

About Thailand and Bangkok

Ariya 'Narm Aruninta
Fulbright Junior Scholar Program
2003-2004

PLM POLICY EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION CHAPTERS : **Case Study of Under-utilized Spaces in Bangkok, Thailand**

As part of PhD Dissertation entitled: **THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR UNDER-UTILIZED SPACE IN BANGKOK, THAILAND.**

Images from - <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/>

Thailand



■ Thailand



* From <http://www.tourismthailand.org/>

Thailand – Facts and figures*

- Thailand means "*land of the free*", and throughout its 800-year history, Thailand can boast the distinction of being the only country in Southeast Asia never to have been colonized. Its history is divided into five major periods
- Thailand is divided into four distinct areas:
 - 1) the mountainous North,
 - 2) the fertile Central Plains,
 - 3) the semi-arid plateau of the Northeast
 - 4) the many beautiful tropical beaches & offshore islands of the Southern peninsula
- **Area** : 514,000 sq. km. Size between California and Texas(CA 163,707 sq miles, 419,090 sq km. TX 268,601 sq miles, 687,620 sq km)
- **Ethnic** : Thais form the majority, though the area has historically been a migratory crossroads, and has thus produced a degree of ethnic diversity. Integration is such, however, that culturally and socially there is enormous unity.
- **Climate** : Tends to be humid and hot throughout the year.
 - Average annual temperature = 28 degree C (83 degree F)
 - 3 seasons: Hot (Mar-May); Rainy (Jun-Oct); Cool (Nov-Feb)

Administration

- **Administration** : 76 provinces, each subdivided into amphoe (district), tambon (sub-district) and muban (village).
- Thailand is a democracy with *a constitutional monarchy*. The power of government belongs to the people of the nation as approved by the King, through the institutions of the National Assembly, Council of Ministers and Courts, as stipulated by the constitution.
- **THE COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY** - The National Assembly of Thailand is a bi-cameral institution consisting of *the House of Representatives* and *the Senate*, as per the Constitution of 1997, Clause 90, which states : "The National Assembly consists of the House of Representatives and Senate".

