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Ecotourism:

## Super Priority Tourism Development and Preservation Strategy in Indonesia

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui; (1) potensi ecotourism pada destinasi super prioritas Indonesia; dan (2) strategi ecotourism sebagai pengembangan dan pelestarian pariwisata super prioritas di Indonesia. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa (1) DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, dan DSP Labuan Bajo memiliki kekuatan dan potensi wisata bahari dan wisata bawah laut yang dikembangkan pemerintah dan potensial untuk menerapkan konsep ecotourism; dan (2) strategi ecotourism sebagai pengembangan dan pelestarian pariwisata super prioritas di Indonesia antara lain strategi SO melalui perencanaan pemasaran ecotourism pada destinasi super prioritas Indonesia sebagai pariwisata yang bersifat sustainable, strategi WO dengan menyusun konsep ecotourism bagi wisatawan yang berkunjung ke destinasi super prioritas Indonesia, strategi ST melalui kolaborasi stakeholders mendukung ecotourism pada destinasi super prioritas Indonesia, dan strategi WT dengan mengedukasi dan mengevaluasi program ecotourism.

Kata Kunci: *Ecotourism, Super Prioritas, Strategi*

## Abstract

This research aims to determine (1) the potential for ecotourism in Indonesia's super priority destinations; and (2) ecotourism strategy as the development and preservation of super priority tourism in Indonesia. This research is descriptive qualitative research. The results of this research show that (1) DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo have the strength and potential of marine tourism and underwater tourism developed by the government and have the potential to implement the concept of ecotourism; and (2) ecotourism strategy as the development and preservation of super priority tourism in Indonesia, including the SO strategy through ecotourism marketing planning in super priority destinations in Indonesia as sustainable tourism, the WO strategy by developing an ecotourism concept for tourists visiting super priority destinations in Indonesia, ST strategy through stakeholder collaboration supports ecotourism in Indonesia's super priority destinations, and WT strategy by educating and evaluating ecotourism programs.

Keywords: *Ecotourism, Super Priority, Strategy*

## INTRODUCTION

In the midst of the massive development of the tourism sector, the issue of the impact of damage to the environment in the tourism sector has emerged. Various tourism alternatives are starting to be developed, so that the tourism sector, apart from providing many benefits, especially in foreign exchange, also benefits local communities (Butarbutar, 2013). As well as applying more environmentally friendly tourism or better known as ecotourism (Mbaiwa, 2009). In this regard, Indonesia's priority Super Destinations which are included in the Special Economic Zones (KEK) for tourism in Indonesia are also developing the concept of ecotourism in their development.

The concept of ecotourism is an alternative in creating tourist destinations within the scope of Special Economic Zones but still paying attention to the ecological aspects in the tourist zone. Development of super priority SEZ destinations that prioritize aspects of natural beauty while maintaining some areas as green areas (Stronza, 2019). The tourism sector that develops ecotourism generally has characteristics that are centered on nature-based tourism, involving local residents, contributing to providing benefits to local residents, contributing to dealing with environmental and ecosystem problems in tourist areas by minimizing tourism impacts, and providing local cultural education to tourists (Wungo , 2020).

The ecotourism-based tourism industry generally involves many stakeholders in its implementation, such as the government (Utomo, 2023; Mulyani, 2021). To maintain tourist growth while maintaining environmental sustainability, the government and tourism industry stakeholders are trying to promote ecotourism-based tourism as an alternative

tourism offering that is sustainable. The concept of ecotourism is related to how the tourism industry can be maintained and developed in line with the increasing number of tourists, but while still paying attention to environmental sustainability in the area. The concept of ecotourism tries to dispel the notion that the tourism industry, apart from encouraging economic growth, is the main trigger for environmental damage (Kia, 2021; Benjamin, 2020).

This research discusses 3 of the 5 super priority destinations, namely DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo which are of concern to the government in implementing the ecotourism concept. Super priority tourism is tourism with high quality services (luxury) and is thick with natural, social, cultural and community uniqueness. Services include several factors, namely amenities, attractions, accessibility and tourism awareness so that tourists get high-value experiences while still paying attention to environmental sustainability (Wulung, 2020).

This research aims to determine (1) the potential for ecotourism in Indonesia's super priority destinations; (2) ecotourism strategy as the development and preservation of super priority tourism in Indonesia.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative-descriptive research so that the findings and discussion of this research are in the form of a description. The qualitative-descriptive method is a type of research that describes in detail (Semiawan, 2010). In line with the research objective to describe ecotourism strategies as the development and preservation of super priority tourism in Indonesia.

