Implementation of Sustainable Tourism Policy in Indonesia

Damiasih
Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Ambarrukmo Yogyakarta

Correspondence Email: damiasih@stipram.ac.id

Received: 25 September 2023; Revised: 30 November 2023; Accepted: December 2023

Abstract: Tourism has an important role in the country’s economic growth, but its impact on the environment and culture often attracts attention. Therefore, sustainable tourism policies in Indonesia are the focus of the Indonesian government. This research aims to analyze and evaluate the implementation of sustainable tourism policies in Indonesia. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research results show that the implementation of sustainable tourism policies in Indonesia involves the concept of protecting the environment, improving people’s quality of life, and strengthening destination competitiveness. This policy covers waste management, renewable energy, and protection of flora and fauna. Sustainable tourism also contributes to job creation, cultural preservation, and local community participation. Destination competitiveness is enhanced by environmentally friendly infrastructure and the promotion of responsible tourism. The sustainability of natural and cultural heritage is a focus, such as in Komodo and Borobudur National Parks. Partnerships between government, society and the tourism industry are the basis, while technological innovation supports sustainability. Even though there are challenges, joint efforts are expected to be able to overcome obstacles to realizing sustainable tourism in Indonesia.

Keywords: Policy Implementation; Sustainable; Tourism.

How to Cite:

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.
Introduction

Tourism is recognized as an economic sector that makes a significant contribution to the welfare of a country (Yakup, 2019). As one of the leading economic activities, tourism is considered a key factor in development, prosperity, and prosperity (Bayih and Singh, 2020). Data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy reveals that foreign exchange realization from the tourism sector in 2019 reached IDR 280 trillion. This sector also plays an important role in contributing to the national gross domestic product (GDP), contributing around 5.5%. With a labor force absorption of around 13 million people (Kontan.co.id, 2020), tourism not only provides a financial contribution but also creates significant employment opportunities (Agung, 2015).

The importance of the tourism sector is not only limited to the national level but also has a direct impact at the provincial or district level (Harirah et al., 2021). State revenues from tourism can be used to open up job opportunities and support economic development throughout the region (Nurhajati, 2018). Furthermore, the positive impact of tourism is not only felt in the economic sector but also in the lives of the surrounding community. According to Hermawan (2016), tourism development is an indicator of community welfare, increases employment opportunities, and effectively reduces the unemployment rate.

The data and facts that have been presented show that the contribution of tourism has a significant positive impact on the economy, both at the national and regional levels (Mulyana, 2019). However, the sustainability of tourism development often faces challenges, especially in the context of exploitation of the service sector for purely economic interests (Khumayah, 2021). A deeper understanding of this view is found in the work of Pitana and Gayatri (2005), which highlights the tendency to prioritize marketing and tourist attractions without considering the goals of tourism development itself. Meanwhile, the results of research by Wirakusuma and Supriatna (2019) highlight problems at the community level, where investors’ expectations for developing tourism areas are often not in line with the direct involvement of local residents in the business.

This condition causes people to only become spectators without being actively involved in the economic benefits generated. Although natural obstacles may arise, this should not become an obstacle to the development of tourism activities (Aly et al., 2019). Conversely, these challenges can be turned into creative opportunities to create a more sustainable development model (Khumayah, 2021b). The importance of community empowerment in maintaining tourism areas is also in the spotlight, emphasizing that tourism development must come from the community itself, not just relying on government programs (Setyawati & Safitri, 2019).

Therefore, the concept of sustainable tourism is becoming increasingly crucial in facing the dynamics of the tourism industry in the current era (Putri, 2022). In the midst of increasing awareness of the importance of protecting the environment and sustainability, sustainable tourism is the main foundation for caring for the natural beauty and cultural heritage that we have (Obot & Setyawan, 2019). Sustainable tourism is not just a concept but an approach to tourism management that considers ecology, social issues, and economics (Musaddad et al., 2019). Sustainable policy
Implementation can be a driving force in maintaining environmental integrity, improving the quality of life of local communities, and strengthening the competitiveness of tourism destinations (Priambodo, 2015).

