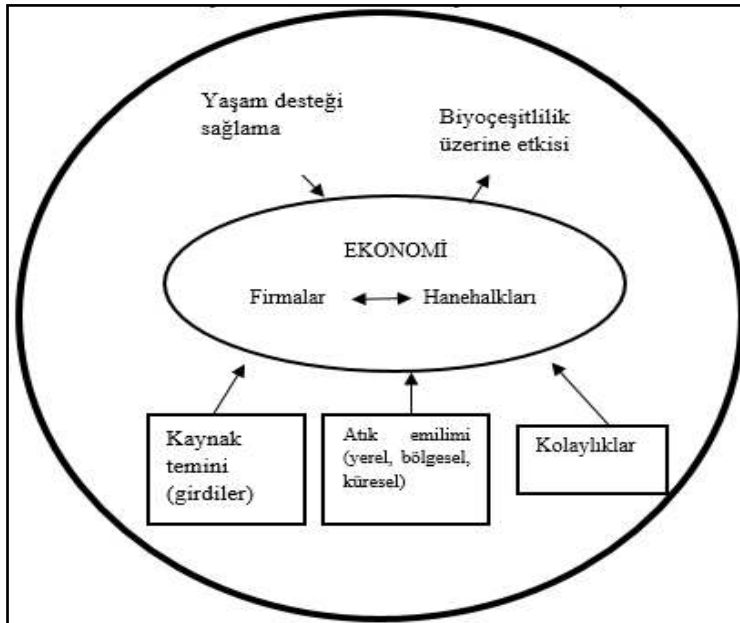
## **2. Environment and Economic Development**

Today, environmental problems experienced in every country have become common problems for all humanity. One of the conditions that form the basis of development of countries is the environment. The extent of environmental problems and how to find a solution to them constitute one of the most important agenda items of all countries.

The increasing sensitivity to the environment for countries has gained validity in the sense of rapid development of the economy. The key to the environmental problem that has taken its place on the world's agenda has been the concept of sustainable development (Tutar, 2011:2). Over the past few years, many studies have significantly changed our understanding of the local level in contemporary climate policy making. In recent years, economists have contributed to the literature by generally using different techniques than those used by environmental historians and by emphasizing the different contributions of their studies (Hickman AndStehl ,2018:16). Dense population and centralized social and economic activities are increasingly causing complex and serious urban environmental problems. In this process, it is essential to implement effective and integrated urban environmental management. In addition, a developed urban economy provides favorable conditions for the implementation of rich cultural and economic methods. Based on the above-mentioned requirements and possibilities, urban

an environmental-economic management system development as required  
This system combines economic methods with other methods in urban and environmental management (Yang et al., 2006:31).

**Figure 1:**The System of Relationships Between Economy and Environment



**Source:**Yang et al., 2006

Environmental organizations and their participants are often more dispersed and diverse in ecosystems. These range from biological disturbance (from air, water, and agriculture) in systems considered natural environments to recreational or aesthetic interests. In general, this interest is not directly tied to the activities of these movements in economic markets. Studies have shown how natural resource revenues in a developing country can quickly create problems of dependency and vulnerability to volatility in global prices and climate change. Policy interventions to address such problems include the use of financial stability funds

It ranges from the creation of a legal framework for water supply to the establishment of regional redistribution policies for water. It also emphasizes the importance of adapting to the specific characteristics of the natural resources in question and the country by outlining appropriate policies to manage newly found natural resources to prevent negative impacts that the resources may create. In such a case, the suggested policy interventions include counter-policies (Cockburn, et al,2018:520).

