



Economic Development Sea and Islands in Kien Giang Province: Opportunities, Difficulties and Challenges

Nguyen Huu Phuc*

¹Professor, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Indonesia

²Lecturer, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Indonesia

³Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author
Nguyen Huu Phuc*

Article History

Received: 29.07.2020

Accepted: 15.08.2020

Published: 30.08.2020

Abstract: The sea and islands play a particularly important role in the rapid and sustainable development of our country in general and Kien Giang in particular. Moreover, attracting investment to develop sea and island economies in association with national defense and security is of great significance. Over the years, the economic development of the sea and islands has brought great benefits to Kien Giang province, making Kien Giang province one of the major island economic centers of the country in general and of the Mekong River Delta in particular. However, during the development process, the island economy of Kien Giang still faces certain difficulties. This study shows that the economic development of the sea and islands is an advantage of Kien Giang province, but it also has difficulties and needs changes to suit the general development trend of the country, from which to propose solutions to continue developing the sea island economy of Kien Giang province for sustainable development in the future.

Keywords: Economic development, Sea and Islands, Kien Giang province, Vietnam.

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INTRODUCTION

Kien Giang province has the largest natural area of the Mekong River Delta region and the population ranks 2/13 provinces and cities in the region. With the location of the western gateway of the region and connecting to the Gulf of Thailand, Kien Giang province has a sea area of more than 63,000 km², 10 times more than the land area of the province; has a border of more than 58km long, with Ha Tien international border gate, several national border gates and more than 200km of coastline [1]. This helps Kien Giang to have certain advantages in developing marine economy, border economy as well as connecting sea traffic, within the region and countries in Southeast Asia. Besides, Kien Giang has a large plain and has all the specific elements of the local river area. In addition, Kien Giang also has its own specific elements that few coastal delta localities have, such as primary forests, rivers, mountains, islands, etc.

In addition, the province also has a domestic airport in Rach Gia city, an international airport in the island district of Phu Quoc; with Duong Dong international passenger seaport, An Thoi cargo port, Dam Bay (Phu Quoc), Hon Chong (Kien Luong), etc; there are high-speed trains from Rach Gia and Ha Tien to Phu Quoc Island and neighboring islands. Kien Giang has 1 university, 5 colleges, 1 professional secondary school, 14 provincial and district vocational training centers, and many vocational training institutions. Post and telecommunications network has been invested in a synchronous and modern construction, ensuring smooth communication. The national electricity network is invested in Phu Quoc Island and has been investing in the island commune centers of Kien Hai, Kien Luong, and Ha Tien City, etc.

Over the past years, Kien Giang province's economy has developed comprehensively, always achieving a growth rate of over 7%/year, leading food production in the country, urban embellishment increasingly modern, and Kien Giang's tourism brand - Phu Quoc is famous in the country and the world, security, and defense have been maintained, people's lives have been improved more and more, which are praiseworthy achievements. Kien Giang is also one of the leading regional revenue collection provinces and has budget autonomy in the next few years [2].

To welcome the wave of investment in Kien Giang, recently, the People's Committee of Kien Giang province has planned and built 5 industrial parks with a total area of over 706 hectares, with convenient infrastructure for traffic and electricity water, telecommunications, banking, etc. In particular, the province is also continuing to invest in the next expansion stages in Thuan Yen Industrial Park (Ha Tien City) with a scale of 140ha and Thanh Loc Industrial park (Chau Thanh district) with a scale of 250ha. These areas have attracted dozens of investment projects of large-scale enterprises in the field of footwear, wood processing, beer, seafood processing for export, etc., have been activating the investment environment here.

According to the People's Committee of Kien Giang province [2], in recent years, the investment projects with the source of non-budget capital in Kien Giang province of investors have had positive changes, the scale is getting bigger and bigger creating more jobs, contributing to ensuring social security, increasing production capacity and competitiveness, making an important contribution to the economic growth of the province. By the end of July 2019, Kien Giang has attracted 680 investment projects, with a total registered capital of 503,763 billion VND. In which, there are 341 projects in operation with a total investment of 60,641 billion VND; 68 projects under construction with a total investment capital of 115,410 billion VND, and 271 projects undergoing investment procedures with a total investment capital of 327,713 billion VND. Particularly foreign direct investment (FDI), the province has attracted 41 projects from 19 countries and territories with a total registered investment capital of 1,440 billion USD, implemented capital reached more than 542 million USD accounting for over 37% of the total registered capital. Foreign investors in Kien Giang province come from 19 countries and territories around the world, such as the US, Switzerland, Sweden, France, Russia, China, Australia, Japan, Korea, Thailand, etc.

