

Ecotourism Development to Grow the Social Economy and the Welfare of Local Communities in the Indonesia-Malaysia Border Region

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Abstract: Ecotourism is a nature tourism activity that influences the condition of the natural environment. The study on Ecotourism Development to Grow the Social Economy and the Welfare of Local Communities in the Indonesia-Malaysia Border Region, in this case in Sajingan Besar Sub-District, Sambas Regency which aims to optimize the potential of the region in Sajingan Sub-District. This study used a mixed-method approach were quantitative confirmed qualitative. Then, it can be summarized that the Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat and Riam Sunge Banokng tourism destination in Kaliau and Sebunga Village is important to be developed to grow the social economy and the welfare of local communities in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region. The point is that based on the analysis of the potential of Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat, and Riam Sunge Banokng, it gives the results of an assessment that its potential is very good so that it can be developed into a water resource tourism destination with a variety of multifunction. In the social economy aspect, it can open investment opportunities, open up employment opportunities for the local people who are averagely poor, and open isolation with the increase in infrastructure. Moreover, according to (Pemerintah RI, 2014) concern on the Village Autonomy in managing and carrying out the existing natural resources and the development of village-owned enterprises as a means of increasing the income of communities.

Keywords: Ecotourism, Local Communities, Potential Region, Tourism Activity, Border Region

1. Introduction

In the context of regional innovation, the paradigm of tourism sector development is carried out by an ecotourism development approach model based on exploring the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental potential. Bases on theory from (Dias Satria, 2009) emphasizes that the policy for ecotourism development in Indonesia is carried out based on strategic policy that is supported by the results of systematic studies by integrating ecotourism in the education sector and innovating local products to support ecotourism through creative economy. Ecotourism is an alternative to realizing sustainable development in the tourism sector so that the sustainability of the diversity of flora and fauna in border region can be maintained Its' sustainability for the next generation and as an effort to overcome environmental degradation caused by communities or individuals in carrying out forest logging and burning land. Sustainable tourism development as a future perspective in environmental management according theory from (Stratigea & Katsoni, 2015) and sustainable utilization both of natural and cultural resources with the content of the local economic structure (Panagiotopoulou & Stratigea, 2014). Therefore, sustainable tourism displays and activates tourism objects (Thushara et al., 2019).

Ecotourism development as a model for tourism development approach to improve the welfare of local communities. In Kalimantan, there is nature conservation, namely by natural tourism which is used to protect the biodiversity of forest tourism and water resources, including Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat, and Riam Sunge Banokng, which have the potential to be developed as ecotourism which geographically borders with the Kucing-Malaysia region, in which is Sajingan Besar sub-district. This sub-district has very simple tourist objects, namely Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat, and Riam Sunge Banokng which are located in a protected forest area. In another hand, in the border region of Indonesia-Malaysia, there are cultural festivals held 1-2 times a year. These cultural festivals are used as an effort to build friendship between these two countries and used to improve the economy of local communities. In this case, people are encouraged to sell local products as a manifestation of the creative economy. Moreover, the development and strategy of e-commerce and festivals in border regions for tourism, as well as community participation, can encourage the creative economy.

Ecotourism is tourism that prioritizes the responsibility for preserving nature. Ecotourism provides more economic benefits and maintains cultural integrity in society. The form of ecotourism is a conservation movement. Ecotourism can also be said to be the implementation of tourism activities that prioritize responsibility in natural places by prioritizing support for efforts to conserve nature and culture while not neglecting the improvement of the welfare of local communities (Lindberg & Hawkins, 1993).

(Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1996) placed great emphasis on the conservation of tourism resources. While a more detailed view is mentioned by (Damanik, Janianton dan Weber, 2006) which was known as an ecotourism perspective. The perspective is as follows:

1. Ecotourism as a product, namely all attractions based on natural resources.
2. Ecotourism as a market, namely the trips are directed at environmental conservation efforts.
3. Ecotourism as a development approach, namely methods for utilizing and managing tourism resources in an environmentally friendly manner.

Furthermore, the guarantee of nature preservation is in line with the objectives of The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Fandeli, 2009). The objectives are classified into as follows:

1. Maintaining ecological sustainability to support living systems.
2. Protecting the biodiversity.
3. Ensuring the preservation and benefits of species and ecosystems.

The implementation of the conservation and utilization approach is carried out through the priority of nature conservation rather than natural use. The approach to side with local community members is in an effort to maintain the local culture and increase their welfare. The concept from (Stakeholders, 1994) was through the arrangement of conservation tax for direct financing for the needs of the area and local communities. The ecotourism actors need to agree and put emphasis on minimizing negative impacts and being able to improve the social-economy of local communities. Ecotourism makes community businesses able to compete even in times of crisis or pandemic by maintaining local wisdom values and sustainability in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region. The businesses can adapt and expand by taking advantage of competitiveness despite the economic recession (Wagaw & Mulugeta, 2018) stated that as an opportunity to diversify the tourism offer by involving competent people (Cruz, 2014).

