

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview

Environmental policy is any action deliberately taken (or not taken) to manage human activities with a view to prevent, reduce or mitigate harmful effects on nature and natural resource and to ensure that man-made changes to the environment do not have harmful effects on humans (McCormick, 2001).

It is useful to consider that environmental policy comprises two major terms: environment and policy. Environment refers to a broad concept consisting of three main dimensions: i.e. an ecological (ecosystems) dimension, a social (quality of life) dimension and an economic (resource management) dimension (Bartlett, 1991). Policy can be defined as a "course of action or principle adopted or proposed by a government, party, business or individual"(Della Thompson, 1995). Thus, environmental policy focuses on problems arising from human impact on the environment, which retroacts onto human society by having a (negative) impact on human values such as good health or the 'clean and green' environment. Environmental issues generally addressed by environmental policy include (but are not limited to) air and water pollution, waste management, ecosystem management, biodiversity protection, and the protection of

natural resources, wildlife and endangered species.

Environmental policy on land is particularly prominent in the environmental policy.

This research will focus on Malaysia and China's environmental policy on land and its implementation and limitations related to agriculture, industry and domestic land.

1.2 Background Issue of Environmental Policy on Land of Malaysia and China

Federation of Malaysia spreads over a range of 329,750 sq. km. in Southeast Asia with an overall population of approximately 27 million. Malaysia is located between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Throughout the South China Sea it has been divided into East and West Malaysia in two parts. It has 4,192 kilometers coastline and a tropical rain forest climate. The temperature of mountains in mainland is 22 °C ~ 28 °C, otherwise the coastal plain to 25 °C ~ 30 °C at an average annual (Constitution of Malaysia, 1957). Environmental issues related to the pollution caused by agriculture, industry and domestic activities.

China is located in the eastern part of the Eurasian continent and the Pacific West Bank. The total area of China's territory is 9,600,000 sq km with an overall population of 1.3 billion. China's mainland coastline is more than 18,000 km. Its mainland border is more than 20,000 km long which feature it obvious continental climate and a variety of

climate types. Winter temperatures are generally low, the southern heat but northern cold. The temperature difference between the North and the South is more than 50 °C (Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)Atlas of the Environment, 2004).

Malaysia and China are both Asian countries in the northern hemisphere. Malaysia is only 3.4% of China's total area. China's population is 48 times more than Malaysia's. The Southern China has similar climate to Malaysia which is tropic climate. Chinese has continued mature environmental management on land in history experience, and has drawn European advanced experience after building up a country which is similar to Malaysia (Xu, 2000).

Different countries have different policies. So do the Asian developing countries, Malaysia and China. It is significant to do comparison between both countries, because both have similar geographic environment but different climatic conditions. On the other hand, this could help to improve the national environmental policies.

1.3 Problem Statement

Ecological degradation is the typical environmental problems of developing countries. Developing countries generally provided the role of division of labor on trade and production of natural resources as well as the ecological cost in the world. Keep the consumption reliance and offsetting on the natural resources of higher intensity utilizing

for a long time, developing country's ecology degrades seriously. It demonstrates the surprising pace of these natural resources' degradation. Questions such as soil erosion, desertification and stony desertification are becoming more prominent issues. Ecological security faces severe challenge day by day.

The target of environmental protection is the living environment and natural environment. It includes 'the main part of the natural and artificial factors which can influence human survival and development. It includes atmosphere, water, ocean, land, mineral deposit, forest, grassland, wildlife, natural trace, humane trace, nature reserve, scenic spot, city and village and so on'. They attempt to cover all existence of various factors which may influence human survival and developing. However, this kind of exhaustively is exactly the necessity that the environmental protection undertaking needs the cooperation from many other departments.

As a multiethnic society, Malaysian environmental policy on land and planning systems are implemented within a broader framework, which is supervised by the government. It is significant for economic development of Malaysia's implementation of planning on environment and planning system. These policies and systems promote regional development and environmental protection. Malaysian environmental policy on land is composed of many consecutive legal documents. Although the Constitution stipulates the state land is a Treasury issue, the states have the right to develop its own policy, but all the policies are consistent.

In contrast, China is a homogenous society. The existence of Chinese environmental policy on land is in order to correct the pollution, economic, social and spatial imbalance that is supervised by the government. It is consistent with other parts of Chinese policy framework. Besides that, it promotes Chinese socialist economic and social development and the government's macro-control. Chinese environmental policy on land in terms of land planning, management, protection, use, plays an important role in the oversight process. Related rights of state organs in accordance with the statutory authority and procedures to enact, amend and repeal the legal effect of normative documents of a variety of different adjustments to the land pollution (He, 2008).

Environmental policy on land contributes to the country's social stability, regional economic, environmental protection and the development of urban planning. Malaysia and China are different in many fields, so does the corresponding policy. Based on the two basic national conditions, this work will explore environmental policy on land in depth, to make contrasts, to show the gaps, and learn advanced experience from others.

1.4 Main Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this study is to do a comparison of the two countries' environmental policy on land with respect to agriculture, industrial and domestic. This will benefit both Malaysia and China in terms of increasing the awareness related to the respective land policies and to be able to conduct better urban planning within a framework. With the

improved framework, it is hoped that both two countries would have better environmental policies to protect their land.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To compare the issues of Malaysia and China's environmental policy on land.
2. To identify the gaps between Malaysia and China's environmental policy on land implementation programs.
3. To identify environmental issues related to agriculture, industrial and domestic land.
4. To recommend approaches for continuous development of China and Malaysia environmental policy on land.