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## Analysis of The Influence of Ecotourism Strategy, Accommodation Management and Public Management on National Tourism Competitiveness

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi hubungan antara prinsip dan praktik pariwisata ekologis yang dilakukan oleh sektor publik dan swasta. Penelitian mengumpulkan data melalui berbagai metode seperti tinjauan bibliografi, wawancara, dan survei. Analisis data meliputi analisis deskriptif dan analisis kualitatif. Sektor publik dan swasta yang diteliti telah menunjukkan kemampuan untuk beradaptasi dan merencanakan strategi baru, termasuk kemampuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan merumuskan program yang dapat memenuhi kebutuhan wisatawan dan meningkatkan pengalaman pariwisata lokal. Saran dari penelitian adalah tim manajemen sebaiknya merumuskan strategi berkelanjutan yang mempertimbangkan berbagai faktor dan masukan dari pakar. Pelaku industri juga perlu meningkatkan kerja sama lintas industri, hal ini diperlukan untuk meningkatkan daya saing sekaligus menjaga nilai dan norma penduduk lokal, meningkatkan kepuasan wisatawan serta menerapkan praktik pelestarian lingkungan dan menciptakan efisiensi energi.

Kata Kunci: *Pariwisata, Wisatawan, Strategi, Nilai, Masyarakat*

## Abstract

This study aims to explore the relationship between the principles and practices of ecological tourism carried out by the public and private sectors. The study collected data through various methods such as bibliographic review, interviews, and surveys. Data analysis included descriptive analysis and qualitative analysis. The public and private sectors studied have shown the ability to adapt and plan new strategies, including the ability to identify and formulate programs that can meet tourist needs and improve local tourism experiences. The recommendation from the study is that management teams should formulate sustainable strategies that consider various factors and input from experts. Industry players also need to increase cross-industry employment, this is necessary to increase competitiveness while maintaining local values and norms, increasing tourist satisfaction and implementing environmental conservation practices and creating energy efficiency.

*Keywords: Tourism, Tourists, Strategy, Values, Society*

## INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism offers in-depth educational programs on local ecology, biology, and culture, as well as direct involvement of tourists in conservation projects such as tree planting, wildlife monitoring, or habitat restoration (Sapulette et al., 2018). It must be planned and managed, so that the development of ecotourism destinations sustainably to minimize negative impacts on the environment and local culture (Harling & Sapulette, 2021). Government must regularly pay attention to and evaluate the implementation of ecotourism to ensure the achievement of conservation goals and benefits for local communities (Maulana et al., 2021).

Tourism is one of the most important economic activities worldwide, providing various positive and negative impacts (Tannady et al., 2023). The positive impacts of tourism include increasing foreign exchange, which is important for the stability of the country's economy and helps reduce the trade deficit. In addition, tourism creates jobs in various sectors, from hospitality and transportation to local services and crafts, providing significant economic growth opportunities (Ekasari et al., 2023). Tourism can also encourage the development of infrastructure and public services, such as roads, airports, and health and education facilities, which in turn improve the quality of life in local communities (Albartin, 2019). However, it's crucial to manage the negative aspects of tourism effectively (Afifuddin et al., 2023). One negative impact that often arises is the seasonal nature of the jobs created by the tourism sector. Jobs that depend on the holiday season can create economic instability for workers, who must seek alternative sources of income outside the peak tourist season (Sintesa & Astuti, 2022). Additionally, excessive consumption of resources, such as air and energy, can increase pressure on the local environment, especially in areas that already have limited

resources. However, although tourism provides many economic and social benefits, it is important to manage and regulate this sector wisely to minimize its negative impacts and ensure long-term travel (Erlangga, 2021).

Ecotourism is associated with socio-cultural, environmental, political, and economic sustainability. This approach emphasizes the importance of wise decision-making by public and private actors in order to maintain a balance between economic growth and environmental and cultural sustainability (Fahrurrozi et al., 2023). Ecotourism must pay attention not only to economic aspects but also to the socio-cultural and environmental ecosystems (Wibowo et al., 2023). Improper management of tourism activities can harm ecosystems, disrupt wildlife, contaminate water resources, and lead to significant waste issues. In addition, tourism that focuses on resource exploitation without considering the preservation of local culture can result in the loss of local communities' traditions and cultural identity (Panjaitan & Panjaitan, 2022). To overcome this challenge, it is necessary to develop a more sustainable tourism model based on three fundamental pillars namely economic, social, and environmental. From an economic standpoint, sustainable tourism must guarantee a fair distribution of the economic benefits from tourism among local communities (Luturlean & Se, 2019).

