

Ecotourism Development

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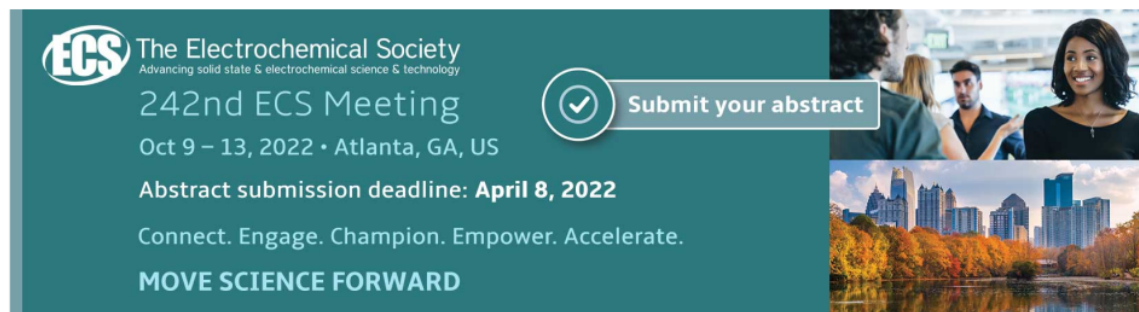
Ecotourism Development in Bangka Islands: An Exploratory Study on Participation and Expectations of Local Stakeholders

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Ecotourism Development in Bangka Islands: An Exploratory Study on Participation and Expectations of Local Stakeholders

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Abstract. Participation and expectations in the discourse of local ecotourism development are important and strategic aspects that need to be seriously addressed and managed. Both have close relation in the succession of local ecotourism. Bangka Belitung Islands in recent years has continued to make various efforts to optimize various local ecotourism development and development spaces, particularly in the context of preparing post-tin economy. Of course there are so many challenges and issues related to the process of local socio-economic transformation on the island of Bangka, especially the transition from the era of extractivism to tourism. In the midst of stretching the local government that continues to initiate and optimize various destinations and attractions that are quite potential and varied on Bangka Island, it is necessary to design policies that also address from various views, criticisms, aspirations and constructive input, both from the public, the government, local ecotourism actors and stakeholders. Based from this context, this study seeks to explore in depth related to the reality of participation and expectations that have surfaced at the local ecotourism level so far. This study in turn also aims to examine critically related various input, ideas, and narrative-constructive notes in the flow of local ecotourism management. Through a qualitative analysis method with an in-depth and structured interview approach, and strengthened by in-depth observations in the field, this study concludes that the context of participation and coordination among stakeholders has begun to develop, but it still seems to be not optimal because it tends to 'run' individually. This research also concludes that at least an important problem that arises is the unequal context of inter-regional ecotourism development in accordance with the varied potential of each region. In addition, there are weaknesses in terms of infrastructure and ecotourism infrastructure and access to transportation that is still limited or not sufficient enough for high tourist mobility. Furthermore, there are still some weaknesses related to governance and optimizing the potential for local ecotourism, both physical and non-physical aspects, which in fact require serious attention and cooperation through integrative commitments and interwoven strategic alliances, both by local governments, ecotourism actors, mass media, and all tourism stakeholders on Bangka Island.

1. Introduction

Bangka Belitung is an archipelago area with natural and economic extractive potential which is very varied and abundant [1]. As a 'tin mining area' for a long time [2, 3, 4, 5], as well as a tourist destination, the Bangka Belitung Islands, is certainly a paradox in itself because the intersection of these two contexts is very complex and conflictual. The discourse of participation and expectations are two contexts that are strongly interrelated with one another in the dynamics of ecotourism development and development in Bangka Belitung. As the efforts of regional governments that continue to strive to focus on the development of ecotourism as a new alternative sector for sustaining



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the regional economy, of course it needs cooperation, coordination and joint commitment in the flow of regional tourism development.

In the midst of local government efforts that continue to seriously strive to at the same time accelerate the development and development of ecotourism on Bangka Island, of course the context of initiation and anticipation that aims to strengthen the quality of regional ecotourism programs and agendas cannot only rely on the space and role of the government, but need strength and joint commitment of stakeholders to strengthen various levels of development, so that ecotourism space can be more participatory and accommodating to the various interests of the parties in the local tourism sphere.