The data source in this research is previous research studies that are relevant to ecotourism strategies as the development and preservation of super priority tourism in Indonesia. The data collection technique in this research is a reading technique by reading sources that are relevant to the research discussion and then determining the data that will be included. The data analysis technique in this research uses SWOT analysis related to ecotourism strategies as the development and preservation of super priority tourism in Indonesia.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Ecotourism Potential in Indonesia's Super Priority Destinations

The super priority destinations (DSP) that are of concern to the government are located in 6 different provinces, Mandalika in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), Labuan Bajo in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), Lake Toba in North Sumatra, Borobudur in Central Java, and

Likupang in North Sulawesi. 3 of the 5 super priority tourist destinations have the strength and potential of marine tourism and underwater tourism developed by the government and have the potential to apply the concept of ecotourism. The super priority destinations are DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo.

Some of the potential that the DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo Creative Economic Zones gain in implementing ecotourism-based tourism includes the interest of foreign investors in the green economy concept offered. By implementing the green economy concept, it will increasingly attract the attention of foreign investors to invest in KEK development. The concept of sustainable development in super priority SEZ destinations can be used as a model for development in other regions.

As an effort to implement the concept of sustainability and green economy, development projects in DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo, such as resorts, hotels and other buildings, are supported by environmentally friendly infrastructure facilities such as solar power plants, distilling sea water into clean water, as well as providing green areas. Investors who want to invest in super priority destinations get special ecotourism-based investment offers such as mangrove tours, natural flora, eco trails, eco lodges and eco hotels and resorts.

The implementation of environmentally friendly infrastructure that the researchers describe is proof of the seriousness of the government and super priority destination developers in developing sustainable tourism destinations. Even though the development of nature-based tourism destinations is followed by the development of modern infrastructure within it, efforts are made to ensure that this infrastructure is environmentally friendly. So that the formation of this tourist destination is not only valid in the short term, but can be implemented in the long term without having to damage the ecosystem in the area.

Ecotourism does not only offer nature-based tourism. However, it can also be implemented by introducing local culture and customs, by visiting local residential areas which generally still maintain the tribe's customs and customs or by performing performances that introduce local regional arts.

Ecotourism Strategy as Super Priority Tourism Development and Preservation in Indonesia

DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo have implemented the principles of sustainable tourism development by strengthening efforts to conserve tourism potential and the environment in supporting the intensification of tourist attractions. The

development carried out must be environmentally responsible as part of the ecotourism concept which is the government's concern for creating sustainable tourism.

Sustainable tourism must pay attention to aspects of participation, stakeholder participation, local ownership, sustainable use of resources, accommodating community goals, carrying capacity, monitoring and evaluation, training and promotion as researchers present in the following table.

Table 1 SWOT Analysis of Ecotourism as Super Priority Tourism Development and Preservation in Indonesia

|    |  |   |   |
|----|--|---|---|
|    |  | Strengths (kekuatan)  | Weakness (kelemahan)  |
| OT |  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Green infrastructure, creating conservation areas, and involving local elements to attract tourists</li> <li>2. It has natural beauty, cultural richness and local wisdom in accordance with the concept of ecotourism</li> <li>3. It has strong tourism potential, namely marine tourism and underwater tourism developed by the government</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to the DSP tourist area is quite far and requires relatively high costs</li> <li>2. Minimal development of new tourism products</li> <li>3. Lack of human resources and experts in the field of ecotourism.</li> </ol> |
| SW |  |   |   |
|    | Opportunity (peluang)  | SO Strategy   | WO Strategy   |
|    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The concept of ecotourism continues to pay attention to environmental issues and involves local residents in its development</li> <li>2. Attracting many local workers, while still implementing the concept of sustainable green tourism</li> <li>3. Showing equal distribution of tourism development</li> </ol> | <p>Marketing planning for ecotourism as sustainable tourism in Indonesia's super priority destinations</p>  | <p>Developing an eco tourism concept for tourists visiting Indonesia's super priority destinations</p>  |

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4. There are many digital platforms that can be used for promotions and to reach consumers widely
  5. Positive community response to DSP development
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| Threat (tantangan)   | ST Strategy  | WT Strategy                              |
|--|--|--|
| 1. It is considered to involve only a handful of parties, namely stakeholders who have capital                     | Collaboration with stakeholders supports ecotourism in Indonesia's super priority destinations | Educate and evaluate ecotourism programs |
| 2. There have not been many marketing efforts or marketing communications in a comprehensive and integrated manner |  |  |

