

A National spatial development strategy to achieve sustainable development: a future direction for Sri Lanka

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Sri Lanka is a developing country currently facing various national issues such as poverty, ethnic issues, poor economic growth, regional imbalances, natural disasters etc. Since independence, the provisions are being made by the respective governments to find solutions to all these issues, but yet no proper equitable development has been taken place.

Historical evidence shows, that the past governments had taken some initiatives to reduce these issues, by providing piecemeal solutions on the path of sectoral approach. But these issues prevail as it is. All these are manifested as spatial disparities. The utilization of space in a sustainable manner and a rational order is very important to achieve spatial equilibrium.

There should be a comprehensive analysis to find out the reasons for such issues addressing the key causative factors as to 'where it went wrong' and 'why it went wrong'. The issues of such should be focused on a development perspective giving priority to spatial development while safeguarding equity, social well being, economic growth and environmental sustainability.

It has been observed that the conventional sectoral based approach has failed to find sustainable solutions to tackle the above mentioned issues. If spatial strategies are to be evolved to minimize these vital issues, it will include various suggestions to reduce this phenomena and ways and means of achieving an equitable spatial development in all aspects.

This paper focuses on the identification of the main national issues in terms of social, economic, physical and environmental through analysis based on an integrated analytical approach. Further, this paper would also propose an appropriate national spatial strategy to minimize the vital issues in order to achieve sustainable development.

Key words: Economic growth, Poverty, Spatial strategies, Sustainable development, Integrated approach

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