Until now, the space and variety of ecotourism development has also led to many local initiatives, which of course also require support from many parties, both from the business world or tourism actors and community organizations at the rural level. The concept of participatory tourism development is thus a strategic essence that can be an inseparable part of efforts to improve the quality of local ecotourism destinations. The concept of participatory development and strategic alliances becomes a necessity in line with the continued increase in the flow of tourist visits (local, domestic, and foreign), while simultaneously developing several objects and alternative ecotourism attractions.

An interesting question that needs to be explored later is questioning the aspects of participation and expectations that have emerged in the dynamics of local ecotourism management and development so far. Participation and expectations are two currents that intersect strongly with each other in order to improve the quality of tourist destinations on Bangka Island, especially in the context of the satisfaction of tourists towards various tourist destinations [6, 7, 8, 9]. If participation requires the active involvement of all stakeholders, especially the actors and activists of ecotourism in the field with policy makers, especially in this case the local government. Of course the aim is to have an impact, both directly and indirectly, on the surrounding community [10, 11, 12]. While on the other hand, expectations become one of the directions and guidelines for policy makers to be more responsive and aspirational to various constructive ideas, ideas and inputs for the succession of various objects and tourist attractions that exist to really be able to lure tourists to visit repeatedly to attractive tourist destinations throughout Bangka Island.

In line with all of the above, the development of ecotourism destinations on the island of Bangka requires a concept and a joint solution. This paper tries to explore in a reflective-analytic manner related to various unique and interesting aspects related to how the dynamics of participation and expectations present in local ecotourism governance so far.

2. Methodology

This paper is designed using a descriptive qualitative research model approach, which tries to analyze the conditions and realities that arise regarding the dimensions of participation and expectations that arise from various stakeholders in the local ecotourism sphere, including the government, business and tourism businesses, ecotourism awareness groups, local communities, destination managers, accommodation managers, transportation, mass media, bureaucrats, tourism guide, private sector, tourism educators, both at the school and college level. Those are relevant to the strategic position of local stakeholders (see.figure 1) with ecotourism development, whether direct or indirect in playing role in ecotourism development. This figure could represent the importance of local stakeholders's expectation and participation on ecotourism development.

Total respondents interviewed were 30 people. They are selected respondents who are quite representative in the governance of local ecotourism development so far. Data collection techniques were obtained through in-depth interviews with actors, activists, and stakeholders who are in direct contact with the chain of organizing ecotourism activities on Bangka Island which are interrelated to one another. To enrich the analysis of the data, researchers also conducted a mini survey questionnaire and field observations in order to examine the dimensions of participation and expectations that appeared varied in the field.

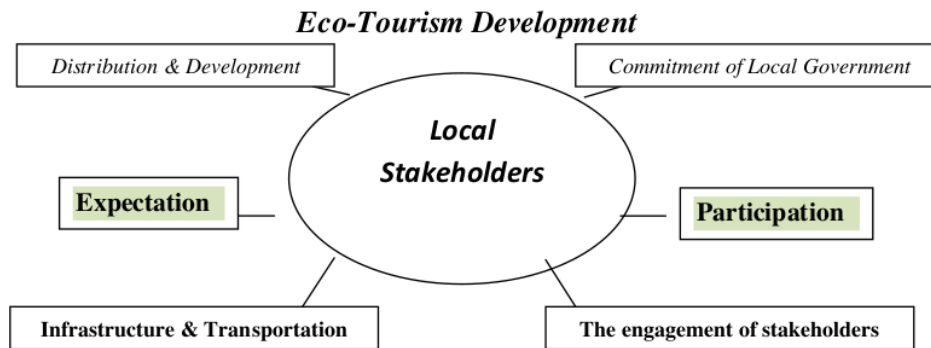


Figure 1. Local Stakeholders Expectation & Participation on Eco-Tourism Development

3. Finding and Discussion

In each regional tourism planning, development and development program, the aspect of participatory involvement and the expectations of stakeholders is a strategic context in the flow of ecotourism development. Therefore, the context referred to should ideally be more sensitive and responsive to various spaces and opportunities for local participation, as well as the expectations of ecotourism actors in the region. Aspects of participation and expectations become a strategic issue for regional tourism because they are equally important, inseparable because they have very close links with each other. It is on the basis of the issue of participation and expectations from the region that the development and development of tourism becomes a common focus and concern [13]. The following are some descriptions related to the results of interviews and field studies related to several strategic focus and issues which become one of the spaces for the emergence of various local participation and expectations, including the following:

