

COMPLETION REPORT

A Comparative Case Study on Success Factors of Japanese and Australian Transition Towns in Mitigating Climate Change., and its Implications for the Development of Sustainable Communities in Malaysia

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Introduction:

The Malaysian Government has implemented the National Green Technology Policy and the National Policy on Climate Change. These policies are in response to reducing Malaysia's emission intensity by up to 40% by the year 2020. Malaysia's Low Carbon Cities Framework and Assessment system (LCCF) has been cited as one of the first framework and assessment systems developed in the region to address reduction of emission. Target users of the framework include local authorities, planners and developers (Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water, 2011). However, the analysis of the present scenario indicates a gap in terms of clearly outlined criteria, guidelines and measures on how the local community should be engaged and identified for the successful implementation of these policies and strategies. This indicates the depth of interventions to be conducted in terms of the engagement of local communities in the implementation of sustainability initiatives, specifically within communities.

What was found through this study on transition town initiatives in Japan and Australia, and how these could pave the way for effective implementation of guidelines, policies and strategies for transition towns and sustainable communities in Malaysia:

1. There are clearly outlined local government policies in Japan and Australia to identify the specific needs and requirements of the local community from the very beginning of any sustainability planning and implementation initiative, and not at the end of the initiative.
2. While a top-down approach to sustainability and sustainable living planning and implementation is necessary, there should also be provisions for bottom-up community led initiatives, with communities charting their own sustainability and sustainable living goals. The Konohana transition community in Japan and the Kyneton transition community in Australia were both found to have developed strategic community led sustainable living goals, supported by their local councils.
3. There is a need for more sustainable and cohesive financial structures to fund and sustain sustainable living planning and implementation initiatives, without having to depend solely on governmental aid alone. The Konohana community in Japan for instance pool financial resources from produce sold at the nearby towns. These funds are then used to fund community initiatives.
4. There is a need for the formation of sustainable alliances between the government sector, private sector, NGOs and local communities. Such partnerships were found in Australia, as noted by members of the Kyneton and Mount Druit transition communities.
5. There is a need to recognize and empower grassroots level recommendations to aid in the sharing of information and spreading of awareness about the need and importance of sustainability and sustainable lifestyles to communities. This was found to be well established in Australia, and also in Japan, where transition communities welcome local and international visitors to their communities to share information about how they live sustainably.
6. Addressing the urban-rural divide by accepting that the contribution of rural and indigenous communities are as equally important as urban communities. In Australia for instance, there is strong advocacy for indigenous and rural community well-being.
7. There is a need to identify ways to better manage the advancement of sustainability and sustainable living initiatives for communities within rural areas, so that they are informed and trained of its benefits to their households and their communities. In Japan, transition communities living within the rural context were found to

proactively engage with international transition communities to keep abreast with the changing sustainable lifestyles landscape. Similar efforts in Australia were more local in nature.

8. Empowering communities with decision making capacity to find local mitigation solutions on problems related to the environment and towards living sustainably. In Australia, for instance, the transition community leaders are invited to workshops and seminars run by the local council to provide recommendations to be taken up by the councils.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

1 Verbal Presentation

Title: Potential of Renewable Energy Technologies and its Implications for the Management of Low Carbon Lifestyles in Rural Malaysia. Presented at International Conference in Leadership and Management 2016, 15 to 17 August 2016, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

1 Journal Article Published

Title: Potential of Renewable Energy Technologies and its Implications for the Management of Low Carbon Lifestyles in Rural Malaysia. Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal. Volume 9, Issue 1, Pages 622-631 (2017)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

Nil