**Table 1.**Development of Economic Dependence on Natural Resources in the Economies of Various Countries

	Natural resource rents as a percentage of GDP						
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015
<b>World Regions</b>							
High income countries	0.7	4.5	1.3	1.3	1.8	1.9	1.1
East Asia & Pacific	1.8	19.1	8.8	3.5	5.6	6.2	1.5
Europe & Central Asia	0.7	1.04	9.6	9.9	11.0	9.3	6.2
Latin America & Caribbean	1.1	8.2	4.9	3.7	6.4	5.2	2.7
Middle East & North Africa	0.4	25.3	14.4	16.7	27.4	20.6	9.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.7	19.1	14.8	13.3	16.8	14.8	8.0
<b>Case Studies</b>							
Burkina Faso- Gold	6.8	8.3	6.8	6.0	7.2	14.9	21.0
Chad- Oil	4.0	10.1	7.5	10.6	38.6	24.5	13.1
Mongolia- Coal, Copper	ND	ND	8.7	7.9	21.6	38.6	16.5
Niger- Oil, Uranium	2.2	3.4	5.4	9.1	9.6	10.1	14.8
Guatemala- Water	1.2	2.1	1.8	1.5	1.5	2.6	2.3

**Source:**World Bank (2017) Total Natural Resources Rents (% of GDP). World Bank data. Available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.TOTL.RT.ZS>

### 3. Political Economy of the Environment

In recent years there has been increasing concern about the degradation and pollution of the environment and climate change affecting the future development of both developing and developed countries. In 1992, representatives from more than 150 countries met in Rio, Brazil, to discuss environmental problems and their impact on the future development of the world. This meeting in Rio was called '*World Summit*' or called the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

Since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, sustainable development has become the main policy response to combat global environmental degradation, from climate change to biodiversity loss and deforestation. Market instruments such as emissions trading, payments for ecosystem services and wood certificates have become the main mechanisms for financing the sustainable management of the world's natural resources (Cadman et al., 2015:17). Within this framework, over the past two decades, international political economy and environment (IPEE) experts have been working on the 1987 Brundtland Report and the 1992 Rio Conference to address economic and environmental issues.

This important work has advanced our understanding of issues such as the economic dimensions of international environmental governance, the environmental activities of international economic institutions and regimes, and new types of specific international regimes regulating the environment. However, the focus of IPEE has shifted attention away from larger structural trends in international political economy.

Their environmental impacts have not been explicitly addressed by specific international governance arrangements. Three trends that deserve more attention from IPEE scholars include: the globalization of financial markets; the rise of new powerful states such as China and India in the global economy; and, more recently, the emergence of high and volatile commodity prices. Each of these structural trends has important environmental consequences, whose close investigation has advanced our understanding of the relationship between the international political economy and the environment. Their work also encourages researchers to focus beyond treaties, institutions, and regimes to examine broader global economic structures and processes and the power relations within them (Clapp and Helleiner, 2012:489).

The literature on the political economy of the global environment suggests that economics, international relations, and international environmental policies are a mix of formal and informal institutional factors that lead to unsustainable practices. The physical environment has long been the subject of social scientists who have recognized that patterns of social activity can contribute to environmental degradation. One of the most common formulations of environmental problems as collective action is the metaphor of the Tragedy of the Commons, which argues that global overpopulation will undoubtedly contribute to widespread resource depletion. Once the fundamental characteristics of environmental issues are established as lying in the range of various human activities, research on international environmental policies has followed suit. The realist and neorealist traditions in international relations emphasize the role of power in addressing environmental problems. Neoliberal institutionalists look to the role of formal institutional features in influencing states' willingness to address transboundary and global environmental threats. The constructivist movement in international relations, on the other hand, focuses on the role of new ecological doctrines in how states choose to address environmental problems and act collectively. Ultimately, mainstream policy over the years has addressed the political economy of local development in terms of environmentally focused activities, sustainable development doctrines, free trade and environmental issues (Haas, 2013:42).

Sociological theories of the political economy of the environment have emerged in two waves. The first wave has a producerist orientation, showing how the normal processes of industrial production harm the environment. A second wave of theories focuses on social movements that challenge environmental degradation. To address popular discontent over environmental decline, states have typically created corporatist policy-making circles that include long-established, moderate environmental NGOs and exclude disadvantaged and unorganized populations. Advocates of environmental justice and sustainable consumption have sought to mobilize those who are excluded by articulating a just theory of sustainability that addresses both concerns. Current debates in the field have divided the first and second

This theoretical focus may shift towards the political economy of disasters as climate change intensifies (Rudel, et al, 2011:224).