Based to the data on the table 1, those could describe the results of in depth interview which conducted to local stakeholders regarding to ecotourism development in Bangka Island. Based to the data of the findings of in-depth interviews with informants during the field, as illustrated in the table above, it can be explained a few descriptions and a brief explanation of some aspects and strategic issues relating to the discourse of participation and expectations in the development and development of ecotourism on the island of Bangka. Some of the images in question include:

Table 1. Overall Respond

| STRATEGIC ISSUES FOCUS | RESPONDS |
|--|--|
| The development of Eco-Tourism in Bangka Island has been relatively good and equitable | The majority of informants put forward that the context of the development of Bangka tourism was not optimal. Meanwhile, the informants who answered were optimal were still relatively few. |
| There are already indications of the seriousness of the local government to prepare Bangka Island as a tourist destination on ecotourism | In this context, the majority of informants responded that there was already an indication of the government's seriousness and commitment in preparing Bangka Island to be developed as a tourist destination on ecotourism. The context of this respond is the majority of the informants. Meanwhile, some of the responses answered were not serious enough. |

The participation of stakeholders (ecotourism area manager / travel agent / tour) related to the process of ecotourism development is good enough

In the aspect of stakeholder participation, it can be explained that the majority of informants answered that there was already participation from ecotourism activists, especially destination managers, travel businesses and tour guides. Meanwhile, there are a number of others who say that there has not been or is still a lack of active involvement of women in the local ecotourism discourse

Infrastructure and transportation access in Bangka Island tourist destinations regarded as still limited by many visitors,

Meanwhile, from the aspect of accessibility, it can be seen that the existence of infrastructure and transportation access in various objects and tourist attractions on the island of Bangka, the majority, are still very limited in the orientation of the number of visitors.

Based to the data on the table above (see table 1), there are some further explanation about the main results:

✚ Aspects of Eco-Tourism Distribution and Development

If viewed from the aspect of the distribution and distribution of objects and tourist attractions on Bangka Island, in accordance with the findings of the results of field interviews with ecotourism activists and actors, it was found that the general condition was still uneven. This is reflected in the less varied and limited choice of destinations or tourist attraction objects for tourists who will travel to Bangka Island. From the results of in-depth interviews and searches in the field, it was found that the majority of informants assessed that aspects of equity and development contexts were not yet optimal. The majority considered that the equal distribution of various destinations in the Bangka Island environment was not so optimal. Therefore, it needs concrete steps between the parties, both the government and the business world to collaborate with local communities in creating better developing tourist destination conditions. Meanwhile, a small group of other informants actually answered that aspects of ecotourism distribution and development were considered to be relatively optimal.

✚ Serious Commitment of Local Government on the Development of Tourist Destinations on ecotourism

Meanwhile, when viewed from the aspect of the commitment and seriousness of the Regional Government towards the development of tourist objects and attractions on Bangka Island, the results show that stakeholders believe that so far there has been a serious commitment from the local government in developing various potential objects and tourist attractions, especially related to ecotourism. for tourists. At least the majority of informants interviewed in depth considered that there had been a serious commitment from the local government. Related to this, based on the results of interviews found that there are some fundamental indications of how the context has appeared in the dynamics of local ecotourism development so far. For example, how the local government continues to develop 'spaces' of new destinations that have the opportunity to increase the level of visits, while at the same time extending the length of stay of tourists when they travel to Bangka Island.

Therefore, this is important in order to support various efforts to encourage and strengthen the development of various potential tourist destinations that are quite varied in several districts / cities that have not been optimally elaborated. Then, there are also several other informal ones who answered that so far there has been no serious commitment from the local government. Therefore, it is necessary to anticipate steps to ensure that the government commander is in every effort to optimize

the various potential tourist destinations on ecotourism that are scattered in the Bangka Island environment.