Although important strides have been made, the marine economy in Kien Giang has not brought into full play its available strengths, according to the assessment of the professional sectors [3]. Specifically, it is not yet possible to build unique marine tourism products; lack of marine services, infrastructure for tourism in some places is still spontaneous, reducing competitiveness. Not only that, but Kien Giang province is also applying a general policy in marine economic development, which has made it difficult for localities to build a tourism environment. Therefore, a comprehensive study of the difficulties, requirements, and challenges posed for the current island economy is essential. This study will focus on analyzing the above contents, thereby proposing solutions for the sustainable development of the island economy of Kien Giang province in the coming time.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of the sea and island (marine) economy: On the basis of the analysis of studies on the marine economy at home and abroad, we can see: Marine economy is all economic activities that take place directly on the sea (fishing products; offshore oil, and gas exploitation; seaport; sea transportation; marine tourism; aquatic and sea product processing industry; salt making) and economic activities directly related to activities at sea (building and ship repair; oil and gas processing industry; supply of marine services; marine communication; marine science and technology research; human resource training for marine economic development and basic investigation marine environmental resources).

Marine economic development: Marine economic development is a change in the mode of operation and structure of the economy in the process of exploiting resources from the sea (directly and indirectly), based on the application of scientific and technological achievements in the exploitation of ocean, sea and coastal potentials, in order to raise the proportion of marine economic sectors in the economy, perfect the marine economic structure, and solve jobs do and improve the marine-island ecological environment and contribute to the protection of national sea and island sovereignty.

The role of the marine economy: The Sea is the main center of economic activity. The sea provides people with food and livelihoods with many activities such as trade, tourism-entertainment, transportation, and fisheries resources that bring billions of dollars each year to coastal communities. That role is shown in detail as follows:

First, the marine economy is an important part of the economy. The development of the marine economy is the basis for promoting socio-economic development;

Second, effectively exploit mineral resources;

Thirdly, exploit human resources in coastal areas;

Fourth, ensure national security and national sovereignty;

Fifth, promote international economic integration.

The dialectical relationship between marine economic development and the political system: It can be seen that the impact role of marine economic development in particular and the economy in general on the political system is the relationship the dialectic between infrastructure and superstructure, in which economic development plays a decisive role in politics and the perfection of the political system affects the marine economy.

Situation of Sea and Island Economic Development in Kien Giang Province

During the past time, taking full advantage of the potentials and opportunities in the economic development of the sea and islands, Kien Giang province has issued many guidelines and policies to promote the development of sea and island economies in association with the country. security, such as Program No. 367/CTr-UBND, dated August 15, 2012, of the Provincial People's Committee on marine economic development in Kien Giang province for the period 2011-2015 [4]; Action Program No. 06/CTr/TU, dated March 8, 2016, on implementing the Resolution of the Xth Congress of the Provincial Party Committee, term 2015-2020; Plan No. 97 / KH-UBND, dated August 29, 2016, of the Provincial People's Committee on marine economic development in Kien Giang province to 2020.

After the above programs have been implemented, the key and advantageous industries of the province, such as fisheries, tourism, shipping, fishing services, seafood processing industry ... are properly invested and promoting positive effects, making Kien Giang the third province in the Mekong Delta in terms of economic development [5]. According to the People's Committee of Kien Giang province, as of June 2016, Kien Giang had nearly 13,000 fishing means; In which there are about 4,200 vehicles with a capacity of 90 CV or more, total production in 2015 reached nearly 500,000 tons, up 7% over the same period.

As of June 2016, Kien Giang has attracted more than 300 investment projects in coastal and island areas, with a total registered capital of over

138,000 billion VND [4]. In general, socio-economic infrastructure in coastal areas, seas, and islands has received attention and investment. The province has completed a number of key projects, such as Phu Quoc International Airport, the bypass of Rach Gia city, Cai Lon river bridge, Cai Be, the electric line to Phu Quoc island and Hon Tre island; to upgrade and open National Highway 61; put into use a number of fishing ports and storm shelter anchors, such as Linh Huynh, Hon Tre, Tho Chau, An Thoi ... to break waves and dredge Duong Dong estuary channel, the commencement of Block B gas pipeline - O Mon, etc. closely combine socio-economic development with national defense and security assurance, and strengthen international cooperation.

These advantages have contributed to promoting tourism development in both size and quality. Only in 2015, Kien Giang tourism has attracted 4.3 million visitors, an increase of 50% compared to 2010; in which international visitors to Phu Quoc reached 156,000. Particularly, in the first 6 months of 2016, the total number of visitors coming to visit and tourism reached 2.7 million, up 10.1% over the same period; total revenue reached over 1,755 billion, up 41.8% over the same period.

