

Research Paperm

## ***Evaluation of Land Management Process in Free Zones, Case Studies: China, United Arab Emirates and Iran***

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### **Abstract**

Free economic zones are one of the tools of the neoliberalism system to realize the outsourcing strategy in the paradigm of globalization and one of the main focuses of investor presence. The presence of capital in these areas has led to a more rapid physical development of these areas and their surrounding urban areas than other areas which has increased the necessity of noticing at the of planning and managing land use in the development of free zones. The purpose of the present study is to evaluate land management mechanisms in free zones according to three samples of China, UAE and Iran. The method of this research is descriptive - analytical and based on documentary studies as well as survey. In order to interpretation Content Analysis and Hierarchical Analysis Process (AHP) have been used. The results of a comparative analysis in Iran and the UAE and China show that being sure about providing infrastructure (rated above 80), investment demand analysis and physical environment (rated above 60%) are the most important principles affecting It is land use management. The main feature of land use management system in free zones are sustainable and integrated management of land resources. In Iran's Experience Contrary to the experiences of both China and the UAE, the transparency of land use regulations and executive regulations has not been addressed by the institutional framework of an integrated approach to land use planning and the mechanism of active involvement of local communities and investors in the preparation and implementation of land development plans. This reflects the need for more reflection and thinking in order to achieve the goals of the Free Zones.

**Keywords:** *Free Zones, Land Use Management, Iranian Free Zones, Integrated Management.*

### **Extended Abstract**

#### **Introduction:**

Today, Free Economic Zones are one of the tools of the neoliberalism system to realize the outsourcing strategy in the paradigm of globalization based on the political economy of space and one of the main centers of focus for investors. The presence of capital in these areas has led to a more rapid physical development of these areas and their surrounding urban areas than other areas which has increased the necessity of noticing at the of planning and managing land use in the development of free zones. So this study wants to do the comparative investigation on planning and management of land use in three free zones of Iran, United Arab Emirates and China and extract of efficient factors

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on current mechanism land use management by descriptive – analytical method and based on documental studies and survey. Based on it, the first question rises as what are the main effective factors on mechanism of urban land use management in free zones and how are they differenced? The second question is: what does optimization of land use management mechanism in physical development of these zones need to implement?

In theoretical studies section it found that land use management has various goals. These goals have interaction and compare with each other. So planning and managing the whole land use is done in the shape of integrated activity. Integration should be in different levels and consider the whole factors (effects of issues such as land market, global change, economic comparativeness for space, environmental balance and different interpretations of emerging changes in land use and effects of them). On the other hand, free zones are a kind of new development paradigm with the goal of providing economic development and economic security, socio-spatial order for cities with the concept of capital accumulation. With regard to unique properties of economic zones, the mechanism of land use management function in free zones is complicated and affected by many factors that is the reason of their differences from the other cities. Based on theatrical studies, theatrical framework of this study is affected by Ding and Lichtenberg and eight measures are defined to measure the effective factors: consideration to demand analysis and investment in development plans (comprehensive plans) and land use, confidence to appropriate biophysics with regard to conservation principles for future, providing development infrastructure that is harmonious with upstream physical plans system, flexibility in physical development plans based on new theory policies, transparency in regulation of land use and implementation, institutional framework with confidence to integrated approach (economic, social and environmental) in land use planning, access to land use management document and mechanism of active participation of communities and investors in preparing and implementation of land development plans.

#### **Methodology:**

The study on free zones in china showed that the main property of these zones are presenting structural plans through flexible plans with maximum outer infrastructure to response to the demand and conservation of environment in all decisions. Implementation mechanism of these plans allows land use change by free zone's official commission of that can determine and change the land use.

#### **Results and discussion:**

In Emirates free zones, one of the main achievements is rapid industrial development. The authority of them can attract capital by infrastructure provision. However, each zone has separated authority and land use management is independent and zones lack integrated regional management.

The experience of free zones in Iran show that land use management mechanism is in the way that organization of plan management or planning, prepare and implement the plans after approving by upstream organizations. This framework has many weak points such as lack of transparency in land use regulations, lack of harmony between short decisions and long term plans, lack of hierarchy in approving the plans. Studying the successful experiences of free zones in China and Emirates and comparing them to Iranian ones (by context analysis) to response to the first question (effective factors of land use management) showed that in all cases, there are consideration to demand analysis and investment in development plans (comprehensive plans) and land use, confidence to appropriate biophysics with regard to conservation principles for future, providing development infrastructure that is harmonious with upstream physical plans system, while unlike China and Emirates, in Iran there are no flexibility in physical development plans based on new theory policies, transparency in regulation of land use and implementation, institutional framework with confidence to integrated approach (economic, social and environmental) in land use planning, access to land use management document and mechanism of active participation of communities and investors in preparing and implementation of land development plans and it needs to think deeply about free zones to reach to success. In order to response to second question, we used experts' opinions in Iran, the results based on AHP showed that confidence to biophysics and demand analysis and investment in development

*plans (comprehensive plans) and land use and providing infrastructure based on upstream plans are the most important effective factors that should be highlighted.*

**Conclusion:**

*This study also showed that the main property in land use management system in free zones is sustainable and integrated land resource that encourage development. In this regard, environmental, social and economic issues should be analyzed carefully. In spite of regulations and official structure in integrated management of free zones, still there is no urban integrated management due to lack of accepting changes. The main point is the job opportunity. Efficiency of zones' function based on encouraging private sector, participation like China and Emirates is necessary in public and infrastructure projects. In this case, private partners can help in planning, management and even infrastructure and services. So in order to realization of integrated and sustainable land use management in free zones of Iran, future studies are needed.*

