

Building Good Governance in Sustainable Tourism Management in Riau Islands

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Abstract: *This qualitative study explores the implementation of good governance principles in the management of sustainable tourism in the Riau Islands. The research aims to identify the challenges and opportunities associated with applying good governance in this region, focusing on key areas such as accountability, transparency, legal frameworks, and information dissemination. Data collection was conducted through interviews with government officials, tourism industry stakeholders, and local communities to gain insights into their experiences and perspectives. The findings reveal that while there are significant obstacles, including weak inter-agency coordination and limited community participation, there are also considerable opportunities, such as leveraging public-private partnerships and fostering community-based tourism initiatives. The study concludes by offering recommendations to strengthen governance mechanisms, promote stakeholder collaboration, and enhance the overall sustainability of tourism in the Riau Islands, ensuring balanced benefits for the local economy, environment, and society.*

Keywords: *good governance, sustainable tourism management, riau islands*

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Introduction

In Indonesia, national tourism development is reflected in Law Number 10 of 2009 concerning tourism. The law states that tourism development is carried out through the implementation of development plans that take into account the diversity, uniqueness, and specificity of culture and nature, as well as the human need to travel. By understanding this concept, sustainable tourism destination policies can be implemented to realize national tourism development that is in accordance with local culture, socially acceptable, prioritizes local communities, is non-discriminatory, and is environmentally friendly.

National and regional tourism planning has a variety of significant benefits, including the establishment of clear development goals and policies, conservation of natural and cultural resources (World Tourism Organization, 2004), and the integration of tourism into broader development policies. In addition, this planning provides a rational basis for decision-making in the public and private sectors, coordination of tourism elements, and optimization of economic, environmental, and social benefits. By establishing clear physical structures and planning standards, tourism planning also ensures effective implementation and sustainable management, as well as providing a coordination framework between the public and private sectors for investment. In addition, this planning allows for continuous monitoring of development to ensure compliance with established plans (Inskeep, 1994).

The Riau Islands, as one of the leading tourism destinations in Indonesia, have rich natural and cultural potential (Irwan et al., 2020). However, the rapid growth of the tourism sector is often accompanied by significant challenges,

such as environmental damage, social conflict, and injustice in the distribution of economic benefits. In this context, sustainable tourism management becomes very important to ensure that natural and cultural resources can be preserved for future generations. However, without a good governance framework, efforts to achieve sustainable tourism are often hampered by practices that are not transparent and accountable (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2021).

Good governance is a concept that emphasizes the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness in decision-making (Fabricius et al., 2001). In the context of tourism management, implementing good governance is very important to create a conducive environment for sustainable tourism development (USAID, 2021). With good governance, all stakeholders, including the government, local communities, and tourism industry players, can collaborate effectively to formulate policies that are not only economically beneficial but also socially and environmentally beneficial (Jamal & Camargo, 2018). This will help reduce conflict, increase public trust, and ensure that the benefits of tourism can be felt by all levels of society (Rainey, 2014).

Sustainable tourism is an approach to tourism development and management that aims to maintain natural, cultural, and social resources in tourist destinations so that it not only meets the needs of current tourists but also protects and improves the quality of life for future generations (Nurhasanah & Van den Broeck, 2022). Sustainable tourism seeks to reduce negative impacts on the environment, for example, through the use of renewable energy, good waste management, and ecosystem protection (Nuh et al., 2024). The concept of sustainable tourism refers

to practices and approaches in the tourism industry that aim to maintain environmental, social, and economic sustainability (Samal & Dash, 2024).

Collaborative governance plays a key role in promoting sustainable tourism by bringing together various stakeholders to work together in decision-making and policy implementation (Movono & Hughes, 2022). Through collaborative governance, multiple stakeholders can identify shared problems, build a shared understanding of sustainable goals, and design solutions that benefit everyone and the environment (Fernandez-Abila et al., 2024). Additionally, collaborative governance in sustainable tourism enables increased transparency, accountability, and participation in decision-making processes (Graci & Van Vliet, 2020). Thus, collaboration in sustainable tourism governance not only generates greater social and economic benefits for local communities but also ensures that tourism can continue to contribute positively to overall sustainable development (De Matteis et al., 2021).