Fact sheet

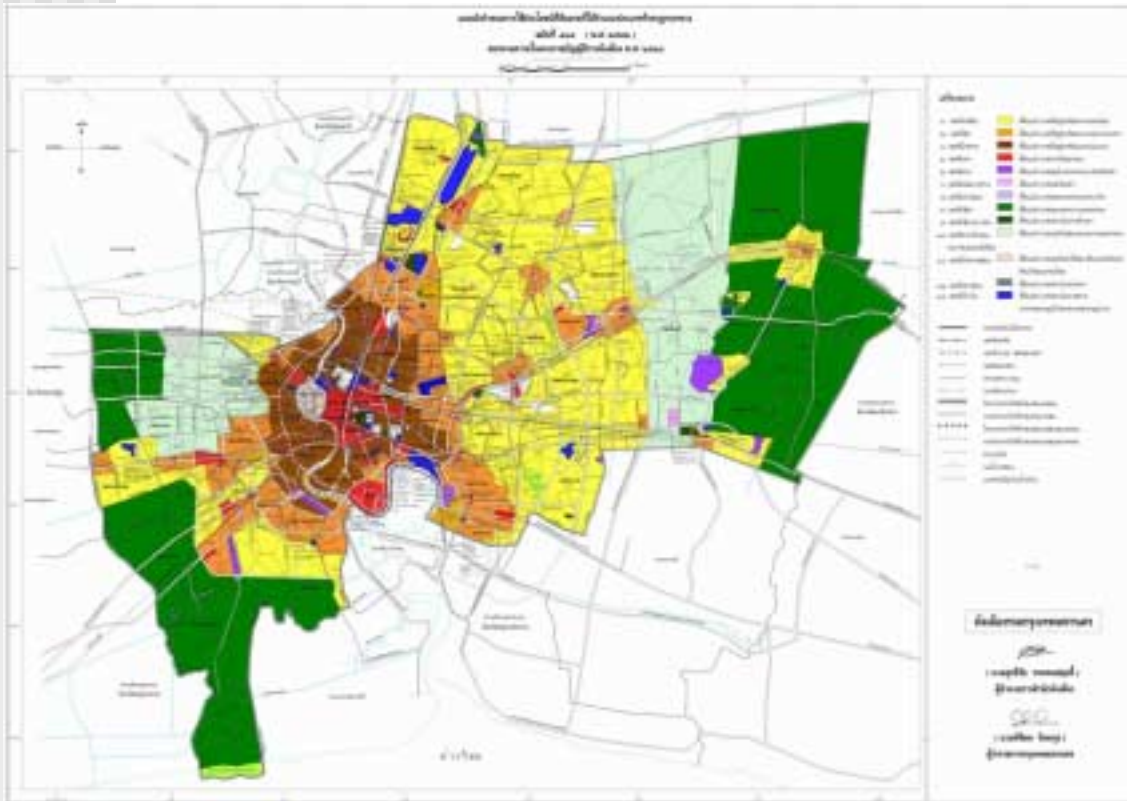


Population (<i>millions</i>)	60.7
Population (<i>% of average annual growth, 1994-00</i>)	0.7
GNP per capita (<i>Atlas method, USD</i>)	2,000.0
GNP (<i>Atlas method, USD billions</i>)	121.6
GDP (<i>USD billions</i>)	122.2
GDP growth	4.3
Inflation	1.6
Labour force (<i>% of average annual growth, 1994-00</i>)	1.2
Poverty (<i>% of population below \$US 1.50 per day</i>), 1999	16
Urban population (<i>% of total population</i>)	20
Life expectancy at birth (<i>years</i>)	69
Infant mortality (<i>per 1000 live births</i>)	28
Access to improved water source (<i>% of population</i>)	89.0
Illiteracy (<i>% of population age 15+</i>)	5
Unemployment	3.6
Government finance (<i>% of GDP, includes current grants</i>)	
Current revenue	15.1
Current budget balance	-4.4
Overall surplus/deficit	-5.4
Structure of economy (<i>average annual growth %</i>)	
Agriculture	10.5
Industry	40.1
Services	49.4

SOURCE: Country
Strategy Paper
(2002-2006)

Bangkok Comprehensive Plan 1st revision (1999)

- The Bangkok Comprehensive Plan consists of 3 plans, which are



1. **The land use plan** is divided the land use in the Bangkok
2. **The transportation system plan** is set to solve the traffic problems in order to promote Bangkok towards the new economic development center. The three new infrastructure developments are the expressway system, public mass transportation and public medium transportation.
3. **The open space plan** is for recreation and environment conservation. This plan was announced after the land use plan and the transportation plan by having a policy to promote, renovate, restore and conserve the urban environment along with the cultural identities. The open space plan has 2 categories as follows:
 - 3.1 The open space for recreation and the environmental conservation
 - 3.2 The open space for the flood prevention

Bangkok – Facts and figures



Source - http://www.bangkokpost.net/horizons/030699_Horizons01.html

- Was established in 1782 as the capital of Thailand by King Rama I of the Chakri Dynasty on a flood plain delta of the Chao Phraya River. The location was selected with the consideration as a natural defense from enemies and the richness of water for lives earning.
- The Chao Phraya river and network of canals (klongs) is the origin of Bangkok's nick-name ; *'Venice of the east'*.
- Local people usually refer to it as *"Krungthep," (or City of Angels)* it is known around the world by the name of its original site "Bangkok ".

City/Metropolis



- The city has grown steadily in size and her importance from only 4.14 square kilometers to nowadays becoming '*a mega city*'^[1] that comprises of *50 districts* with *total area of 1,568.737 sq km*, or *980,460.62 Rais*^[2]. It can be compared with Los Angeles which covers 1,205 sq km (465 sq miles) or almost 3 times bigger than Chicago (228.5 sq miles, 590 sq km)
- The unofficial population of greater Bangkok covering neighbor provinces is as high as *10 million of daytime population*. Bangkok is also identified as an unplanned fast growing big city with almost *recorded 7 millions population*. The registered population in Bangkok increased from 1.6 million in 1958 to 5.4 million in 1986 and 5.6 million in 1999^[3].