Along with that, seafood processing and export are also focused on investment in the direction of product diversification. In the 2011-2015 period, the whole province has 23 seafood processing factories with a total capacity of over 165,000 tons/year, with a processing output of 58,000 tons/year; Seafood export turnover in 2015 reached USD 137 million, an increase of USD 20 million compared to 2010; total production of exploiting and farming in 2015 reached 647,125 tons, increased 3.5 times compared to 2010, etc.

In general, after 5 years of organizing the implementation of Program No. 367/CTr-UBND, the socio-economic situation of coastal, coastal, and island areas in the province has had many positive changes [4]. According to the People's Committee of Kien Giang province, the economic growth rate of the sea in the period 2011 - 2015 reached 11.4% / year (constant price 1994). The proportion of GDP in the marine economy accounts for 73.3% of the province's GDP.

In addition to the achieved results, over the past time, the exploitation of the sea and island economy associated with strengthening national defense and security in Kien Giang has also faced the following limited difficulties:

(i) The potential and advantages of marine resources have not been exploited. The reason is that mechanisms and policies have just been studied

and applied in Phu Quoc Island, although many positive results have been achieved, but up to now, it has not been studied and replicated to many other islands. Potentials and particular strengths are similar, so many islands in the province have not "awakened" many potentials, and have not exploited effectively the particular economic characteristics of the islands associated with strengthening national defense and security.

(ii) The ecological environment in coastal and coastal areas has evolved in many bad directions, in some places are heavily polluted, aquatic resources are increasingly exhausted, and the renewable capacity is low.

(iii) Fishing is identified as an economic sector not only rich for the province but also associated with the protection of sovereignty and security of the sea and islands of the country, however, it is still facing many difficulties and challenges stay awake. Mining activities are still individual occupations, smaller scale; 99% of fishing vessels in Kien Giang province are still wooden boats, not ensuring the efficiency of fishing and navigation.

Difficulties and Challenges

In addition to the advantages indicated above, the difficulties and limitations in the economic development of the islands of Kien Giang province are as follows:

The organization of offshore fishing still has many problems regarding resource investigation, determination of fishing grounds, seasons of fishing subjects, fishing equipment, types of boats for each profession. Fishing means, especially offshore fishing, are quite out of date, with low capacity boats. The infrastructure system, fish wharf, and fish market are still small in scale, not meeting the logistics of large-scale fishing.

Socio-economic development in coastal areas remains difficult, with low educational levels, and structural transformation in coastal areas remains slow. The level of technology in exploitation, farming, and processing is generally outdated, leading to low productivity with high cost, and competitiveness in integration with many difficulties and challenges. The protection of aquatic resources still faces many difficulties and limitations due to the low awareness of accepting the law of the people.

Scientific research activities and research and production of aquatic breeds of high economic value as well as the application of world scientific achievements in seed production, feed, and disease prevention solutions weak, so the production efficiency is limited.

Production activities are still self-sufficient, self-sufficient, the production technology is rudimentary, out of date, and the product quality is not high. In addition, fishermen still face many difficulties due to complicated terrain and water body conditions. Every year, there are much rain, storms, and floods, causing great losses. The life of the people working in the profession is still difficult and precarious, so it cannot create a connection with the profession.

The ability to predict the weather situation lacks accuracy and timeliness, moreover, the ability to communicate and communicate is quite limited. In addition, the protection of the lives of fishermen in offshore fishing has not yet been completed.

The market is getting stricter with hygiene and quality requirements and strict regulations on management will be detrimental to Vietnam. Although the labor force is large the technical and cultural level is not high, the trained force accounts for a small proportion, mostly based on experience, so it is difficult to keep up with the changes of natural conditions and market demand school.

Activities to support loans for fishermen are limited. This causes many difficulties for people to invest in fishing means. Besides, the situation of price pressure or in other words, the purchasing prices are not really suitable for the seasons of the business, making it difficult for fishermen to find the output for products at reasonable prices. The insurance for boats and body insurance for fishermen is still limited.

The twenty-first century is considered the "century of the ocean", many countries in the world are heading strongly to the sea for development, to meet three strengths: strong in the marine economy; strong in marine science; and strong in an integrated marine management capacity. Vietnam is not an exception. The approval of Resolution 09-NQ/TW dated February 9, 2007, by the Central Committee of the Party Session X on the Vietnam Marine Strategy to 2020 [6] showed the determination of Vietnam in general and of Kien Giang province in particular.