The ultimate goals of ecotourism are basically to improve the economy of local communities and to overcome poverty, limited accessibility, as well as inadequate infrastructure. A strategic location located in the border region of Indonesia-Malaysia becomes access to tourist destinations for both domestic and foreign tourists, Sambas Sub-District BPS (2018). Based on the description of the current conditions, substantively there are main issues and problems in the border region, one of which is a social economy, there is a gap between theory and empirical facts, namely the condition of people that live in the border region are poor, high poverty rates

(> 25%), limited job opportunity, and minimum infrastructure, resulting in barriers to accessibility. So far, border communities are still dependent on and influenced by the economic conditions of the neighboring country (Malaysia). This will not happen if the government's strategic plans are not fully sourced from the community and the government is sensitive and observant in capturing and taking advantage of opportunities in border region and makes this region has the competitiveness and is competitive. Utilizing regional in order to be competitive and has competitiveness (Salder, 2020) was by gathering knowledge about the environmental, economic, and social context (Stepaniuk, 2014) and tourism potential framed by policies along with tourism market trends (Stratigea & Katsoni, 2015), while, the strategic programs are implemented based on the principles of togetherness, tolerance, and utilization for the public (Fitriasari et al., 2019).

Generally, the economy in the border region such as the Sajingan Besar region depends on the neighboring country. This is because the infrastructure of neighboring country (Malaysia) is better. On the other hand, the natural resource potential which is increasingly abundant has not been managed properly, especially the potential of water resources and forest resources, namely the water resources of the tourism objects of Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat, and Riam Sunge Banokng. The challenge in realizing ecotourism in border region is the human resources in developing self-potential to think and act innovatively and creatively in seeing the potential opportunities of natural resources by preserving local wisdom values to improve the economy of local communities and the government to make pro-community policies so that human resources, natural resources, and the policy are integrated and structured. The challenges posed to develop and implement a successful tourism integration strategy according to (Toma et al., 2014) stated that Economic development is a top priority in rural area policies, the ability to increase employment opportunities and increase income for survival (Gabe et al., 2013). Likewise, creative economy, home industry, and tourism businesses are still untouched. The importance of all elements to participate and collaborate in implementing sustainable ecotourism empowerment programs for Kalimantan.

Table 1: Total Poor Population, Percentage of Poor Population, and Poverty Line for Sambas Sub-District, 2008-2016

Poverty Measurement				
Year	PL (IDR / capita / month)	P0 (%)	Poor (000)	People
2008	163.773	11,51	61,52	
2009	184.496	9,96	53,82	
2010	203.325	10,08	50,00	
2011	232.581	9,38	46,98	
2012	266.047	8,87	45,31	
2013	278.704	9,90	51,15	
2014	314.144	9,46	49,26	
2015	329.993	9,42	49,29	
2016	345.066	8,54	44,88	

Information:

P0 is the Head Count Index (percentage of poor people)

PL is the Poverty Line

Source: BPS, Sambas Regency 2017

Figure 1: Map Area



(Li, 2013) said that overall, the literature review focuses on different viewpoints which are provided to be a foundation for understanding the meaning of ecotourism. For the analysis of the calculation of the benefits of ecotourism such as in Costa Rica, it will have a positive impact on the future improvement of a society oriented to the concept of ecotourism and a scoring system. Therefore, a reliable and useful indicator that reflects the multidimensionality of sustainable development is urgently needed.

How does the social-economy potential influence the ecotourism development for the welfare of local communities in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region in this case Sajingan Besar Sub-District?

Meanwhile, the aims of this study are to explore and analyze the potential of Social-Economy conditions for the welfare of local communities in the ecotourism development in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region.

2. Research Method

Based on the results of survey and reference studies, this study used quantitative and qualitative approaches. In line with the opinion from (Bryman, 2007), it is emphasized that the use of two approaches will at least eliminate bias compared to using only one research perspective (quantitative or qualitative). The techniques used in analyzing data can be visualized as follows. The analysis process in this study was carried out in the following steps: data obtained from interview, focus group discussions (FGD), observation, and documentation.