✦ *Aspects of Involvement and Active Participation of Stakeholders*

Meanwhile, if viewed from the aspect of commitment and seriousness of the Regional Government towards development efforts, data from interviews with tourism stakeholders, both the government, business community and tourism actors, are found that the majority of informants interviewed in depth in the field explained that basically there has been an active involvement of the parties in the process of developing and developing local ecotourism, especially in the context of preparing the attractiveness of attractive tourist destinations for tourists to visit. So far, the flow of involvement of the parties took place on two streams, which were born from the initiation of the community and tourism business actors themselves, as well as the existence of programs that provide adequate space and opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in the process of developing tourist attraction.

Meanwhile, there were some respondents who felt that the active participation of the stakeholders was not so optimal. Departing from these data, they considered that during their inclination the government's position and role so far tended to assume that the government tended to be present 'later', when a separate initiation from the community or tourism actors had begun to be built at the local level. This is also evident from the growing active role of the community and the presence of a variety of environmentally friendly or ecotourism communities who take various active and creative steps to develop various tourist attractions in their respective environments.

✦ *Aspects of Infrastructure and Transport on Access Travel Destinations*

If viewed from the aspects of Infrastructure and transportation access in tourist destinations on Bangka Island, the interview data shows that the conditions of the infrastructure and access in question already exist, and are considered to be good enough. The informal majority stated that the condition of infrastructure and access to transportation was sufficient. Meanwhile, almost the remaining half rate that the condition of infrastructure and transportation access has not been sufficient. In fact, according to them, both aspects have a role and strategic position in order to support various activities and activities of tourists. The presence of tourist attractions really requires adequate infrastructure and access so that it makes it easier for tourists to enjoy a variety of panoramas and the main tourist attractions offered, including alternative tourist attractions that are presented at the developed ecotourism zoning. Therefore, this condition basically shows that there must be aspects that are interrelated and support each other. Successful implementation of ecotourism activities depends on aspects of basic infrastructure and access that can be enjoyed by tourists when making a tourist visit to an object and tourist attraction.

Furthermore, the majority of ecotourism businesses admit that so far the budget support to improve and multiply the transportation infrastructure is still relatively minimal. The context of transportation in question is accessibility facilities to tourist destination locations, and also road infrastructure that is easy and adequate for tourists to access. The community of tourism actors wants a strategic partnership between the business community and the government in order to support the development and improvement of infrastructure and transportation access to ecotourism destinations. In this case, there needs to be a space of strong collaboration between stakeholders to jointly create a ecotourism cycle that is conducive for visitors to make tourist visits. Need to understand and at the same time the collective commitment of the parties in order to design tourist conditions that are easy, safe and comfortable for tourists.

In the context of its strategic importance and the presence of infrastructure and accessibility, the following is a conceptual overview of how and what the important position of both aspects with various other important aspects that are related to each other (see figure 2). Thus, a participatory development approach is certainly needed in line with the expectations that arise for the parties involved in developing tourist destinations.

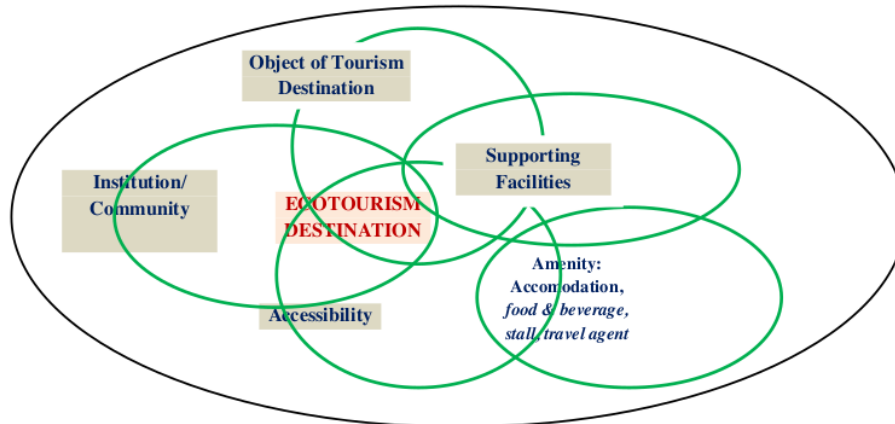


Figure 2. Elements of Destination (Sunaryo, 2013) [14, 15]

✦ *Participation, Expectations, and Solutive Recommendations*

In the context of the development of ecotourism destinations on the island of Bangka, the base of participation and the expectations so far still need to be optimized seriously by all parties. The goal is to improve coordination and consolidation between parties, especially in order to equalize the perceptions of stakeholders in developing and developing local ecotourism in line with the hopes and desires of tourism actors, both from the government and the business world. Between parties need to support each other in order to succeed the development of local ecotourism that is more responsive and participatory to various constructive input from stakeholders at the local level. The following are some field findings related to several strategic issues that are directly related to the dimensions of participation and expectations in the development of local ecotourism destinations.