Apart from that, this policy also plays a role in preserving cultural diversity and natural heritage, building close partnerships between government, society, and the tourism industry, increasing the quality and quantity of tourism through innovation and technology, and increasing awareness and participation in sustainable tourism (Widari, 2020). Not only that, sustainable policies also contribute to the development of competent human resources in the field of sustainable tourism (Permatasari, 2022). Apart from the learning and training aspects, this effort will create a workforce that has a deep understanding of the principles of sustainable tourism (Kumaji et al., 2021).

In the context of tourism development in Indonesia, the application of the ethos and principles of sustainable tourism development is regulated by the law and the National Tourism Development Strategic Plan. The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009 concerning tourism stipulates that the implementation of tourism in Indonesia must be based on principles that are in line with the ethos and principles of sustainable tourism development (Sun, 2016). Chapter II, Article 2, Law No. 10 of 2009 lists the principles of tourism administration, including benefit, kinship, fairness and equity, balance, independence, sustainability, participatory, sustainable, democratic, equality, and unity. Article 5 of Law No. 10 of 2009 further emphasizes that the implementation of tourism in Indonesia must base its principles on aspects that include the ethos and principles of sustainability (Hutapea, 2019).

Every year, the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia awards tourism destinations that consistently implement sustainable tourism principles through the Indonesia Sustainable Tourism Award (ISTA) (Putri & Ardhanariswari, 2020). This award provides opportunities for tourism destination managers throughout Indonesia, including area managers, travel agents, tourism service sellers, social institutions, and local residents to participate. The aim of ISTA is to provide motivation to players in the tourism industry to continue to improve the implementation of sustainable tourism according to their respective capacities (Asteya & Pamungkas, 2017).

In the 2017 ISTA guidelines, assessments are carried out in four main categories (Saridi et al., 2021), namely: Category A (Sustainable Tourism Destination Management), Category B (Economic Utilization for Local Communities), Category C (Cultural Preservation for Communities and Visitors), and Category D (Environmental Conservation). Category A evaluates destination management from planning to evaluation; Category B focuses on the destination's economic impact on local residents; Category C assesses the destination's efforts to protect various cultural aspects; and Category D evaluates the destination's contribution to environmental preservation in the context of sustainable tourism. Each category has criteria and assessment elements that are measured by the ISTA jury to determine the winner.

This research aims to explore and evaluate the implementation of sustainable tourism policies in Indonesia, with a focus on their impact on economic,
environmental, and social aspects. Through this research, it is hoped that we can identify the extent to which sustainable tourism policies have been implemented so that we can provide recommendations for policy improvements that can increase the effectiveness and positive impact of sustainable tourism in Indonesia. The benefits of this research include contributing to an in-depth understanding of sustainable tourism practices in Indonesia and providing insight for relevant stakeholders, such as the government, tourism industry players, and local communities. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make a positive contribution to the development of sustainable tourism, ensuring harmony between economic growth and environmental and cultural preservation at the national level.

Method
This research has qualitative descriptive characteristics with the main aim of revealing and describing phenomena, events, facts, and circumstances that occurred during the research with the aim of presenting the true reality (Yulianah, 2022). In this research, the data used comes from secondary literature, including journals, previous research, scientific articles, and other sources of information. The data analysis approach follows the framework proposed by Miles and Huberman as outlined by Gunawan (2022), which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions, and data verification. The data analysis process begins with collecting data from various sources, then continues with the data reduction stage. Data reduction involves filtering and summarizing data to identify key points relevant to the research. The reduced data provides a more focused and clear picture. Next, the data is presented and organized based on the previous process to facilitate a better understanding of the research findings. Finally, this research can conclude the results and verify the findings produced, ensuring that the interpretations and conclusions drawn are in accordance with the existing data. This qualitative-descriptive approach is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of the implementation of sustainable tourism policies in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

Concept for Implementing Sustainable Tourism Policy in Indonesia
As explained in the introductory point, the concept of sustainable tourism policy is an approach to tourism management that takes ecological, social and economic considerations into account. Sustainable policy implementation can be a driving force in maintaining environmental integrity, improving the quality of life of local communities, and strengthening the competitiveness of tourism destinations. In more detail it will be explained as follows:

Effort to Protect the Environment
The importance of building sustainable tourism policies goes beyond simply preserving the natural environment. This reflects a deep awareness of social and ecological responsibility in the development of the tourism sector. By prioritizing sustainability, these policies aim to prevent the negative impacts that tourism activities may have on the environment, including ecosystem damage and the loss of biodiversity. One concrete example occurs in Komodo National Park in Indonesia, where a limit on the number of
daily visitors was implemented as a concrete effort to protect the endangered Komodo dragon habitat. This policy not only emphasizes environmental sustainability but also maintains a balance between tourism exploration and natural heritage preservation.

Several aspects of sustainable tourism policies that can be adopted include waste and water management, the use of renewable energy sources, and the protection of rare flora and fauna. By setting clear boundaries and guidelines, this policy can help create a sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism environment. For example, involving local communities in waste management and environmental conservation can be an effective step. Through the implementation of these concrete steps, sustainable tourism policy becomes a key instrument in combining the growth of the tourism sector with nature conservation, thereby creating economically beneficial tourism experiences while maintaining environmental integrity for the future.

**Effort to Improve The Quality of Life, Especially For Local Communities**

Sustainable tourism is not only a driver of economic growth but also has a significant positive impact on local communities. One of these impacts is the creation of new jobs, which provide employment opportunities for local residents. This not only improves their standard of living economically, but also provides an opportunity to improve skills and knowledge through direct involvement in the tourism industry. For example, through sustainable tourism projects in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, local communities are involved in various aspects of destination management, from tourism services to environmental conservation.

In addition to job creation, sustainable tourism can also promote cultural sustainability and strengthen local identity. Community participation in managing tourist destinations can include preserving cultural heritage, art, traditions, and local uniqueness. An example of this is seen in Bali, where villages are developing sustainable tourism projects that emphasize their cultural values. Involving the community in the promotion and preservation of destinations creates a sense of shared responsibility for cultural heritage, ensuring that cultural riches remain alive and thriving.

Sustainability in tourism is not only about protecting the environment but also involving and empowering local communities so they can experience the positive benefits of the growth of the tourism sector. Through this approach, sustainable tourism can become an agent of positive change that leads to inclusive development and has a long-term impact on local communities.

**Increasing the Competitiveness of Tourist Destinations Especially Nature Tourism**

Sustainable policies play a crucial role in increasing the competitiveness of tourism destinations, especially by attracting tourist segments that are increasingly aware of environmental and sustainability issues. Tourism destinations that commit to sustainable practices can create additional attractions for tourists who prioritize environmental stewardship in their travel experiences. To achieve this, several sustainable policies can be adopted by tourism destinations. First, developing environmentally friendly infrastructure is one of the keys to increasing the competitiveness of tourism destinations. This involves implementing
technologies and practices that focus on the use of renewable energy as well as effective waste management. For example, the Bukit Keker Learning House in Ped Village, Nusa Penida, was built jointly by ecological activity practitioners as a space to share and learn about ecological practices. One of the ecological practices is using biogas and solar panels as renewable energy sources.

Apart from that, the promotion of responsible tourism is also an important aspect of increasing the competitiveness of destinations. Through promotional campaigns that emphasize sustainable values and concern for the environment, destinations can attract the attention of tourists looking for positive and impactful travel experiences. Increasing competitiveness can also be achieved through the development of sustainable tourism products, such as ecological tours, environmentally friendly tourism, and activities that support local community development. By implementing these policies, tourism destinations can not only attract more environmentally conscious tourists but also ensure the long-term sustainability of the tourism sector. In a global context that increasingly values sustainable tourism practices, this policy can provide a significant competitive advantage for tourism destinations that adopt it.

Preserving the Diversity of Natural and Cultural Heritage

The importance of preserving cultural diversity and natural heritage is fundamental to ensuring that future generations can experience and enjoy the beauty and richness that are an integral part of our identity. Sustainable tourism, as an approach, plays a crucial role in maintaining the sustainability of cultural and natural heritage. One striking real example occurs in Central Java, where sustainability in the management of Borobudur has become one of the leading sustainable tourism destinations in the world. Borobudur, as a world heritage site, has become the center of attention in conservation efforts through sustainable tourism policies adopted by the Indonesian government.