3. Result and Discussion

Based on the results of observation, in-depth interview, and FGD, it can be concluded that Riam Merasap has great potential which is quite attractive and meets the requirements to be developed as ecotourism management and there are several supporting elements of the importance of Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat, and Riam Sunge Banokng tourisms to be developed into ecosystem tourism (ecotourism). There are three reasons that support Inskep and Groot's opinion, namely (1) geographically, Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat, and Riam Sunge Banokng are located on the border of the doorway (Border Aruk) which is strategic to be visited by foreign tourists, especially Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam (2) As long as the Republic of Indonesia is independent, it could be said that the social-economy of communities in Sajingan Besar tends to be oriented towards Malaysia rather than their own country. Their main orientation (dependence) is on basic daily needs such as fuel, gas, rice, garlic, and cooking oil.

According to (Shailes et al., 2001) analyzed the factors that influence tourist congestion on the benefits of the existence of tourist sites from tourist visits, both foreign and local tourists. Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat and Riam Sunge Banokng have the potential as international tourism objects.

Orientation and Social-Economy potential is a relationship between people in their activities and interactions with each other by utilizing resources. This is in line with the preparation for more tourists and a fairer distribution of income generated from ecotourism and that the creative industry is an engine of economic growth and restores the values of community's local wisdom in terms of economic sector integration. Moreover, a place for aspirations is needed in improving human resources, because the lack of training places for the creative industry, difficulties in finding human resources as well as the lack of human resources to cultivate potentials are influenced by the level of communities' education. The strategy for growing economy by using tourism accelerates growth, generates job opportunities and increases income, based on theory from (Thushara et al., 2019) to maximize profits from the tourism industry in the aspects of appropriate policy formulation, development infrastructure and a conducive business environment are needed (Dychkovskyy & Ivanov, 2020). The behavioral approach to knowing the market share in spending time on vacation is important to be understood so that tourism can continue, be useful and succeed in improving the local community's economy as a fulfillment of household economic needs.

Household economic activities can be measured from the daily take-home pay income earned by the head of the family to meet their daily needs. Based on these theorists, the following presents the characteristics of the orientation and social-economy potential of the people in the study area, the majority of which are dry land farmers, very few conservatory household businesses, quite high poverty rate from the total population in Sajingan Besar Sub-District, and a green expanse with a diversity of flora and fauna. Furthermore, current tourism is green rural tourism to open up opportunities in solving a number of rural development problems (Gutkevych & Haba, 2020). Green rural tourism is one form of rural recreation that has wide

opportunities to exploit the natural, material and cultural potential of certain areas (Kuizinaite & Radzevičius, 2020) and can be one of the very important economic and socio-cultural impacts of tourism which are realized by the creation of infrastructure, improvement of the provision of services and entertainment, and vibrant cultural life.

The following showed the results of the FGD attended by various stakeholders who discussed topics related to the development of orientation and social-economy potential as well as stakeholder responses towards the development of community-based ecotourism. Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat, and Riam Sunge Banokng tourism objects.

Table 2: The Opinions of FGD's Participants on Orientation Potential and Social Economy Potential of Sajingan Besar Sub-District

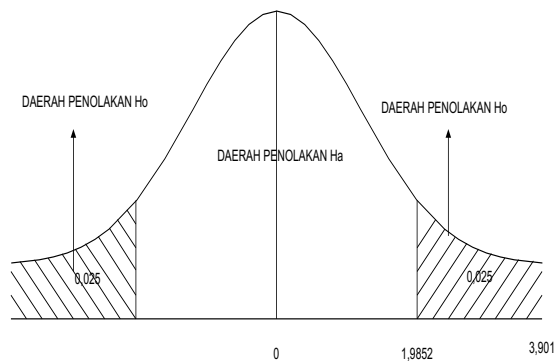
NO	Indicator	Description of Potential
1.	High enough poverty	Ecotourism can overcome poverty
2.	Limited job opportunities	Ecotourism expands job opportunities
3.	Low income	Ecotourism can increase monthly family income.
4.	Sub-district Savings	Ecotourism can increase savings
5.	Undeveloped investment	Ecotourism can increase investment in Credit Unions
6.	Undeveloped crafts	Crafts develop ecotourism
7.	Fisheries have not been cultivated.	Aquaculture can develop ecotourism.
8.	Halal culinary has not been developed	Halal culinary supports ecotourism with locally processed products.
9.	The absence of historical heritage revitalization.	Creative economy and education support ecotourism
10.	Limited transportation	Transportation supports ecotourism
11.	Economic imbalance and inequality between border communities and border communities of Malaysia	1. During the independence until the New Order era, the welfare of the Indonesian people was very unequal compared to Malaysia, especially in terms of meeting the needs for clothing, food, housing, and road facilities and infrastructure, health and education. 2. As a result, the people of Sajingan Besar are very dependent on the orientation of fulfilling their needs not from their own country but from Malaysia and until now the dependence on fulfilling their daily needs still happens such as spending on basic necessities, spices, and fuel because they are cheaper. 3. Apart from that, at point 0 "border market", there are still buying and selling transactions in which the people of Sajingan Besar play a more role as consumers than the people of Biawak Malaysia.