Some Tasks and Solutions

The above shortcomings are due to objective reasons, but subjective reasons are due to Awareness of a part of cadres, civil servants and people are not high, not fully understanding the meaning, role, position, and potential of the sea and island economy for development. State management in the marine economic field is not strict, especially the management of coastal land, beaches, etc. Investment capital for technical infrastructures, such as transportation, is limited; still suffers from many

impacts from climate change, but there are no radical measures to overcome [7]. In that context, in order for the sea and island economy to really become a spearhead in the economic development of Kien Giang province, it is necessary to focus on implementing the following solutions:

1. Strengthening the Party's leadership and administration of the authorities at all levels, promoting propaganda, raising awareness of sustainable marine development, creating consensus throughout society.

Raising awareness, enhancing the leadership of the Party committees, party organizations, the administration of the government in the implementation, inspection, and supervision of the implementation of development guidelines and solutions sustainable development of the sea and island economy. Improve efficiency and diversify forms and contents to propagate the Party's guidelines, State policies and laws on sea and islands, and strategy for sustainable development of Vietnam's marine economy in the entire main system governance, among the people, our fellow citizens abroad, and the international community; affirming Vietnam's consistent policy of maintaining a peaceful and stable environment and respecting international law at sea. To bring into play the role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and mass organizations at all levels in propaganda and mobilization of all strata to monitor and criticize the society in the implementation of the Resolution. Timely commend and reward good workplaces, at the same time boldly, criticize and handle violating organizations and individuals.

2. Concentrate on perfecting the plans and plans related to sea and islands

All levels, branches, and localities shall review, supplement, and build new master plans related to sea and islands in the direction of integrated management, suitable to the marine ecosystem, ensuring harmonious cohesion and synchronous conservation and development of the mainland, coastal, marine, and island regions of the province and neighboring provinces.

Closely coordinate with localities in the coastal and southwestern coastal areas (Ca Mau-Tien Giang-Kien Giang) in formulating development goals and orientations to ensure sustainable development of the above marine economy the basis of maximizing comparative advantages in natural conditions, geographical location, ensuring the linkage between regions, and between localities.

Actively coordinate with the central competent agencies in expeditiously building the

national marine spatial planning, the master plan on exploitation, and sustainable use of natural resources in coastal zones in the province. Kien Giang sea area is located in the southwestern sea area, in the process of implementing the marine spatial planning, with a specific zoning plan (which should focus on the waters of the archipelago: An Thoi, Tho Chau, Nam Du, Ba Lua, and Hai Tac) and integrated into the province's socio-economic development plan.

Concentrate all resources to invest in developing marine economic infrastructure; to strongly encourage and attract enterprises to participate in marine economic sectors, especially aquaculture, fisheries and processing, and new marine economic sectors such as (undersea mining, biotechnology) the sea and island learning, marine safety, and surveillance, etc.), and other advantageous marine branches of the province.

3. Socio-cultural development on islands and coastal areas

Regarding education and training, science, and technology:

To attach importance to the training and developing human resources for seas and islands, first of all, human resources for marine economic development. Continue to give priority to the land fund to invest in building school facilities, pay attention to the lives of teachers, create good conditions for all levels of education, courses in coastal areas, and islands to step by step improve the quality of teaching and learn. Pay attention to invest in building high-quality schools in island districts, coastal areas, and islands, especially in the Phu Quoc district. Promote innovation, creation, application of advanced scientific and technological achievements in the management and socio-economic development of coastal areas and islands of the province, etc. Enhance education to improve survival skills, adapting to climate change and sea-level rise, preventing and avoiding natural disasters for pupils and students of all grades and levels. Implement effectively training to meet the labor requirements of marine economic sectors and the job change of the people.

About health

Continue to consolidate and develop the medical network in island areas; invest in health care for people living in coastal areas and islands, prioritize investment in building medical stations, medical equipment, and the workforce of health workers in island communes to well serve care and treatment sick people. To ensure that people living and working in sea and island areas have access to and use of medical services. Investing in facilities

and qualified human resources for Phu Quoc District General Hospital; 100% of island communes have medical stations, of which 50% of communes meet medical standards for seas and islands according to the criteria of the Ministry of Health. Ensure that workers on ships and shipping vessels have knowledge of self-protection and know how to call for assistance in case of an emergency.