The success of ecotourism and sustainable tourism depends greatly on the policies and decisions taken by both public and private actors (Afrizal Zein, 2024). Governments and other stakeholders need to develop frameworks that support sustainability, including strict regulations regarding environmental management, incentives for sustainable practices, and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (Sulistyo et al., 2022). Cooperation between the government, the private sector, and local communities is essential to creating a conducive environment for sustainable tourism (Sapulette, 2021). By adopting the principles of ecotourism and sustainable tourism, we can reverse the harmful impacts of tourism activities and ensure that tourism can continue to function and develop without harming the environment or local communities (Supriyanto, 2023). This approach not only helps preserve natural beauty and cultural heritage, but also provides sustainable economic benefits for future generations.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a mixed-methods approach with a predominantly qualitative approach. Data collection techniques used include bibliographic reviews, interviews, and surveys. We carried out a bibliographic review to establish a solid theoretical basis, and conducted interviews with members of the city's tourism public management for this

purpose. We conducted a survey among members of tourist accommodations in the selected destinations using an online questionnaire. This questionnaire uses a Likert scale. We carried out data analysis using descriptive and frequency analysis techniques for quantitative data, and qualitative thematic analysis for interview data. We use Google Forms and Excel programs to organize and process the collected data in this process. The analysis takes into account data from surveys of tourist accommodation members and interviews with public management members to provide a comprehensive picture of the conditions and dynamics of tourism in the selected destinations.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research results suggest that respondents associate ecotourism practices in these destinations. Respondents linked ecotourism to various aspects of resource management, including managing water resources by avoiding inappropriate use in washing towels to save water, as well as protecting the natural environment through minimal and non-damaging interactions. They also highlighted the importance of using renewable energy, such as solar energy, to reduce the carbon footprint, as well as separating and recycling waste, with these waste management practices being the most frequently mentioned by respondents. Apart from that, ecotourism is also associated with tourist and recreational activities, such as visiting beautiful and unique natural attractions, as well as participating in various environmentally friendly outdoor activities, which allow tourists to interact directly with nature without destroying it. Respondents have a solid understanding of ecotourism practices and relate them to actions that support environmental conservation and participation in sustainable tourism activities. This shows great potential for the development of ecotourism, which can combine environmental awareness with an immersive and educational tourism experience.

In the survey, respondents stated the costs and benefits of ecotourism practices in their destinations. The main benefits identified are those for the environment, cities, citizens, and optimal resource use. This is consistent with the literature, which shows that ecotourism can have a positive impact on the environment and local communities. On the other hand, we identified changes in the habits and beliefs of staff and tourists as important factors in terms of costs. Economic costs were also identified as a major factor, along with temporal factors such as the time spent by those responsible for implementing ecotourism strategies. When analyzing the costs and benefits in the context of the companies managed by the respondents, there are similarities with those mentioned previously regarding the costs and benefits of ecotourism practices in their destinations. This demonstrates that ecotourism

benefits not only the environment and wider community, but also the company itself, resulting in increased operational sustainability and other long-term benefits.

The benefits of ecotourism practices identified in the survey included the environment, taxes, resource management, and attraction to target audiences. On the other hand, ecotourism practices have economic costs, time factors, a lack of community choice, and changes in habits. Examining ecotourism practices within companies reveals similarities with those found in popular tourist destinations. Respondents consider two main aspects of ecotourism: resource management and tourism activities. Ecotourism practices identified in this research include resource management, socializing the importance of the environment, and providing training for tourists and staff. Challenges related to water use, production, and waste management were the main focus and were implemented by respondents. Survey respondents added new ecotourism strategies.