#### ***The Role of Political Economy in the Global Environment***

Modern economics is not only concerned with financial matters, but also with the various services and resources that the natural environment provides us. In environmental economics, how do economic activity and policy affect the environment in which we live, and how does the environment support economic activity? It is very important to explain how the economy and the environment are interconnected. The environment supports economic activity by humans in four ways – providing life support, providing natural resources for production and consumption, absorbing waste products, and providing maintenance services. The economy operates from within the environmental system, and its activities affect the environment, which in turn affects the economy.<sup>2</sup>

The continuing subversion of the global environment by human activities in pursuit of developmental goals has manifested itself over the years in the form of many natural disasters: severe floods, famines, deforestation, earthquakes, ozone depletion, global warming, and other related social and economic distress. In order to reduce carbon emissions resulting from technological and chemical development processes in developed and developing countries, world leaders have sought to initiate and adopt resolutions, conventions, and agreements that will guide policies—at various times through multilateral and bilateral forums. The aim is to ensure that the environment is protected and managed by the governments of both developed and developing countries of the world (Cadman, 2015:45). In the past two decades, more attention has been paid in Western societies to the physical-biotic basis of social functioning than at any time in industrial history.

#### ***Socioeconomic Impacts of Environmental Crises***

Given the importance of time-varying environmental events such as weather, climate change, and natural disasters, several studies have assessed the importance of environmental shocks in economic history due to the implications of exogenous changes. Environmental history is a mature field and the environmental subfield of economic history is well developed, but the integration of these literatures is far from ideal. The natural environment has played an important role in the development of societies. It is thought that the findings, data sources, and methods obtained from the environmental economic history literature will further enrich environmental historiography. In addition, the dynamic relationship between some important themes in the environmental history literature has received limited attention from economists with their welfare implications (Gadgil and Guha, 1993:25). Some studies have examined the economic effects of events such as droughts, floods, and the spread of new diseases. Most of this literature has focused on the United States. For example, using weather-induced changes in 19th-century cotton crops to establish a causal effect on nonfarm business cycles has shown that more cotton exports increased the high-powered money supply in the economy (Davis, et al., 2009).

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<sup>2</sup><http://www.economicdiscussion.net/economic-development/environment-and-economic-development/economics/30299>

Fishback et al. (2011) similarly investigated whether climate or weather affected mortality rates during the Great Depression (Fishback et al., 2011:137).

The relative ease with which events such as conflict and political transitions can be recorded in historical contexts and their importance in influencing the course of history have focused a considerable volume of work. The literature on this subject provides an extensive bibliography of historical examples. Christian and Fenske (2015) and Papaioannou and de Haas (2015) have linked adverse weather conditions to unrest and crime, respectively, during the colonial period in Africa. Chaney (2013) has argued that years of flooding on the Nile River reduced the likelihood of the supreme religious authority in Muslim Egypt being replaced (Chaney, 2013:2035). Other studies have explored the longer-term effects of environmental disasters by comparing affected places or individuals with plausible comparison groups that have not been treated similarly. Cutler et al. (2007) studied the long-term health effects of America's dust bowl period on individuals by geocoding soil erosion maps, while Hornbeck (2012) tracked its effects on land values, population, and agricultural development (Hornbeck, 2012:1478). The negative effects of droughts on the eve of the Mexican Revolution and the flood disaster in Mississippi show that these effects continue to this day (Hornbeck and Naidu, 2014:966).

Public concern about environmental degradation World throughout is growing. Due to the increasing environmental awareness, it reveals the need to further expand environmental policies. For example, although there is a global awareness of the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, many developed countries, large coal exporting countries, still maintain coal production (Weng et al., 2019:208).

To understand the roots of modern environmental problems, it is necessary to appreciate how the environmental interests of the actors mentioned above relate to the physical-biotic organization of ecological systems. The history of expanding industrial production has provided data outlining a dialectical conflict between social and ecological organization in advanced industrial societies (Schnaiberg, 1992:17).

Dialectical conflicts arise whenever social systems have two or more goals that cannot be achieved simultaneously. Fundamentally, dialectical tension in the relations between modern societies and their environments arises from two axioms: (1) most elements of ecological systems cannot meet both exchange-value needs and use-value needs, and (2) the production treadmill prioritizes the exchange-value uses of ecosystems, while ecological uses are a biological and social necessity for all classes (Groves, 1992:43).