Regarding improving life for people, building a culture of the sea, sticking and friendly with the sea:

Implement effectively vocational training to meet the labor requirements of marine economic sectors and the job change of people; to ensure that people living in coastal areas have a stable life and income. Promote the spirit of mutual love and mutual love of communities in coastal areas and islands. Preserving, restoring, and promoting traditional festival activities, fine customs, and practices of communities in sea and island areas; to attach importance to developing cultural institutions for communities in sea and island areas; promoting the national cultural identity and values, knowledge of dealing with the sea, creating a foundation for building marine culture. Ensuring security and safety for people living in coastal areas, on islands, and at sea workers. Raise awareness of the sea and ocean, build awareness, close and friendly cultural lifestyle and behavior, and protect the marine environment. Ensure fair and equal access, participation, benefit, and responsibility of the people to the sea.

4. Environmental protection, conservation, and sustainable development of marine biodiversity; actively respond to sea climate change, sea-level rise, and natural disaster prevention and control.

Clearly identify areas that need to be protected and conserve, areas where mineral resources are restricted, areas for aquaculture in the sea and in coastal areas, etc. Manage and exploit effectively marine conservation zones. Overall planning for exploitation and sustainable use of natural resources in littoral zones of the province; develop effectively and suitably with the model of growing medicinal herbs under the forest canopy. To attach importance to conserving biodiversity, restoring marine ecosystems, especially important marine ones; ensure the integrity and natural relationships between terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

Strictly control investment projects with a high risk of environmental pollution in the sea and islands according to national and international technical criteria and requirements; ensuring the prevention and prevention of environmental

pollution incidents, effectively minimizing and handling pollution sources. Improve capacity to observe and monitor marine resources and environment, and capacity to respond to environmental incidents and toxic chemicals at sea; management of marine waste, especially plastic waste; improve and improve the quality of the environment in sea and islands of the province.

On the basis of applying scientific and technological achievements, improving the capacity of forecasting, warning, proactively preventing natural disasters, adapting to climate change and sea-level rise. Take effective measures to prevent and combat sea erosion, coastal erosion, inundation, drought, and saltwater intrusion. In which, attention should be paid to building mangrove planting projects to protect the safety of the sea dyke and limit coastal erosion. Research and develop feasible solutions to protect and conserve marine resources for areas with seagrass, coral reefs, and rare aquatic and marine species, especially islands serving exploitation requirements to sustainably, develop tourism, and conserve rare genetic resources. Develop and implement effectively a program to raise awareness of marine resources protection and conservation in socio-economic development and environmental protection for officials and people.

5. Ensuring national defense and security and expanding international cooperation

Continuing to define the socio-economic development task in combination with ensuring national defense and security in sea and island areas of the province; implementing synchronous measures to firmly protect the unity of national rights and interests on sea and islands; consolidating and strengthening the defense posture of the entire people, associating with the people's security posture in the sea area; ensure the ability to handle situations on sea and islands well. Strengthen state management on sea and islands, especially close and effective coordination among functional forces at sea in protecting sovereignty, ensuring security and safety of seas and islands.

To promptly settle conflicts and frustrations among the masses of the people, not to create a hot spot that complicates the security and order situation of the sea and islands of the province. Proactively prevent, combat, and effectively prevent all types of crimes, smuggling, and commercial fraud across the sea.

Further promoting international cooperation activities to take advantage of resources in science, technology, knowledge, human resource training, finance, and equipment to serve the management and sustainable exploitation natural

resources, environmental protection of sea and islands in the province.

CONCLUSION

Currently, the province's marine economy accounts for 73.82% of the province's GRDP; the annual output of exploiting seafood reaches 500,000-600,000 tons. Aquaculture reaches more than 217,000 tons/year [8]. Many projects to build key infrastructure for traffic, irrigation, electricity, water, seaport, airport, coastal corridor, boat mooring area, schools, medical stations for neighboring communes sea, islands, and tourism development in coastal areas and islands are invested and put into use, etc. National defense and security are maintained, well-protected security, sovereignty over borders, sea and islands, and key areas and create favorable conditions for local socio-economic development.

Facing the general requirements of the province and the country, the Party Committee of the Provincial People's Committee is necessary to develop a plan to concretize the action plan of the Provincial Party Committee, in case of necessity, to prepare a survey project assess the current state of coastal and coastal areas to unify a system of targets, specific directions, and solutions to ensure marine economic development to 2030, with a vision to 2045. Districts, city commissars, and party committees under the Provincial Party Committee, Party unions, party committees, party committees according to their assigned functions and tasks, organized the implementation of too thoroughly in the entire political system Resolution No. 36-NQ/TW, dated 22- 10-2018 of the Party Central Committee, XII term on "Strategy for sustainable development of Vietnam's marine economy to 2030, with a vision to 2045" [7] and the action plan of the Provincial Party Committee. Particularly in the districts and city commissars of the coastal and

inland areas of the province to develop programs and plans to concretize the implementation, etc. ask for a new situation; by 2030, review the implementation of the program.

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