Firstly, the majority of respondents still lack cooperation between parties, especially the government, the community and the ecotourism sector to be able to make the same perception in the success of the regional ecotourism program. Furthermore, respondents felt that the availability of human resources and knowledge capacity was still limited regarding the development of tourist destinations. In addition, support from the budget side can basically be said to be relatively limited so it is not surprising then, if initiatives and creations from local communities emerge to develop various alternative ecotourism attractions that are in line with existing local potential.

Secondly, the respondents, both in terms of ecotourism stakeholders or local governments, recognizing how the limited governance of objects and tourist attraction, accessibility road, and promotional programs are still considered relatively terbats. In addition, aspects of cleanliness and maintenance of tourist destinations still often face problems. So far the management is still relatively weak and limited. As a result, there is a tendency for ecotourism destinations to be poorly maintained and well managed.

Thirdly, the space for strategic coordination and consolidation between stakeholders still needs to be increased. Of course the government can not walk alone in an effort to develop and improve the quality of regional ecotourism development. It needs cooperation, commitment and strategic alliance of each party to sit together in designing higher quality ecotourism destination development programs. The aspect of involving the stakeholders, both directly and indirectly, is important. Therefore, it is necessary to align commitments and programs between stakeholders, both in the government, business world, and local communities.

Fourthly, efforts to optimize tourist objects and attractions require a variety of approaches, both from the zoning aspect, participation and expectations that are strongly related in presenting attractive and quality ecotourism destinations for tourists. During this time, the actors together with the business world have a large enough space for interaction with tourists. Therefore, a joint commitment is needed to redesign the development model that uses a multi-perspective approach, one through

increasing the active involvement of all parties to provide constructive input and notes on efforts to develop local ecotourism destinations that are more unique and creative in accordance with the local characteristics of each region on Bangka Island. Furthermore, it is certainly necessary to involve public participation, for example in an environmentally conscious community, ecotourism awareness, or driving organization to optimize the maintenance of various objects and tourist attractions that have been developed previously by the government and the community.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that at least a few basic things, first, tourism development in Bangka Island tends to proliferate on ecotourism features lately. Interestingly, the space for participation and coordination between stakeholders, both by the government together with the ecotourism business, ecotourism actors and the community are still not established by strategic alliances, specifically how the participation space is still not optimal. In this case the integrated cooperation space is still relatively limited so it needs to be optimized by the district and city areas together as well. Secondly, efforts and roles of local governments have been there, but not yet serious enough, responsive and accommodating to prepare a more participatory and equitable context of ecotourism development in regency/ city areas in accordance with the potential and characteristic characteristics of each region's potential. Third, other findings from this study are that although the ecotourism sector development program continues to be improved, but the various ecotourism destination development projects that have been developed still leave many weaknesses, both in terms of accessibility, amenities, attractions, accommodation, activities and quality of the destination, as well as the sustainability of power tourist attraction in destinations that have been built so far. Therefore, all of these problematic contexts really require joint attention and commitment between the regional government and ecotourism actors so that strategic alliances can be established in the management of regional ecotourism. Furthermore, it needs a shared space in order to strengthen coordination and consolidation between stakeholders in the development and development of local ecotourism destinations in the future. Meanwhile, based on an in-depth examination of the results of questionnaire interviews with various parties concerned with local ecotourism, it can be concluded that the participation space so far has been relatively limited. These conditions are certainly important and strategic in order to make the input and ideas of interested parties as the basis for making appropriate and accurate policies. With various figures, the authors identify that most contexts of participation are considered to be relatively lacking. Then, from the aspect of the equalization of tourist destinations in several regencies / cities, that there are several groups of informants who stated that there is no equal distribution related to the distribution of tourist objects and attractions that should have the opportunity to become alternative destination destinations for tourists to extend the stay of tourists.

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