The lack of institutional stability, capacity and funding for climate change has prevented Johannesburg's climate unit from effectively measuring, collecting and reporting data on greenhouse gas emissions. This has hindered long-term strategic efforts and affected the implementation of existing strategies. According to local administrators, significant budget constraints have *Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan* and 2009 *Climate Change Adaptation Plan* has limited its success. So far, only two greenhouse gas inventories have been produced for 2007 and 2014 with the help of external actors, including international city networks. As a result, greenhouse gas emissions



The lack of comparable data on climate action creates gaps in knowledge about the real impact of climate action and delays the prioritization of carbon-intensive areas. However, international financing programs have been used to initiate climate-related projects in some sectors (Hickmann and Stehle, 2018:16).

#### **4. Environment and Local Governments**

Localization has become an important strategy for achieving development goals, providing public services and maintaining environmental protection, and has become a dominant theme in environmental policy discussions (Wittayapak and Vandergeest, 2010:14). Over the last two decades, localization has become an important strategy for achieving development goals, providing public services and maintaining environmental protection, and has become a dominant theme in environmental policy discussions (Panya, 2018:38). In this respect, there are good reasons to draw attention to local governments. Every environmental problem is also a local and global environmental problem. Local governments are the institutions closest to people and the environment. Therefore, in many countries, local governments' environmental expenditures outweigh those of others. Local governments have determined many strategic, long-term environmental policies, especially in the field of land use planning. In addition, small decisions and actions are taken cumulatively to the changes that occur in the regional environment and heritage values every day (Thomas, 2010:121).

Parallel to the process of decentralization, environmental management has become a core function of local governments. Local government management performance significantly affects the quality of life (QOL) of people, for whom local governments are responsible for basic public services, including urban planning, provision of social and health services, education, water supply, business development and environmental management. This is especially important as the world is becoming increasingly urbanized today. Rapid economic development causes environmental degradation, pollution and also global warming, and therefore, local government environmental management has high value to improve people's QOL with good environmental quality.<sup>3</sup>Therefore, while local governments act under the control of the center within the framework determined by the center, with the new method, local governments have the initiative to determine the area of action directly. Finally, while operating with the principle of top-down delegation of authority, the new method acts with the federal principle from bottom to top (Dede, 2011:71).

#### ***Environmental Problems and Local Governments***

Local governments are seen to play an increasingly important role in environmental and sustainability practices. Over the last two decades, authors have put forward various views on the role of cities in climate policy making. For example, Dodman (2009) assessed the opportunities and limits of local governments in contributing to climate change mitigation. He particularly emphasized the importance of institutional capacities for local adaptation to the negative impacts of climate change (Dodman, 2009:188).

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<sup>3</sup>For more detailed information on this subject, see; United Cities and Local Governments, *Decentralization and local democracy in the World*, Washington, D.C., 2008