Concrete measures have been implemented, such as limiting the number of visitors, to maintain the integrity and sustainability of fragile archaeological sites. Additionally, the protection of fragile archaeological sites involves careful management measures to minimize the negative impacts of visitor presence. This approach not only involves the authorities but also involves tourist participation and awareness to preserve the site. Through the implementation of sustainable tourism policies, Indonesia shows a real commitment to preserving its cultural and natural heritage. This approach not only involves wise management of tourist destinations but also ensures that tourist experiences not only satisfy current desires but also support the long-term sustainability of the cultural and natural riches they enjoy.

Strengthening Collaboration Between Community Government and Tourism Industry Players

Partnerships between government, society, and the tourism industry are the main foundation for implementing sustainable tourism principles. This collaboration plays a central role in directing the development of the tourism sector towards environmentally, socially, and economically friendly practices. The government, as the main regulator, plays an important role in establishing a policy framework that supports sustainability principles. The importance of this
partnership is seen in the need to align policies and programs that cover the entire sustainability spectrum, from environmental and cultural preservation to local economic development. The government must facilitate open dialogue with communities and the tourism industry to hear their needs and concerns. In this way, the resulting policies can reflect various perspectives and take into account possible impacts.

Through this partnership, the government can also empower local communities and the tourism industry to play an active role in decision-making. Communities, as cultural heritage holders and local stakeholders, have valuable insight into how to maintain sustainability and preserve the uniqueness of local culture. The tourism industry, on the other hand, can contribute insights into best practices for promoting sustainable tourism and building inclusive local economies. With the active involvement of all three parties—government, society, and the tourism industry—this partnership can become the basis for building a balanced and sustainable tourism destination. So, through strong cooperation, tourism can provide positive benefits for the environment, culture, and economy while ensuring long-term sustainability for future generations.

Introducing Technological Innovation to Improve The Quality and Quantity of Tourism

The role of innovation and technology in the context of sustainable tourism is very strategic, opening up opportunities to increase operational efficiency, reduce environmental impacts, and improve tourist experiences. One example of an innovative solution that can embrace sustainability is the use of renewable energy in the hospitality industry, especially in hotels and resorts. Through the use of energy sources such as solar power, wind power, or other renewable energy sources, the hospitality sector can reduce its carbon footprint and become more environmentally friendly. Additionally, the use of mobile applications has become an effective tool for promoting sustainable tourism. This application can provide information to tourists about sustainable destinations, environmentally friendly places, and activities that support environmental conservation. This kind of use of information technology not only facilitates sustainable choices for tourists but also increases their awareness of practices that support sustainability.

Green technology in tourism transportation is also an innovative step that can reduce the environmental impact of this sector. The use of electric vehicles, shared transportation, and the development of environmentally friendly infrastructure can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution associated with tourist travel. Additionally, the integration of green technology can create a more memorable and sustainable travel experience for tourists. By continuing to encourage innovation and the application of technology in the tourism industry, we can achieve the goal of sustainable tourism. Implementing these innovative solutions not only improves operational efficiency and enhances industry competitiveness, but also creates a positive impact on the environment and promotes sustainability awareness among tourists and other stakeholders.

Increase Awareness and Participate in Protecting The Environment

Increasing awareness and participation in sustainable tourism plays a key role in changing the behavior of
tourists and local communities towards more sustainable practices. Awareness of the impact of tourism on the environment and culture is a crucial first step. By increasing understanding of the consequences of tourism activities, both tourists and local communities can become agents of change in supporting sustainable practices. Awareness campaigns, such as the "Say No to Plastic" campaign in Bali, Indonesia, are successful examples of how awareness can be generated and directed into concrete action.