Research Source: FGD

Based on the results of calculations with the SPSS program, it shows that the social economy potential (X_2) has a positive and significant influence on the ecotourism development on tourism in Sajingan Besar Sub-district (Y). This can be proven because the value of $-t$ count $< -t$ table ($-3,464 < -1.96$) or probability ($0.001 < \alpha (0.05)$). The positive results indicate that any increase in the social-economy potential will increase the development of Riam ecotourism in

Sajingan Besar Sub-district. The results of this evidence indicate that if the community becomes more economically stable, ecotourism will succeed.

Figure 2: Proving the Social-Economy Hypothesis



From the results of qualitative and quantitative descriptive analysis, it can be concluded that from the social-economy aspect, the Indonesian-Malaysian border communities are generally faced with some problems, namely job opportunities, poverty, limited infrastructure, and many Indonesians on the border migrate to Malaysia to earn a living. This is a potential problem that can be used as a fundamental effort to manage natural resources, especially Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat, and Riam Sunge Banokng in the protected forest area. Strengthening fundamental in this border region by utilizing the potential of *Riam* to strengthen the self-image of border communities by increasing the potential use of natural and human resources for the welfare of the communities, (Fitriyani et al., 2019). The following is the potential of Sajingan Besar protected forest in the framework of the Riam ecotourism development. The qualitative study findings are confirmed from the results of quantitative analysis, it is proven that the social-economy aspects have an influence on the ecotourism development so that it can be concluded that the results of qualitative descriptive analysis are confirmed or strengthened by the results of quantitative analysis.

The regional government has an important role in implementing sustainable regional development, namely by continuously building public facilities and infrastructure and creating a just and prosperous society that is in accordance with the ideals of the nation. The regional government in the implementation of this role is carried out by the implementing element (line element) in the region, namely the regional offices and agencies. Through the support of the government and the private sector to strengthen funding for improving facilities and infrastructure.

In this case, local government has the authority to regulate regional households, one of which is in determining the strategy to accelerate the development of the border region (Sajingan Besar Sub-district) which has a direct role in the Regional Development Planning Agency of Sambas Regency. Particularly, the development of border region has several principles and is guided by the Master Plan for Development of the Border Region of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, among others:

- a. The embodiment of NKRI sovereignty;
- b. integration across sectors and regions;
- c. sustainable development;
- d. alignments with the local community and economy;
- e. regional autonomy; and
- f. partnership.

4. Conclusion and Suggestion

The results of the study can be summarized that there are several supporting elements of the importance of Riam tourism being developed into ecosystem tourism (ecotourism). There are research findings as to the reasons for strengthening the opinion from (Inskeep, 1988; Simons & de Groot, 2015), namely geographically Riam Merasap, Riam Cagat and Riam Sunge Banokng are located at the border of the entrance (Border Aruk) which is strategic for foreign tourists to visit, especially Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. As long as the Republic of Indonesia is independent, it could be said that the social-economy of communities in Sajingan Besar tends to be oriented towards Malaysia rather than their own country. Their main orientation (dependence) is on basic daily needs such as fuel, gas, rice, garlic, and cooking oil. Furthermore, the social economy conditions of the people are generally less prosperous (poor). There is a significant influence both qualitatively and quantitatively on the social-economy aspects of the ecotourism development of the Indonesia-Malaysia border region, especially in the area of Sajingan Besar Sub-district with Biawak Kuching Malaysia. Substantively it can be understood that this influence is related to the problem of the orientation of the relationship between the border communities of Sajingan Besar and Biawak Kuching Malaysia both from the social-economy aspect in the context of border development and the development of the inter-border tourism sector.

The social-economy development to support ecotourism development which is in accordance with the characteristics and problems of the Sajingan Sub-district region is the increase in infrastructure development in the growth center such as the Aruk border area, market development, freshwater fish cultivation, agriculture, and plantations. These should be conducted to overcome the problem of poverty, limited job opportunities, unemployment, and low village income. The development of community-based ecotourism will be able to realize the principle of independence or orientation of the Sajingan Besar community towards Malaysia regarding the daily needs, fuel, health and be able to build a nationalist orientation of border communities towards the Republic of Indonesia both culturally and politically as well as for the state security in the border region.

Border communities in the use of resources are followed by the quality of human resources so that they can compete to have a selling value and increase the income of local communities. Local communities' education is very influential on the results of quality and product innovation. The border communities, in producing quality products, there are local cultural arts so that there are characteristics of the product for market share to the neighboring country, namely Malaysia.

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