



City foresight and development planning case study: Implementation of scenario planning in formulation of the Bulungan development plan

Jaizuluddin Mahmud¹

Center for Innovation Policy Research Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology, Floor 13th, Building 2nd BPPT, Jl. MH. Thamrin No. 8, Jakarta 10340, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Available online 24 May 2011

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the formulation of the Bulungan Development Plan (2002) that sought to formulate a 25 year city vision. The foresight process included how to prepared the process, implemented the scenario planning method, created consensus amongst stakeholders, and formulated graphic and narrative scenarios that explored alternative future for Bulungan. Based on these scenarios, the stakeholders formulated a vision for the city's preferred future. The vision is "excellence in agro industry supported by qualified human resources".

Project debriefing showed that unlike traditional forecasting or market research, the methods of foresight, especially scenario planning, is a more appropriate and powerful planning tool for integrated regional development. The main reason for this is that the future is unpredictable, and scenarios allow stakeholders to make sense of complexity.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Bulungan is one of the regencies in the province of East Kalimantan, Indonesia, which is located in the northern part of Kalimantan Island (Fig. 1). It borders Nunukan Regency and Malaysia to the north, Tarakan and Sulawesi Sea to the east, Berau Regency to the south, and Malinau Regency to the west. The population of this 18,010.50 square kilometer regency was 109,219 (2006). In general, Bulungan people work in agriculture (78.1%), followed by the services sector (26%).

Agriculture is the highest contributing sector within the region, earning 24.56% of the regional income of Bulungan, followed by the food processing industry (24%).

Political instability in 1998 which led to large-scale national reformation has triggered the people's intention to form their own regency, including the people in Bulungan. In 1999, Bulungan was divided into three parts: Nunukan, Malinau and Bulungan itself. This regional change had social, economic and political consequences on Bulungan's government administration. Democratic governance faced various internal institutional problems as well as forming relations with the politicians in the Regional People's Representative Council. Policy formulation became more complicated as it engaged the Council with its vested interests.

One of the Regency's important agendas was setting the direction of Bulungan's long term development. This long term development plan would be used as a reference to formulate the medium term development outcomes for the first five year period. Since the Bulungan Government had no experience or skills capability to formulate a long term strategic plan,

E-mail addresses: jaizul@bppt.webmail.go.id, jaizoel@yahoo.com.

¹ Current address: Ph.D candidate in Agroindustrial Technology, Bogor Agricultural University, Jl. Raya Darmaga Kampus IPB Darmaga Bogor 16680, West Java, Indonesia.

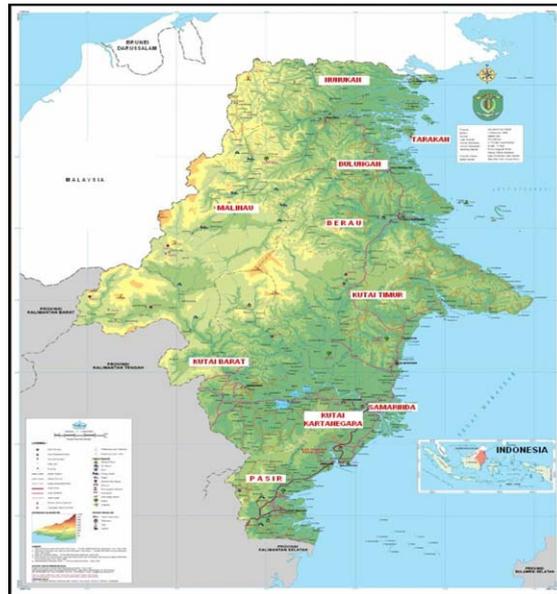


Fig. 1. Bulungan's location in the province of East Kalimantan, Indonesia.

partnerships were formed between BAPPEDA (Regional Development Planning Agency), and BPPT (the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology).

The project commenced in 2002 and was fully financed by the Bulungan Government. The main task of the BPPT expert team (referred to as the Foresight Team), was to design and conduct the planning processes to address the known challenges of the study area and to be culturally sensitive to the people of Bulungan. The outputs of the foresight project would be used by BAPPEDA to prepare the Bulungan Long Term Development Plan. The intra-agency project team started to work effectively in March and completed their collaboration in December 2002. The project activities occurred in three stages:

1. Preliminary study – comprising planning problem analysis and foresight method selection;
2. Foresight activity – engaging stakeholders with alternative scenarios; and
3. Formulation of the Bulungan Development Plan

This case study focuses on the first two steps of the foresight project from the perspective of BPPT's participation. The purpose is to examine the specific application of scenario planning in formulating a regional development plan. The paper consists of two parts: (1) the introduction which consists of activity background, problem identification, and foresight method selection, and (2) foresight method implementation and lessons learned.

2. Preliminary study

Preliminary study, the first activity, covered problem analysis and foresight method selection. This first step included interviewing users in detail, studying literature related to foresight and planning, and benchmarking the use of foresight methods. The next step was implementing foresight methods. Inserting the foresight outcome in the formulation of the Bulungan Long Term Development Plan was the last step.

2.1. Planning problem analysis

The Regent of Bulungan (government officer of the regency) is the project client who was represented by BAPPEDA. Project definition and problem analysis established the purpose and the objectives of the study through client and end user interviews. Consultation with the Planning Unit provided the following information:

1. Timeframe for formulation of the long term development plan.
2. The content structure of the Plan – vision, mission, strategies, goals, objectives, and a development priority program.
3. The formulation process needs to involve stakeholders, including politicians in the Regional People's Representative Council which was a stark departure from past planning practice.

Before the reformation era, the process of regional development planning was fully determined by the Regent and usually took the form of continuing previous programs. Development planning was based on the assumption that the world was

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