*Urban Environmental and Economic Management*

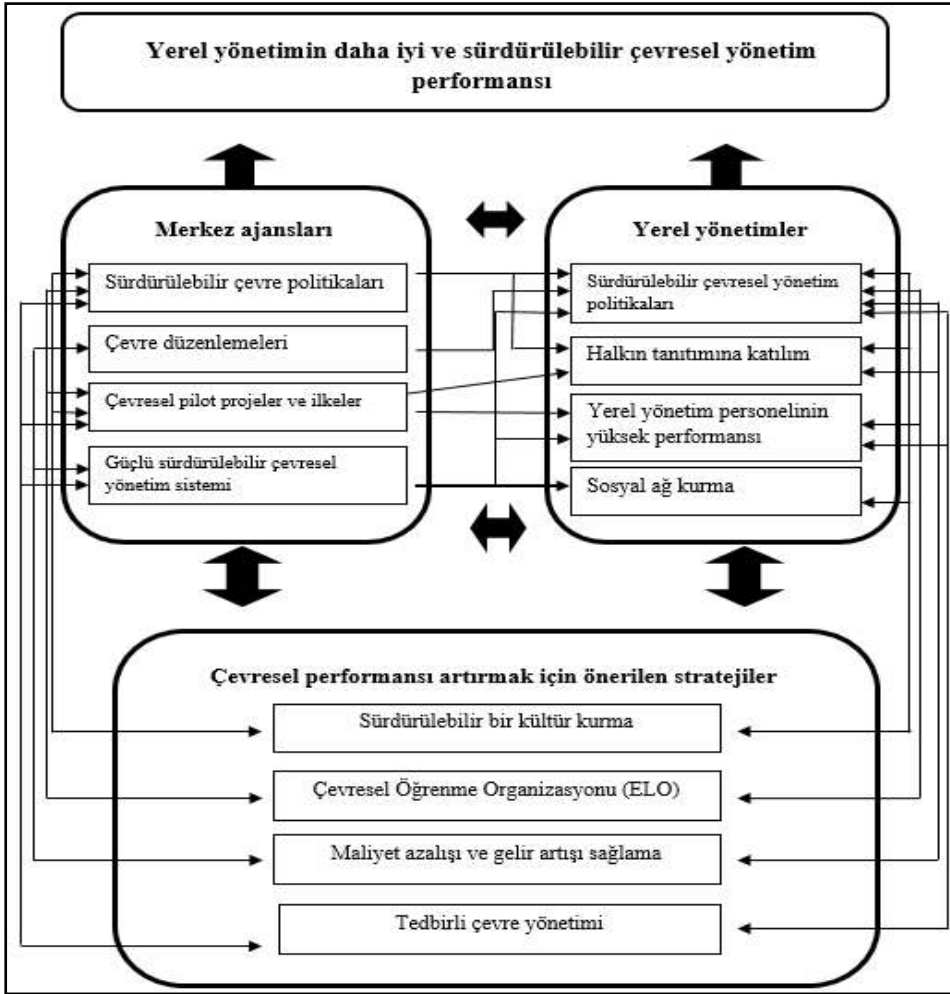
It is hoped that by establishing a multi-faceted management network, enterprises and public administration network, the urban environment economic management system can achieve effective management. The administrative management sector acts as a decision-maker, formulates laws, regulations and standards, and carries out uniform supervision and management. According to the principles of environmental economic management, the objects managed by enterprises must comply with the government's regulations and carry out. Meanwhile, public participation and monitoring are very important for positive practices (Yang et al., 2006:35).

**5. Environmental Management Strategies of Local Governments**

Environmental management systems (EMS) are also used to guide environmental activity and can contribute directly to sustainability (Emilsson and Hjelm, 2007:76). The United Nations has developed a system for economic and environmental accounting, defining four relevant areas for local governments. These include environmental protection, natural resource management, activities related to environmental damage, environmental balance sheet, changes in the quality and quantity of environmental assets (Heycox et al, 1997:6). Environmental management system (EMS) is to develop international standards that specify the requirements for an environmental management system and provide the environment for implementing policies and objectives, taking into account important environmental aspects and legal requirements (Panya et al, 2018:36). The aim here is to achieve sustainable waste management practices by balancing global and regional environmental impacts, social impacts at the local community level and economic impacts. The framework combines life cycle assessment with other environmental, social and economic tools (Kijak and Moy, 2004:33).

Although many local governments are trying to improve their environmental management systems, they face problems such as clarity of objectives, inadequate management structure, access to information and conditions specific to developing countries, which affect their environmental management performance (Emilsson and Hjelm, 2002:446). However, some local governments face environmental problems that cause various types of pollution, waste and land use problems, which affect people's QOL (Panya, et al, 2018:36).

Evaluation of environmental management is an important measure to monitor, analyze and evaluate the environmental management system (EMS) of the local government. This evaluation helps to control the degree of success or value of any action taken in relation to its purpose, objectives and results. In addition, the evaluation results help in decision making to reduce problems and improve environmental management (Panya, et al, 2018:36).

