

# Review of: "Political Economy and Ecology of International Regional Development: Indonesia Urban and Rural Development Loans from the Asian Development Bank (ADB)"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The article investigates the political economy of development aid through the case of Indonesian urban and rural development loans. The main merit of the article lies in the problem it raises and the data-driven approach. The issues arising in this article are highly important and have far-reaching relevance for economic development.

A few comments along which the content might be improved:

The title might be a bit incomplete, perhaps it should read "Political Economy and Ecology of International Regional Development Funding..."

The abstract seems to be a bit lengthy and in the first sentence of it there is an erroneous repetition of words: in the second occurrence of the expression 'political economy' should be replaced with 'political ecology'. The last four sentences of the abstract might not be necessary here, because too many details are given, rather the general lessons learned should be summarised.

The third paragraph of the introduction states that the mentioned theories are faulty, but it does not say anything about the essence of its flaws, and where are these statements discussed in the paper in detail.

With regard to the statements in the methodology section it might not be evident that the economic growth is predominantly the result of endogenous and not external forces, because this can vary in time.

Regarding section 2.2 Data, more detailed and more accurate information should be given about the data sources.

In section 3.1 a more practical illustration would be welcome. Throughout the text some of the arguments are repeated, but they are not really discussed in sufficient detail. In section 3.2.2 it is not discussed in detail that some limitations exist for the money creation of commercial banks. In section 3.2.4 the correct sources of the data are not always given and with regard to Figure 1 the source should be given in a more correct form. It should be kept in mind that these forecasts are highly dependent on the chosen model. There are some statements that are not really supported by correctly given sources or data. In section 3.3 a bit more detailed analysis of the figures and the presented results would be welcome. The fractional polynomial regression can provide seemingly good fit but its predictive capacity is lower, and the results are more insecure and it might be suspected that these figures show the association between the given variables or indicators

but the real causal relationship is not fully evident. The mechanisms behind the presented association of indicators and their dynamics are not really explained in the article; for example, some equations should be given which would explain the relationships in a more formal way and it is suspected that not all the important and relevant variables are taken into consideration in these analyses.

The wording of the text is not easily readable, it should be written a bit more smoothly.

I recommend to publish this article after making some minor modifications.