[1] "Mega-cities" is a term created by the United Nations in mid-1980 in a study addressing issues generated by rapid urbanization and fast growing population experienced by a lot of cities then. When a city population reaches 8.5 million, it is a 'Mega-city', meaning that the scale and magnitude of affiliated urban issues relating to such size could outgrow the city's capacity to cope. Issues such as transportation, housing, education, health, public safety and job opportunities are common issues that would consume urban managers. [Stephen Lau Center of Architecture and Urban Design of China and Hong Kong, Mega-cities NOW (Network Of the World) : Where the future is now]

[2] 1 Acre=2.25 Rais (Thai area unit)

[3] Introduction - <http://www.bma.go.th/bmaeng/introduction.html> [March, 2002]

City/Metropolis (cont.)



- The Bangkok Comprehensive Plan is targeted to accommodate a population of: 9.3 million in 2002, 10.2 million in 2017, and 11 million in 2022, **54.5 % growth expected between 1995-2015** (City size estimated on basis of urban agglomeration, not administrative boundaries^[4]). Most residents in Bangkok are native Thais with around 25% of the city's inhabitants being other nationalities, which are Chinese or of Chinese descents, Indians, Arabs, Malays and Europeans.
- Bangkok Metropolis and its vicinity towns have constituted the national base economic, political and cultural activities serving the international community as the country's main focal point throughout the years and ranked as **the world's 15th largest metropolitan capital**. Furthermore, Bangkok is considered **the largest center for international airlines in the Southeast Asian region**.

^[4] UN Dept of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division World Urbanization Prospects [The 1999 Revision]

Problems statement

- Unplanned development/all level policies
- Economic
- Management and decision makings
- Governance
- Legal issues
- Public participation/actors involvements

BMA :

Bangkok Metropolitan Administration



- **Green Area Project** - At present, 1,168 of public parks with the area of 9.134 million sq.m. have been established by Office of Public Park, Social Welfare Department, BMA. It has future plan to increase green area in Bangkok as recreation area and improve air quality. There are many projects which BMA has planned for the future, which are as follows:

1. Main Public Park Project: 5 sites with the total area of 172 rai(69 acres).

2. Road Park Project: Target: establish parks in the inner area with the distance of 20 km./year.

3. Community Mini Park: Target : 2 mini parks/district/year.

4. Perennial Growing Project:
Target: growing 120,000 perennials/year

5. Manage to procure public parks by purchasing, renting land or request for lands from sponsors.

* Source : “Bangkok State of the Environment Report”

<http://203.144.180.242/environment/download/bangkok2001eng.pdf>

BMA Agenda 21*

- BMA has worked out an Agenda-**AGENDA 21**- for what has to be done in the next 20 years in order to improve the city, the environment and the quality of living for the Bangkok people.
- The Bangkok Agenda is presented in 10 chapters, which together cover all BMA duties, what must be done if Bangkok shall improve. The following is an outline of each of the ten chapters;
 1. THE STRATEGY FOR A SUSTAINABLE BANGKOK AS A SAFE CITY WITH HIGH QUALITY OF LIVING STANDARD
 2. WE WILL LEAD **URBAN ECONOMY TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY**
 3. WE WILL USE **URBAN PLANNING TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE**
 4. WE WILL REORGANIZE **TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT TO RAISE QUALITY OF AIR AND NEIGHBORHOODS**
 5. WE WILL INVEST IN **GREEN URBAN AREAS**
 6. WE WILL MAKE **BANGKOK A CLEAN CITY**
 7. WE WILL FOCUS ON **GOOD GOVERNANCE IN BMA TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE**
 8. WE WILL SECURE **EASY ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN BMA**
 9. WE WILL USE **HUMAN RESOURCES AS A STRATEGIC TOOL IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
 10. WE WILL INVOLVE **THE CITIZENS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BETTER BANGKOK**