The main goal of sustainable tourism is to ensure that current tourism activities do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Tan et al., 2018). This involves integrating the principles of environmental protection, respect for cultural diversity, and local economic empowerment in the planning, development, and operation of tourism destinations (Mihalic, 2016). Key aspects of sustainable tourism include wise management of natural resources, such as water and energy; maintenance of biodiversity; reduction of pollution; and protection of fragile ecosystems (Irawan et al., 2022). Additionally, sustainable tourism encourages equitable economic participation and benefits for local

communities by ensuring that income from tourism is distributed equitably and providing sustainable employment opportunities (Jamal & Camargo, 2018). In addition, this approach also promotes cultural awareness, maintains local wisdom, and ensures that tourists and the tourism industry respect the unique cultural values and traditions of the destinations they visit (Thananusak & Suriyankietkaew, 2023).

Researcher Miedes-Ugarte et al. (2020) illustrate how this new model of tourism can avoid the standardization of current models and the environmental costs that come with it. With a focus on SLOC (small, local, open, and connected) design, the model aims to create more sustainable and locally connected travel and hospitality services. This approach, if supported by the right public investment, has the potential to transform the current tourism model to be more sustainable by empowering local communities and involving various stakeholders in the process.

This research aims to analyze the application of good governance principles in sustainable tourism management in the Riau Islands. Specifically, this research will explore the challenges and opportunities faced in implementing good governance, as well as its impact on the sustainability of tourism in the area. The scope of the research includes analysis of government policies, tourism management practices by industry players, as well as local community participation in the decision-making process. Thus, it is hoped that this research can provide constructive recommendations to improve good governance practices in tourism management in the Riau Islands.

Methods

This research uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative research is used to describe, explore, and understand the meaning ascribed to a social or humanitarian problem by a group of individuals (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research focuses on describing and understanding context rather than quantitative measurement. The researcher seeks to understand the subject's experiences and perspectives. The data used is secondary and primary data. Primary data was obtained from interviews with the Riau Islands Provincial Tourism Office, and other data can be accessed via online media and from the Riau Islands Tourism Office. Qualitative research methods were chosen to gain an in-depth and contextual understanding of the complex phenomena involved (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis,

researchers can explore in detail aspects of port governance and how the concept of responsible tourism can be implemented. This method enables the identification of specific problems and practical solutions relevant to the local context, as well as providing flexibility in data collection and analysis to develop appropriate and sustainable recommendations. Researchers applied purposive sampling to determine respondents who had direct experience in tourism management.

Result And Discussion

The Riau Islands are located in a strategic geographical area. The Riau Islands consist of 5 regencies and 2 cities, namely Natuna Regency, Anambas Islands Regency, Lingga Regency, Karimun Regency, Bintan Regency, Tanjungpinang City and Batam City. The Riau Islands are a coastal area that directly borders Singapore and Malaysia.

Table 1. Number of Foreign Tourist Visits 2019-2023

Year	Number of Foreign Tourist Visits
2019	2.864.795
2020	411.248
2021	3.103
2022	758.154
2023	1.530.899

Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

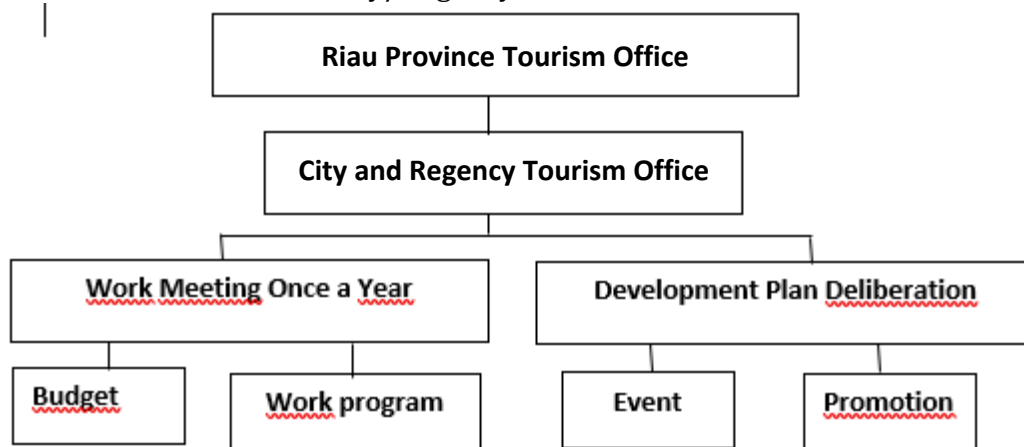
The number of tourist visits to the Riau Islands in the last 5 years has experienced an unstable number. This happened because of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 to 2021, which resulted in the closure of entry points for anyone entering and exiting a country. However, previously, the number of tourist visits to the Riau Islands was quite stable. After Covid-19, namely around 2022, the