**Fig.2:**Recommended Strategies and Tips for Driving Strategies

**Source:**Panya Napawan, Poboon Chamlong, Phoochinda Wisakha, Teungfung Ratiporn.(2018), The performance of the environmental management of local governments in Thailand, *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, Volume 39, Issue 1, January–April, p.40

Multi-level governance is a process of negotiation between legitimate, deliberative, institutional structures and public, private, individual and civil society actors. This process refers to both the making and implementation of decisions and the resolution of disputes (Piattoni,2010:20). Central institutions should adopt the vision of better and sustainable local government environmental management as important policies that local governments should follow environmental management and make clear environmental regulations, because clear regulations supporting local government environmental management can increase the effectiveness of their activities. Central agencies should create a competitive environment among local governments to convince local administrators and their employees to implement the proposed policies. Pilot projects supported by central institutions should be carried out in cooperation with local governments.

It can be a way to encourage cooperation in improving environmental management. In addition, central agencies provide management resources such as human resources and budgets for environmental management of local governments, especially small local governments. However, central agencies need to support local governments in establishing a strong and sustainable environmental management system that can be operated without the help of the central government in the long term. In addition, the unity of central agencies is very important in the implementation of the proposed strategies because it provides a clear common understanding for local governments.

Sustainable environmental management should be the main policy for local governments. Instead of focusing only on current problems or the construction of infrastructure, local governments should move towards environmentally friendly planning and management, and encourage the participation of the public and stakeholders in environmental management by providing information and raising public awareness. In addition, improving performance and raising public awareness of local government personnel to ensure sustainable management is very important to improve performance and local environmental quality. Finally, establishing a social network suitable for the local context can help local governments to perform their duties more effectively and sustainably.

### ***Building a Sustainable Culture***

When determining environmental management strategies, the most important goal should be a sustainable culture. Therefore, the first strategy suggests building a sustainable culture by increasing people's environmental knowledge and awareness, changing people's environmentally friendly behaviors, and establishing social networks to support environmental activities. Therefore, LGs have been involved in the management of conservation and environmental issues through land use planning, especially through legislation on land use planning. In addition to this approach, LGs have played a greater role in determining future directions using strategic planning approaches (Thomas, 2010:121).

### ***Environmental Learning***

Environmental learning is an important method that local governments should pay attention to. This strategy aims to support and facilitate local staff in learning how to improve their performance in the long term (Panya et al, 2018:39).

### ***Reducing Costs and Increasing Revenues***

Reducing costs is one of the most important functions of environmental policy and environmental management. Because local governments have limited tools and equipment. Therefore, the proposed strategy is to reduce costs and increase revenues through three main concepts. These concepts are: green economy, command and control, and using a voluntary approach.

### ***Waste management, resource efficiency and recycling***

As previously mentioned, one of the traditional roles of LG has been in the provision of basic services such as garbage collection. With the increasing concern about pollution from landfills or incineration facilities and the consumption of resources now managed as "garbage" rather than simply disposed of, management approaches have become relatively complex (Kijak and Moy, 2004:38).

*Environmental Management*

Environmental management is an active issue in protecting the environment. Therefore, this strategy was proposed against environmental problems to reduce the impact on human beings and reduce the damage to the environment. Security measures or precautions should be planned in advance before problems occur. Therefore, at each stage of the environmental management cycle, local governments should adopt environmental risk assessment to reduce environmental problems in their areas to improve people's quality of life.

It shows the relationship between the strategies proposed to improve environmental performance and the recommendations for both central institutions and local governments to execute the proposed strategies (Panya et al, 2019:37).

## **6. Urban Environmental Policies and Multi-Level Governance: New Development**

### **The paradigm**

The complex and multi-scalar nature of environmental climate change has attracted increasing interest in governance approaches that can span across governance levels (Gupta, 2007:134). Urban governance and institutional capacity have been highlighted as necessary conditions for addressing key challenges to urban sustainability. Governance refers to the process by which government carries out its duties through the involvement of non-governmental actors (Jones and Evans, 2006:1495).

The term multilevel governance was initially used by scholars focusing on the European Union to describe the vertical and horizontal interactions between local, national and European decision-making levels (Bache and Flinders, 2004:34). Later studies developed various concepts to highlight the wide distribution of decision-making capacities and policy-making responsibilities in different areas of global affairs (Hickman and Stehle, 2018:16).