Survey results show that communities are responsible for company tasks such as employing local people and using and promoting local products. The respondents also emphasized the aspects they wished to incorporate, particularly those concerning their involvement in waste reduction seminars and the supervision of internships or professional practices conducted by students in the city, all of which are integral to ecotourism education and training. Respondents identified energy consumption as the most prominent, followed by water management and environmental stewardship, while waste management and purchasing policies were considered the least prominent. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, one of the prominent aspects of ecotourism is its educational function. Environmental education is critical to implementing sustainable development in the tourism sector because it has the potential to change tourists' and local residents' awareness. We can achieve social change by cultivating values, attitudes, and skills that promote environmental responsibility, foster a more harmonious relationship between humans and the environment, and prevent and solve environmental problems through the development of a more sustainable lifestyle.

According to data analysis, it appears that accommodation service providers tend to pay attention to environmental and resource concerns through the use of posters. However, most of them stated that they did not implement certain environmental education strategies. The company engaged in ecological strategy-related programs. Only a small portion of respondents said they participated, while more than half were unaware of the program or did not participate. Reasons given include other priorities, too many program requirements, the impossibility of implementing ecological habits, a lack of time and resources, and unfamiliarity with the program. This group's primary obstacle in executing

environmental strategies stems from the exorbitant expenses associated with securing certification or eco-labels, as well as altering the elements necessary for efficient and responsible resource management for sustainability, a topic previously explored by numerous authors. Some respondents stated that they did not specifically carry out environmental education, but there were those who used communication methods such as face-to-face verbal communication and visual communication to inform others about respecting, protecting, and conserving natural landscapes.

Respondents stated that when communicating about environmental awareness, two situations arise with guests. After a dialogue aimed at raising awareness, guests can show two attitudes they may feel uncomfortable, but on the other hand, they can also show a positive attitude towards environmental care recommendations. Participants also noted a disregard for the environment on the part of tourists. Guests find it most challenging to respect aspects related to electrical energy use, like turning off lights when not needed and adjusting air conditioning settings. Participants attributed this guest behavior to a lack of awareness, a habit of unnecessary and excessive resource expenditure due to paying for services according to the rate, and a lack of management within the city or company itself. They also highlighted a lack of practice and education from hotels and guests regarding resource maintenance.

Some respondents reported that their guests complied with the established rules, while others paid less attention to ecological and environmental aspects. The acceptance of waste management and environmental awareness generally correlates with guests' environmentally friendly behavior. On the other hand, economic compensation often contributes to environmentally unfriendly behavior, leading guests to feel entitled to overuse and disregard resources, excessive energy use, a lack of awareness, and discomfort with managers' efforts to raise awareness. To improve guest behavior that is considered environmentally unfriendly, participants suggested environmental education strategies. Despite the awareness of the importance of environmental education, some respondents reported the lack of specific implementation of these measures. This may be due to differences in perceptions of what environmental education actually means, suggesting that there is room for clarification and greater agreement on this concept in the context of tourist accommodation.

We highlight factors driving the emergence of sustainable tourism, such as the recognition of the depletion of natural and environmental resources and the need to protect and preserve them while maintaining balance with the economic, social, and cultural interests of society. The reasons expressed by respondents for improving guest behavior

regarding ecological actions also emphasize collective benefits, concern for the environment, and personal contribution to environmental care, as well as the importance of managing energy and waste resources. Over the past few decades, there has been an increase in awareness of environmental and social issues in society. People tend to want daily practices that are more environmentally friendly and lead to consumption that is considered more ethical. The Tourism Directorate's surveys and interviews reveal guests' and tourists' current interest in environmental issues and their desire for nature-based experiences. They are also increasingly aware of the importance of protecting the environment. While not all survey respondents agreed with this view, it is important to note that some did, indicating variations in perceptions and attitudes towards environmental sustainability in the tourism industry.

## CONCLUSION

The public sector has carried out campaigns to raise citizens' awareness of the importance of preserving resources and tourist attractions, while also focusing on the preservation of natural spaces and responsible waste management strategies. From an ecological perspective, both the public and private sectors are trying to develop strategies that consider various dimensions of sustainability, such as economic, social, cultural, environmental, and political. However, cooperation between these sectors is necessary to enhance this development. In the context of the relationship between tourist accommodation and environmental impact, there are several key concepts that include good environmental practices, energy efficiency, and corporate social responsibility. The companies participating in this research have highlighted aspects related to the implementation of good environmental practices, energy efficiency, and corporate social responsibility. Strategies to reduce and optimize energy consumption without sacrificing comfort, encourage changes in people's habits and attitudes, and adopt new ethics towards society and nature are the focus of these actions.

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