number of tourist visits will start to rise again. However, it has not been able to reach 2 million again because there was an increase in ticket prices, which were initially round trip from Batam to Singapore for only Rp. 250.000 - Rp. 350.000 to Rp. 500.000 - Rp. 550.000 (Hamapu, 2024). This research found that the application of good governance principles in tourism management in the

Riau Islands still faces various challenges. Despite efforts by local governments to increase transparency and accountability, many stakeholders feel less involved in the decision-making process. In addition,

there are indications that existing policies are often not implemented consistently, resulting in dissatisfaction among the public and industry players.

Figure 1. Planning Coordination Pattern for the Riau Province Tourism Office and City/Regency Tourism Office



Source: Researcher Processed Data, 2024

Coordination between ministries, provinces, and regencies/cities in organizing tourism activities included in the Calendar of Events is diverse, with different intensity and focus on each level. In general, coordination at the central (Ministry) and regional (Regency/City) levels is quite intensive, especially in terms of budget allocation through fund-sharing mechanisms. This process is often carried out by direct appointment (PL), where funds are divided proportionally according to the needs of each region. Apart from that, in organizing an event, there are three main stages of coordination, namely the planning report, the exposure report, which is submitted to the minister and deputies, and the activity report. This coordination process ensures that the implementation of the event goes according to plan and receives full support from the central government. However,

the coordination pattern between provinces and regencies/cities tends to be less intensive, especially in national-scale events or promotions. Districts/cities often bypass the role of the Provincial Tourism Office when dealing directly with the Ministry of Tourism, especially for events that are scheduled in the national calendar. One of the main reasons behind this lack of coordination is effectiveness and efficiency. Provincial tourism services often have slower decision-making mechanisms, which can hinder the smooth running of events or promotions. Therefore, districts/cities choose to coordinate directly with the ministry to avoid delays that could affect the success of activities. In the other hand, in organizing provincial-scale events, coordination between the Provincial and Regency/City Tourism Services usually runs well. This starts with development

planning meetings (Musrenbang) at the provincial level, which is the main forum for discussing cross-institutional support. In regional-scale events, even though the number of activities presented is relatively small, especially for remote areas such as Natuna and Anambas, coordination is still carried out to avoid overlaps in the provision of facilities and resources. For example, if the province has prepared tents and transportation for an event, then the regency/city no longer needs to provide the same items. Even though there are quite good coordination efforts in organizing events, synchronization between levels in terms of work plans and budgets (RKA) and performance indicators is still not optimal (Darmawan, 2020). This process needs to be improved so that every party involved, both at the provincial and district/city levels, can

develop programs in a more integrated and efficient manner. In this way, each event can run smoothly without repetition or waste of resources, which can be avoided through more effective coordination. To strengthen the tourism sector, policies are needed that are in line with the concept of regional development. As part of strengthening this policy, in accordance with statutory provisions, a Regional Tourism Master Plan (RIPPARDA) document was prepared. This RIPPARDA document is a strategic plan created by the regional government to direct the development of the tourism sector in its region. The aim is to ensure sustainable tourism development and make a positive contribution to the economy, society, and environment, especially in the Riau Islands Province.