The increasing importance of actors outside the formal hierarchy of state structures, along with their increasing interconnectedness, points to the emergence of multi-level governance mechanisms in world politics today. Multi-level governance refers to the various layers of overlapping influence that characterize policy-making processes in the current global order. States find themselves having to share the policy-making function with many civil society actors whose increasing participation in policy processes is redefining the role of the state from policy control to policy coordination. This form of governance provides a broad framework within which the roles of various state-state and non-state actors involved in decision-making on a particular issue can be better understood. Therefore, given the nature of the issues at stake, there is a need to reconsider the diverse interpretation of governance. Sustainable development issues affecting both human security and state security cut across political boundaries and their complexity requires different actors working at multiple levels to negotiate and create issue-based linkages. This dispersion of decision-making at different political levels has pointed to the emergence of multi-level politics (Vivekanandan, 2009:45).

Multi-level policy network approaches focus on the interactions within, as well as between, levels of governance. Both national and subnational climate and land use

The policy area includes governmental, non-governmental and international actors operating at the relevant jurisdictional level (Gregorio, 2019:65). Efforts to tackle environmental problems require specific solutions that exploit existing and new institutions with clear cross-functional functions across jurisdictions with governance structures that have a broader scale of climate change as an environmental problem. As noted in the literature, a move towards a more centric and cohesive governance system could help overcome existing barriers to cross-level interactions (Gregorio, 2019:67).

### **7. Environment and Multi-Level Governance: Conceptual Framework**

Multi-level governance refers to a pluralistic structure formed by the state, private sector and civil society organizations in the decision-making process in public policies, on the one hand; on the other hand, it refers to the elimination of hierarchy between supranational, national and sub-national levels. Multi-level governance, by definition, is a process of continuous negotiation between actors and temporary networks formed for special purposes among decision-making actors (Dede, 2011:245). In studies on adaptation, interaction and scale, Orang Young (2002) defines five driving forces that shape the interaction between governance levels. These include: levels and type of decentralization, authority and power differences between jurisdictions, preventing policy coalitions, constellation discourses and cognitive transitions. Policy approaches emphasize the relational characteristics of policy processes (Young, 2002:25).

The complexity and multi-level nature of climate change requires governance systems that can manage and resolve conflicts of interest across scales and among policy actors. This is even more important in the Global South, where priorities can be influenced by powerful international interests. Comparative analyses of land use have found evidence of barriers to cross-pollination due to institutional and political constraints. In this sense, improved integration of mitigation, adaptation and development objectives could help reduce the divergence of interests across actors at different governance levels in climate change responses.

Efforts to tackle environmental problems require solutions that affect existing and new institutions with clear cross-functional functions among governance structures organized in regions with a large scale of climate change as an environmental problem. As noted in the literature, a move towards a more harmonious and multi-centric governance system could help overcome current barriers to cross-level interactions. It is also argued that such innovative institutions should be specifically designed and dedicated to integrate weaker interests at the local level into policy processes centrally. Climate change actors at the international and national levels have an important responsibility in this regard (Gregorio, 2019:66).

On the other hand, governance solutions that organize governance functions at different spatial levels are common. For example, the joint management of natural resources such as forests in developing countries is based on the relative advantages of undertaking some governance functions, such as funding and collective decision-making at the national level, and other governance functions, such as monitoring and provision, at the local level. Decision-making and fundraising at the national level are less costly than doing so at the local level,

because there are economies of scale for these activities across multiple forest plots. It is also less costly to develop expertise and experience in funding and potentially to interact centrally with resources and local areas. In contrast, local monitoring of natural resource use and provision may be less costly than central monitoring and provision because of proximity to relevant resources and co-production with other activities. Co-management also allows states with limited capacity and resources to spread the costs of monitoring and provision more widely.<sup>4</sup>

Important issues from a multi-level governance perspective:

(i) competence and coordination between vertical levels of government

(ii) both intercity and intracity links and between different local governments

In terms of governance patterns, they are horizontal governance levels.

(iii) In decision making and policy making processes at local and metropolitan levels power relations between different public, private and civil actors (McGuirk, 2000:654).