The "Say No to Plastic" campaign in Bali has succeeded in mobilizing the participation of local communities and tourists to reduce the use of single-use plastic. Through education, promotion, and joint initiatives, this campaign succeeded in creating positive behavioral changes in society. From using shopping bags to reducing the use of plastic bottles, active participation in this campaign proves that awareness translated into concrete action can shape sustainable practices at the individual and community level.

The importance of awareness campaigns and participation in sustainable tourism not only has an impact at the local level but also shapes a positive image of the destination in the eyes of tourists. High awareness and active participation play an important role in supporting long-term sustainability, creating a balanced tourism environment, and promoting sustainable practices as an integral part of the tourism experience. Through this joint effort, sustainable tourism will not only become a vision but also a reality that can be enjoyed by all parties involved in the tourism industry.

Sustainable policies play a very important role in maintaining safety and health in the tourism industry. In a dynamic era characterized by rapid change, developing hygiene and safety protocols is the main basis for minimizing the risk of disease spread and protecting the health of tourists and local communities. This policy can include proactive measures such as providing handwashing facilities and general sanitation, as well as strict regulations for maintaining cleanliness in tourism accommodation and tourist areas.

In addition, sustainable policies must also include disaster risk management to deal with threats that could disrupt security and health. This includes emergency planning, evacuation training, and adequate disaster response infrastructure. Given the vulnerability of some tourism destinations to natural disasters, such as earthquakes or tropical storms, this policy not only addresses emergency situations but also designs preventive measures to reduce the impact of disasters that may occur.

Protection of potentially dangerous flora and fauna is also a crucial aspect of sustainable policy. Efforts to balance interactions between humans and the natural environment, especially in tourism destinations that have potentially dangerous species, can involve strict regulations, area restrictions, and education for tourists to minimize the risk of contact that could endanger health and safety.

Develop Competent Human Resources Through Sustainable Tourism

Challenges in Implementing Sustainable Tourism Policy in Indonesia

Implementing sustainable tourism policies in Indonesia involves a number of challenges that need to be overcome so that sustainability principles can be
effectively realized. Some of these challenges include:

- **Community Awareness and Education**
  The importance of sustainable tourism as a crucial element in environmental and cultural preservation still needs to be socialized and raised among the public. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to implement more intensive and focused education about the positive impacts that can be generated through sustainable tourism practices. This educational program must involve various levels of society, from tourism industry players to local communities, so that they can understand their role in maintaining the sustainability of tourist destinations. Through this increased awareness, it is hoped that the community can more proactively contribute to supporting tourism practices that are environmentally friendly and have a positive social and economic impact.

- **Local Community Involvement and Participation**
  The involvement of local communities is not only important but is also a key element in designing and implementing sustainable tourism policies. A deep understanding of the needs and expectations of local communities is the main foundation for successful sustainable practices. The fundamental challenge in this context is to ensure that the economic, social, and cultural benefits of the tourism industry are truly felt by local communities. This requires an inclusive policy framework that enables the active participation of communities in decision-making regarding their destinations. Apart from that, the involvement of local communities is also needed to ensure the preservation of authentic culture and nature. Local people have invaluable local knowledge about their cultural heritage and natural environment. Therefore, they must have a clear role in designing, managing, and maintaining their tourism destinations. The challenge here is to create a mechanism that allows local communities to actively participate while providing recognition and appreciation for their contribution to maintaining the sustainability of the destination.

- **Regulation and Law Enforcement**
  Clear regulations and strong law enforcement are needed as the main foundation for supporting the implementation of sustainable tourism policies. The main challenge here is to design and develop a legal framework that is comprehensive, relevant, and responsive to sustainability in all Indonesian tourism destinations. This legal framework should include clear norms and standards regarding sustainable practices, environmental protection, local community rights, and worker welfare and rights. Consistent law enforcement in all tourism destinations is an ongoing challenge in realizing sustainable tourism policies. Joint efforts are needed between the government, law enforcement agencies, and related parties to ensure that regulations are implemented consistently and firmly. This includes routine monitoring, clear sanctions for violators, and active community participation in
monitoring and reporting sustainability violations.