Table 1. Status of the Regional Tourism Master Plan (RIPPARDA) in the Riau Islands

No	City/Regency	Year	Status	Regulation No
1.	Tanjungpinang City		There is no RIPARDA	-
2.	Batam City	2016-2021	There is RIPARDA	Local Regulation Batam City No. 8 Year 2016
3.	Anambas Regency	2023-2025	There is RIPARDA	Local Regulation Anambas Island Regency No. 2 Year 2023
4.	Bintan Regency	2015-2025	There is RIPARDA	Local Regulation Bintan Regency No. 4 Year 2015
5.	Natuna Regency		There is no RIPARDA	-
6.	Lingga Regency	2013-2023	There is RIPARDA	Local Regulation Lingga Regency No. 13 Year 2011
7.	Karimun Regency		There is no RIPARDA	-

Source: Researcher's Findings, 2024

Based on the table above, the Riau Islands Province faces several problems in developing tourism institutions. First, there is no synergy between the Regional

Tourism Master Plan (RIPPARDA) at the provincial level and those at the district or city level. Some districts or cities already have RIPPARDA, while others do not.

Apart from that, regions that already have RIPPARDA often still prioritize their own regional sectoral interests in developing tourism, so that integrated planning is not yet visible. RIPPARDA should be for a period of 15 years. However, cities or regencies in the Riau Islands are still not in line on time. Like Lingga Regency, the period is only from 2013 to 2023, which means it only lasts 10 years.

The local government, which still prioritizes sectoral ego, can be seen from the government forcing its vision and mission to be in line with institutions. Some of the institutions in question are the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) and the Association of the Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies (ASITA). Institutions will certainly focus on business rather than aligning with local government; this could be due to a lack of coordination between relevant stakeholders. Lastly, tourism planning does not always have to rely on the Tourism Service but rather requires contributions from institutions or actors from within or outside government.

This is also mentioned in the dissertation of Narotama (2022). Tourism is a multidimensional sector, involving many sectors, actors, and aspects. This requires integrated management and effective collaboration between related institutions to support economic development and tourism development in the Riau Islands. The implementation of tourism policy still relies heavily on support from the central government, while regional governments have not shown strong enough initiative in developing this sector (Narotama, 2022). This creates an imbalance in the implementation of tourism programs and projects in the region. The private sector is also not fully involved in planning and implementing tourism policies. Private

sector participation is essential to provide the required investment and manage several aspects of tourism development more effectively.

In conditions like these, evaluation of tourism institutional policies is very important to develop effective strategies and plans. Apart from that, alternative policies are needed that can improve the situation and support planning integration between districts or cities. Evaluation of tourism institutional policies is important because it helps ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of resource allocation, assesses the impact and performance of policies, and increases transparency and accountability. Through evaluation, problems and obstacles can be identified early, providing a basis for better decision-making in the future, as well as measuring stakeholder satisfaction. It also allows policy adjustments to changing trends and market conditions, ensuring the relevance and sustainability of the tourism sector. Comprehensive evaluation ensures that tourism policies provide the desired results and benefit all parties concerned. In implementing tourism institutional policies, there will be top-down and bottom-up.

Regarding the legal basis for developing tourism in the Riau Islands, it is as follows:

- a. Article 18, Paragraph (6) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia: Regional governments have the right to establish regional regulations and other regulations to implement autonomy and assist in duties.
- b. Law Number 10 of 2009 on Tourism (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2009 Number 11, Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4966) as amended by Law Number 6 of 2023

on the Enactment of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 2 of 2022 on Job Creation into Law (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2023 Number 41, Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6856).

- c. Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2014 Number 244, Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5587) as amended several times, most recently by Law Number 6 of 2023 on the Enactment of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 2 of 2022 on Job Creation into Law (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2023 Number 41, Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6856).
- d. Government Regulation Number 50 of 2011 on the Master Plan for National Tourism Development 2010–2025 (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2011 Number 125, Supplement to the State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 5262).
- e. Minister of Tourism Regulation Number 10 of 2016 on Guidelines for Formulating the Master Plan for Provincial and Regency/City Tourism Development (State News of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2016 Number 1173).
- f. Minister of Culture and Tourism Regulation No. PM.03/UM.001/MKP/07 on the Criteria for Establishing Superior Tourism Destinations.

However, in its implementation, there are still many things that have not been implemented according to the regulations. One of them is whether or not there is a tourism master plan in each city or district. This is quite unfortunate

because in the tourism development process, synchronization is needed so that the process becomes better and more precise.