These practices are crucial for ensuring effective urban governance. For example, in Europe in the 1990s, metropolitan governance institutions can be seen not only as instruments of regional competitiveness, but also as providing a comprehensive response to mitigate the negative side effects of local urban entrepreneurship and the reduction of local legislation. On the other hand, they are critical for ensuring an inclusive and accountable governance process that is not only important for social activities, but can also have direct positive effects to improve the economic and environmental impacts of urban development (Keivani, 2010:5).

Any governance discussion must consider the impact of strategic planning in responding to uncertain urban futures, particularly in the context of economic globalisation and climate change. This approach has been adopted by many cities since the early 1980s as they have reinvented themselves in the face of severe economic crisis and the loss of traditional industries. This has led to a proliferation of medium- and long-term economic and development strategies at both metropolitan and district levels. Drawing in part on this experience, and on the recognition of the multifaceted economic and physical growth challenges in cities, the adoption of City Development Strategies (CDS) in developing countries has been advocated by the World Bank as a way of providing a holistic strategic approach to overcoming perceived challenges. The objectives required for an effective CDS are:

Increasing the efficiency of the city economy,

To reduce poverty,

To protect the environment,

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<sup>4</sup><https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/eet.1698>

Improving local revenue raising capacity and city financial management (McGuirk, 2000).

By 2009, more than 200 CDSs had been formulated and implemented in different cities around the world with varying degrees of success. Some commentators have argued that CDSs and strategic planning aimed at strengthening economic competitiveness, "*Washington consensus*" They argued that the neoliberal growth paradigm would reinforce local practices and historical and social patterns of exclusion. In contrast, a more positive and pragmatic perspective argues that unless local leaders have a strategic understanding of the weaknesses, strengths and potential of their cities, and where they fit into the wider national and regional economies, they will not be able to take effective action to address their shortcomings (Keivani, 2010:5).

#### Conclusion

The growth of the world economy is changing the world environment. However, there is sharp disagreement about the nature of this transformation. For example, the question of whether the globalization of capitalism is a force for progress and environmental solutions or whether it is a cause of our current global environmental crisis remains unanswered. These questions are examined by considering the most contentious issues at the heart of economic globalization and the environment. These debates focus particularly on economic growth, production and consumption; trade and international investment. After providing an overview of the general debates on how the global political economy affects the global environment, the history of global environmentalism is traced, in particular, with the emergence of international environmental organizations with the norm of sustainable development.

Multi-level governance, on the other hand, offers great potential for achieving the full scope of sustainable development. However, different stakeholders are likely to make competing demands on the governance system. Powerful lobbies will have vested interests in stopping attempts to impose restrictions on unregulated resource use, while they will want to ensure that their rights to resources in local environments are protected. The degree to which sustainable development issues are addressed depends on the nature of a country's political system and the inherent power of the constituencies affected. This power, in turn, requires the state, resources and policies to remain limited in the face of national, local and transnational challenges.

Ecological economists, although not yet fully embracing the study of environmental governance solutions, clearly have potential for further research. Complex governance arrangements are a fertile object of inquiry that asks us to understand their economic rationale, their workings, and their effects. There are different visions of a sustainable economy, and these include different social and political values. The assumptions about different discourses may be challenged or invalidated, but these views do not necessarily produce a genuine and legitimate discourse.

When the relationship between local governments and environmental problems is considered, it is clear how much they can contribute to reducing environmental problems. In this process, local governments are becoming much more effective. It is clear that local governments are



The role of local government management has expanded beyond road construction and garbage collection. Local government management performance significantly impacts the quality of life (QOL) of those for whom local governments are responsible for basic public services, including urban planning, provision of social and health services, education, water supply, business development and environmental management.

It is necessary to proceed with the belief that there are no ideal solutions or institutional arrangements waiting to be implemented. Approaches to these (as is the notion of multi-level governance) involve processes fraught with conflict and contradiction and are by no means easy. When such arrangements are made, they are likely to require a variety of solutions to address the many aspects of sustainable development. Intervening, managing and implementing these different solutions will involve multiple stakeholders with overlapping imperatives, a strategy that results in a dispersed arrangement but responds to the simultaneous needs of society and the environment. Because the complexity and multi-level nature of environmental change requires governance systems that can manage and resolve conflicts of interest at multiple scales and among multiple policy actors.

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