

**THE IMPEDIMENTS IN ADOPTING  
THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (EMS) IMPLEMENTATION AMONG  
LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN MALAYSIA**



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**NOVEMBER 2016**

# 1. Letter of Report Submission

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Date: 15 January 2017  
Project File No: (600-RMU/DANA 5/3 (7/2015))

Asso. Prof. Dr Hajjah Rashidah Mahdi  
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Research Management Unit (RMU)  
Universiti teknologi MARA Cawangan Sarawak  
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94300 Kota Samarahan  
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Dear Asso. Prof.,

## Re: Submission of Final Research Report

Please find herewith three (3) copies of the final research entitled "The Impediments in adopting the Environmental Management System (EMS) Implementation among Local Authorities in Malaysia" by a group of researchers at UiTM Sarawak Samarahan Campus.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
.....  
**NERO MADI**  
Leader of Research Project

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## **5. Report**

### **5.1 Proposed Executive Summary**

The Government has introduced five major initiatives to transform the nation, namely, 1Malaysia, the New Economic Model (NEM), the Government Transformation Programme (GTP), the Economic Transformation Plan (ETP), and the Tenth Malaysia Plan (Annuar, 2011). The NEM lists eight Strategic Reform Initiatives (SRI) to drive the Malaysian economy towards high income, inclusive and sustainable economy. One of the initiatives is strengthening the public sector via numerous reform agenda, such as implementing environmental management system (EMS). In this study, local authorities were chosen as a sample because of their important role in advancing towards sustainable development. Moreover, only three out of 149 local authorities in Malaysia to date have implemented EMS. The three local authorities are Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara (DBKU), Majlis Perbandaran Seberang Perai (MPSP), and Majlis Perbandaran Pasir Gudang. (MPPG). Hence, the study intended to extend the research by Joseph et al. (2014) by examining the impediments in implementing the ISO 14001 in Malaysia's local authorities.

The survey instrument was developed based on the results from Joseph et al. (2014), which was distributed via mail to all 146 local authorities in Malaysia. It was expected that the findings would be used to encourage the use of ISO 14001 as a tool for implementing sustainability agenda as practised in other countries, as well as to promote the use of EMS to address the requirement for a plan to implement sustainable development programme, such as Local Agenda 21. It was also expected that the survey findings would fill in the gaps in the literature in better understanding the ISO14001 adoption stage.



## 5.2 Enhanced Executive Summary

The Government has introduced and is currently implementing a number of initiatives to transform the nation to a developed status by the year 2020. One of the initiatives is strengthening the public sector via numerous reform agenda, such as implementing the environmental management system (EMS). This initiative is in line with Malaysia's Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and the New Public Management doctrine. Local authorities were chosen as a sample because of their important role in advancing towards sustainable development. This study aimed to examine the impediments to the ISO 14001 (EMS) implementation by Malaysian local authorities using the institutional theory, as the underlying framework was not explored in the earlier study. The survey instrument was developed and distributed via mail to all 146 local authorities in Malaysia. The finding revealed that the impediments to the EMS implementation were explained by the lack of coercive, normative and mimetic isomorphism under the institutional theory. It was expected that the survey findings would fill in the gaps in the literature in better understanding the lack of implementation of ISO 14001, particularly in the emerging economy.

## 5.3 Introduction

The Malaysian Government has introduced five major initiatives to transform the nation into the developed nation status in 2020. The initiatives are the New Economy Model (NEM), 1Malaysia, the Government Transformation Programme (GTP), the Economic Transformation Plan (ETP), and the Tenth Malaysia Plan. The NEM lists eight (8) Strategic Reform Initiatives (SRI) to drive the Malaysian economy towards a high income, inclusive and sustainable economy. The reforms introduced by the Malaysian Government in 2009 and 2010 were set towards achieving the nation's bold aspirations of Vision 2020 by joining the high-income nations. One of the initiatives is strengthening the public sector via numerous public sector reform agenda, for example, the implementation of environmental management system (EMS), which is one of the efforts undertaken in advancing sustainable development. The Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as the "ability to make development sustainable — to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (The Brundtland Report, 1987, p.8).

The expectation of the more educated societies for efficient service delivery by local government is increasing as we approach the developed nation status by 2020. This is particularly true in the urban local authority jurisdiction areas. Abdullah and Kaliannan (2008, p. 8) stated that, "as the population becomes urbanized, local government grows in direct importance to the welfare and the quality of life experienced by a majority of the citizens ...". In a few years, it is expected that more than two-thirds of Malaysian citizens would reside in the urban areas (see Junus, 2015). The urbanization process would translate to congestion and increased pollution of the water, air, noise and overall environment. It is, therefore, urgent and vital for local authorities to undertake more aggressive and concerted efforts involving the public in addressing this impending issue.