Analysis of the Application of Good Governance Principles in Tourism Management in the Riau Islands

Regarding Rainey (2014) Good governance is good development management, which includes several key principles. These include accountability, where public officials are held accountable for their actions; a legal framework that provides clarity and stability for the private sector; accessibility of reliable information regarding economic conditions and government policies; and transparency, which encourages openness in government processes to increase accountability and reduce corruption. The principles of good governance are explained as follows:

1. **Accountability:** Public officials must be responsible for their actions and decisions, and there must be a mechanism to assess their performance.
2. **Legal Framework for Development:** There is a regulatory and legal structure that provides clarity, certainty, and stability for the private sector, which is applied fairly and impartially.
3. **Information:** Information on economic conditions, budgets, markets, and government intentions must be reliable and easily accessible to all parties, which is essential for private sector operations.
4. **Transparency:** Governments must operate openly to increase accountability, limit corruption, and encourage consultative processes between government and private interests in policy documents.

Table 2. The Principles of Good Governance in Riau Islands

No.	The Principles of Good Governance	Implementation
1	Accountability	Implemented in accordance with the coordination pattern mentioned above
2	Legal Framework for Development	Already have regulations for tourism development
3	Information	Information regarding economic conditions, budgets, investment opportunities and tourism promotion policies can be easily accessed by all parties. This can be seen in the Riau Islands BPS which is open in online media, but is not very complete
4	Transparency	The Riau Islands Government has implemented policies transparently, including in terms of budget allocation and tourism event planning. This is proven by the availability of Performance Reports in each city/district

Source: Author's Processed Data, 2024

In the Riau Islands tourism sector, public officials, both at the provincial and district/city government levels, must be responsible for the decisions and actions taken in tourism management. For example, Tourism Department officials must be responsible for budget use, work programs, and organizing tourism events. To ensure this, performance assessment mechanisms, such as audits and evaluations, must be implemented periodically. With this mechanism, the government's performance in improving the tourism sector can be measured transparently, and corrective action can be taken if irregularities or inefficiencies are found.

Tourism in the Riau Islands requires a clear legal and regulatory structure to provide certainty for the private sector that wishes to invest in the tourism industry. This includes regulations that support the development of tourism infrastructure, business licensing, and the implementation of other economic activities that support tourism,

such as resorts, transportation, and accommodation. The regulations implemented must be fair and transparent so that there is no discrimination or legal uncertainty for investors. In this way, the private sector will be more confident in participating in the development of tourist destinations in the Riau Islands, which in turn will support regional economic growth.

Clear and reliable information regarding economic conditions, budgets, and investment opportunities in the tourism sector must be easily available to all parties. The Riau Islands Government can increase the accessibility of this information through official websites and public reports, as well as wider dissemination of information through industry forums and tourism promotion. Relevant information, such as tourist market projections, tourism promotion policies, and tourist destination development plans, will help the private sector to make the right investment decisions. In addition, this information is

important for tourists in planning their visit to the Riau Islands so that it can increase tourist attraction and visits.

To encourage trust between the government and the private sector, the Riau Islands government needs to implement policies transparently, especially in terms of budget allocation and tourism promotion policies. For example, the process of planning and implementing tourism programs, such as developing new destinations or international events, must be carried out by involving stakeholders, including the private sector and local communities. Public consultation must be carried out before policies are adopted, and policy documents must be published openly. This transparency will limit the potential for corruption and ensure that policies taken reflect the interests of all parties involved, as well as encourage better collaboration between government and the private sector.

Even though there is still a lot that needs to be improved, good governance in the Riau Islands has been implemented quite well. The application of good governance principles, such as participation, transparency, and accountability, in the Riau Islands has shown mixed results. Although local governments have held public consultation forums to listen to community aspirations, the effectiveness of these forums is often questioned. Many people feel that their input is not accommodated in the resulting policies. Apart from that, transparency in tourism budget management is also a problem, where information regarding the use of public funds is not always available to the public. This creates a trust gap between government and society, which in turn can hinder efforts to achieve sustainable tourism.