- Diversification and Local Economic Development

One of the crucial challenges faced in realizing sustainable tourism in Indonesia is the shift in focus from a mass-oriented tourism model to a model that is more sustainable and has a positive economic impact on local communities. This transformation requires a redefinition of tourism goals, replacing models that might focus on tourist numbers with models that emphasize social and economic sustainability. To overcome this challenge, diversifying income sources is a must. Local communities need to be empowered to be involved in tourism businesses, not only as beneficiaries but also as active stakeholders. This can be achieved through developing local products and services, promoting local culture and arts, and empowering micro and small businesses that support sustainable tourism. In addition, community involvement in tourism businesses requires a participatory approach to destination planning and development. This involves the community in decision-making regarding tourism development, so that the resulting policies reflect the needs and aspirations of local communities. Collaboration between government, the private sector, and civil society is key to creating a sustainable tourism model and providing an evenly distributed positive impact economically.

- Natural Resource Management

Tourism destinations often face significant pressure on their natural resources, posing a major challenge in efforts to achieve sustainable tourism. This pressure can arise from increasing numbers of tourists, the development of tourism infrastructure, and unsustainable activities such as overfishing or the destruction of natural habitats. The importance of managing natural resources wisely is highlighted in overcoming this challenge. This includes careful planning in destination development, including mapping and identifying critical areas that need to be protected. Conservation of flora and fauna is a central element in management strategies by maintaining the sustainability of their populations and habitats. Apart from that, maintaining ecosystem balance is a crucial aspect of efforts to conserve natural resources. This involves monitoring the impact of human exploitation on ecosystems as well as addressing problems such as pollution, habitat destruction, and climate change. There needs to be the active involvement of local communities, tourists, and other interested parties in maintaining environmental sustainability by increasing awareness of the importance of conservation and shared responsibility.

- Technology and Innovation

Adopting technology and innovation in sustainable tourism operations is an important and strategic challenge. Changes towards more environmentally friendly technologies and innovative solutions require significant investment from
relevant parties. The key challenge is to shift what may be an established operational paradigm towards more technologically sustainable practices. Investments in environmentally friendly technologies can include the use of renewable energy sources, the utilization of energy efficiency technologies, and better waste management. In addition, the use of technology for destination monitoring and management can help optimize the use of natural resources, reduce environmental impacts, and increase operational efficiency.

This technological expansion also includes innovations in marketing and the travel experience. Using mobile applications to provide information about sustainable tourism practices, digital travel guides, or environmentally friendly payment solutions can increase traveler awareness and provide a better experience. However, the real challenge lies in adapting and effectively implementing this technology. Collaboration between the government, the tourism industry, and technology companies is needed to create an ecosystem that supports the adoption of sustainable technology. Policy support, incentives for innovation, and the active involvement of relevant parties are key to overcoming this challenge.

Conclusion

The importance of sustainable tourism for our future cannot be ignored. In an era of environmental concern and sustainability, sustainable tourism is the key to preserving natural beauty and cultural heritage. To achieve this, sustainable policies are needed that involve the government, society, and the tourism industry. By designing sustainable policies, we can protect the environment, improve the quality of life of local communities, strengthen the competitiveness of tourism destinations, preserve cultural diversity and natural heritage, build strong partnerships, improve the quality and quantity of tourism through innovation and technology, increase awareness and participation in sustainable tourism, and develop competent human resources. Even so, the implementation of sustainable tourism policies in Indonesia is faced with a number of challenges that need to be overcome to ensure the sustainability of the tourism sector. Tourism does have a significant role in economic growth, contribution to the country's foreign exchange, and community welfare, but pressure on the environment, wise management of natural resources, and involvement of local communities are important aspects that need serious attention. Therefore, shifting the focus from the mass tourism model to a more sustainable model, empowering local communities, and implementing clear regulations are the main highlights. Amidst these efforts, the use of technology and innovation is a key factor in increasing operational efficiency and reducing environmental impact. No less important, the involvement of government, society, and the tourism industry in a strong partnership is also an essential element in achieving sustainability.

Acknowledgment

The Author would like to express the deepest appreciation to all the Professors and colleagues from Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Ambarrukmo Yogyakarta. The completion of this writing would not have been possible without the support from all of them.
References