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#### SO Strategy: Ecotourism Marketing Planning in Indonesia's Super Priority Destinations as Sustainable Tourism

The government is seeking integrated promotion of DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo as a super priority tourism destination. Various local and international scale events with the concept of ecotourism are held in super priority tourist destinations to attract tourists to visit. DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo also have calendars of events and offer environmentally friendly tour packages as part of integrated tourism promotions in the region. Uploading DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo ecotourism content on social media can also influence visitors' decisions and provide a feeling of satisfaction for the uploader.

#### WO Strategy: Develop an Ecotourism Concept for Tourists Visiting Indonesia's Super Priority Destinations

DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo are tourist destinations whose conditions support being developed into tourist attractions. Existing tourism activities at DSP Mandalika, DSP Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo are capital or sources of tourism. Capital

attractions that attract tourist arrivals that support the concept of ecotourism include Natural Resources (natural), cultural tourism attractions, and environmentally friendly man-made attractions.

Infrastructure readiness such as access to transportation, availability of accommodation, and support for tourist activities can also influence visitor satisfaction. Most ecotourism destinations require infrastructure development due to their nature-related characteristics, which usually have limited access and technology. On the other hand, this infrastructure development will support the economic development of local communities.

#### ST Strategy: Stakeholder Collaboration Supports Ecotourism in Indonesia's Super Priority Destinations

Implementing ecotourism as the main strategy in achieving sustainable tourism is the right step to be implemented in Indonesia's super priority destinations which are of concern to the government. In order to achieve success and minimize challenges in running ecotourism, collaboration between sectors is needed. Government support in developing the tourism sector is needed, especially for matters relating to ecotourism business policies and funding for human resource formation.

Not only stakeholders in tourism activities such as government, private sector and society, but also between sectors and non-government organizations, especially in the fields of education and the environment. Collaboration with educational institutions is needed to support outreach, research and research programs that support the development of ecotourism destinations. Meanwhile, collaboration with environmental institutions is needed as a medium for implementing conservation systems, as well as assistance in terms of funding. An appropriate destination image that meets the wishes of ecotourism tourists is needed to attract this target market. In this case, good cooperation is needed between Object Managers and tourist attractions or better known as Destination Management Organizations (DMO) and business owners.

#### WT Strategy: Educate and Evaluate Ecotourism Programs

Lack of commitment in conservation programs, which is actually one of the main goals of ecotourism. This can be sourced from low knowledge, understanding and community participation in ecotourism activities. In other words, there is a lack of human resources and experts in the field of ecotourism. For this reason, the presence of man power who have skills in the field of ecotourism who understand sustainable tourism, both in preparing business and operational strategies (such as tour guides), is needed for the development of ecotourism initiatives.

Activities that can be used to increase community participation in ecotourism programs are efforts to improve the quality of human resources. This effort is usually carried out in the form of training, outreach and outreach about the concept of ecotourism, creating small businesses, tour guides and accommodation management. Apart from that, community empowerment efforts can also be carried out in the form of providing credit to local communities so they can start businesses such as MSMEs.

In community empowerment efforts, it is important to socialize that ecotourism activities, apart from providing benefits to local communities, must also make a direct contribution to conservation activities. This is important so that in developing their business, they have conservation signs that must be maintained. To achieve sustainable ecotourism, monitoring and evaluation of ecotourism implementation is required. Monitoring and evaluation is carried out internally and externally. Internally, internal monitoring is carried out by the managers themselves, while external monitoring is carried out by outside parties such as the community and other independent institutions.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research presentation, the conclusions of this research show that the super priority destinations Mandalika, Likupang, and DSP Labuan Bajo have the strength and potential of marine tourism and underwater tourism developed by the government and have the potential to apply the concept of ecotourism. The ecotourism strategy as the development and preservation of super priority tourism in Indonesia includes the SO strategy through ecotourism marketing planning in super priority destinations in Indonesia as sustainable tourism, the WO strategy by developing an ecotourism concept for tourists visiting super priority destinations in Indonesia, the ST strategy through collaboration stakeholders support ecotourism in Indonesia's super priority destinations, and WT strategies by educating and evaluating ecotourism programs.

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