Challenges and Opportunities in Building Good Governance for Sustainable Tourism

Discussing the challenges and opportunities in building good governance for sustainable tourism is very important because it helps understand the obstacles that need to be overcome and the potential that can be exploited. Challenges, such as lack of coordination between stakeholders or inconsistent regulations, need to be identified so that appropriate solutions can be implemented. On the other hand, opportunities, such as public-private collaboration or the use of technology for transparency, provide opportunities to create innovative policies that support sustainable tourism development. By understanding these two aspects, tourism policies can be designed more effectively, maintaining a balance between economic growth, environmental conservation, and the welfare of local communities.

Challenge:

- a. Ineffective coordination between provincial and district/city governments and the Ministry of Tourism often hampers the implementation of tourism programs and activities. For example, differences in priorities or slow decision-making at the provincial level can disrupt the implementation of national-scale events.
- b. Even though there is a budget allocation for tourism development, sometimes its use is inefficient or not on target. This can be caused by weak audit and evaluation systems, as well as a lack of transparency in fund management.
- c. Local communities are often not optimally involved in the decision-making process regarding tourism development. This causes a lack of sense of ownership of tourism

programs, as well as potential conflicts in the use of local natural and cultural resources.

- d. As in many other sectors, tourism in Riau Islands is also vulnerable to corrupt practices, especially in terms of procurement of goods and services for events or promotions. This non-transparent practice can hinder the sustainability of tourism because it reduces the trust of investors and tourists.
- e. Tourism-related regulations and policies, particularly regarding investment and the environment, often change or are inconsistent. This uncertainty makes the private sector hesitant to invest, which ultimately hinders sustainable tourism development.

The main challenges in building good governance for sustainable tourism in the Riau Islands include a lack of institutional capacity, low public awareness of the importance of participation, and the existence of political interests that often ignore the principles of good governance. However, there are significant opportunities to improve this situation. For example, increasing education and training for local stakeholders on the principles of good governance can increase community participation. In addition, collaboration between government, the private sector, and civil society organizations can create better synergy in tourism management. By utilizing information technology, the government can increase transparency and accountability so that people can more easily access information related to tourism management.

Overall, despite significant challenges, with strong commitment from all stakeholders, the Riau Islands have the potential to build effective good

governance in sustainable tourism management, which will ultimately provide long-term benefits for society and the environment.

Opportunity:

- a. With its extraordinary natural and cultural potential, the Riau Islands have a great opportunity to attract investment from the private sector. Through good partnerships, the public and private sectors can jointly develop tourist destinations that support economic and ecological sustainability.
- b. Information and communication technology can be used to increase transparency in tourism management. For example, an online system for applying for permits and budget reporting can speed up bureaucratic processes and reduce opportunities for corruption.
- c. The involvement of local communities in tourism development, both as business actors and decision makers, is an opportunity to create a sense of ownership. This can also promote tourism based on local wisdom and culture and reduce dependence on foreign investors.
- d. The special attention from the central government to develop tourism in border areas such as the Riau Islands opens up great opportunities to get infrastructure support and greater promotion. This policy can accelerate sustainable tourism development in the region.
- e. The Riau Islands have great potential to develop various types of tourism, such as ecotourism, marine tourism, and cultural tourism. This diversification provides an opportunity for local governments to create a more integrated and sustainable strategy while increasing

the competitiveness of Riau Islands tourism at national and international levels.

Even though there are various challenges in building good governance for sustainable tourism in the Riau Islands, the opportunities that exist provide great hope for better development. Through efforts to increase coordination, transparency, accountability, and involvement of local communities, Riau Islands can maximize its tourism potential in a sustainable manner, support local economic growth, and preserve the local environment and culture.

Conclusion

The conclusion regarding the implementation of good governance in sustainable tourism management in the Riau Islands emphasizes the importance of balancing accountable, transparent, and participatory management with exploiting opportunities to increase tourism sustainability. Challenges such as inefficient inter-agency coordination, limited access to information, and slow decision-making need to be overcome through increased collaboration and more responsive policy implementation. On the other hand, opportunities to build collaboration between the public and private sectors, as well as optimize local potential through community involvement, pave the way for the development of more inclusive and environmentally friendly tourist destinations. By understanding and responding to these challenges and opportunities, tourism management in the Riau Islands can achieve long-term sustainability, providing balanced economic, social, and environmental benefits for all parties involved.

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