

Stakeholder Analysis for Coastal Tourism Development in Bangka Island, North Sulawesi Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is an important sector of development in Bangka Island, Indonesia. Principally, the recent growth of tourism in Bangka Island introduces new challenges for local people. Few studies have been implemented in the initial phase of tourism development in small islands in Indonesia. The objective of this study, therefore, is to describe the recent coastal tourism development in Bangka Island, as one of the small islands in Indonesia, in North Sulawesi Province. This study focuses on describing the position of stakeholders in initial tourism development and on drawing the possible scenario for future tourism development. This study found that coastal resources are the principal tourist attraction in Bangka Island. Foreign investors play an important role in the initial tourism development. However, local people were not much involved. Bangka Island needs to adopt a sustainable tourism concept to increase local people participation in tourism sector. In such strategy, all tourism stakeholders should be involved in planning, establishment, development, and maintenance of tourism industry in Bangka Island.

Keywords: coastal tourism, small islands, stakeholders, tropical biodiversity, conservation

INTRODUCTION

Tourism in small islands recently receives a lot of attention among planners and scholars. In many small island states, tourism has become an important business and such sector has important employment implications [1] [2] [3] [4]. Tourism can also contribute to the protection and conservation of the environment. Tourism is another significant determinant of the local and regional development [5]. While there are benefits offered by tourism development, such business potentially contributes to island ecosystem degradation. Scholars point out that tourism principally can have serious environmental impact on native vegetation, animal and soil [6]. In social aspects, tourism is able to change local community behavior and social structures. There are also many reports showing that tourism development changes local economic regimes [7]. Small islands represent one of the most fragile ecosystems on the earth. Small islands are therefore especially interesting for sustainable development studies because small islands commonly show ecological and economical limitations.

In the context of Indonesian tourism geography, North Sulawesi Province (NSP) is one of the important sites for tourism destination. Ecologically, NSP is unique among provinces on Sulawesi Island because they possess many small islands which are rich in term of biodiversity. The NSP islands consist of Bunaken, Manado Tua, Mantehage, Talise, Nain, Lembeh, Bangka, Biaro, Ruang, Tagulandang, Siau, Sangihe, Karakelang and many smaller islands. Bunaken becomes the main world's tourism destination in NSP and receives both international and national attention significantly [8] [9][10]. Recently NSP has been considered by tourism planners and developers as a major development site. The growth of tourism in NSP introduces new challenges for local economic earnings. In NSP, this has led local government to design the concept of sustainable tourism. Under this concept, tourism sectors may be forced into bargain with conservation interest that is planned to meet sustainable uses of resources [2] [11]. In NSP, Hakim *et al.* [11] has outlined the significance of natural resources in tourism development. NSP is one of the important biodiversity areas in the world, particularly in terms of marine biodiversity. Myriad species and habitat types support tourism industry in North Sulawesi. Given an increasing popularity of diving, NSP and its small islands have the potential to attract both local and international tourist.

In NSP, Bangka Island represents the very potential area for tourism development [9]. Geographically, Bangka Island is located in the southern tip of Sulawesi Island. The island is located close to the Bunaken

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Marine National Park, the very popular marine-based tourism destination in the world. Bangka Island is blessed with a wonderful long sandy beach which is potential for coastal tourism development. Like Bunaken and its surrounding area, Bangka is the habitat of numerous coral reefs and tropical fish species [12]. According to Buckles [9], snorkeling and diving was the popular tourist program in Bangka. Although tourism has been taking place in Bangka Island, there has not been any research of tourism industry and the role of stakeholders in such emerging industry.

The contribution of stakeholders in tourism development is crucial. According to Murphy and Murphy [13], tourism stakeholders may include tourism business owners, employees, customers, government, NGOs, suppliers and other groups who are interested in tourism planning and development. In NSP, stakeholders have a direct and fundamental economic, social and political impact upon the tourism sector. Stakeholders may be involved in financing and supporting tourism project. Government plays an important role in promoting tourism development. Principally, legislators need to develop strategies, plans, and mechanism that help tourism to grow.

The aims of the paper are to quantitatively assess the natural capital of Bangka Island towards sustainable tourism destination in small islands, to analyze stakeholders' perception on tourism development, and to design the scenarios for sustainable tourism development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in Bangka Island, North Sulawesi, Indonesia from June to August 2011. It contains approximately 2.919 ha. of land. Administratively, Bangka Island belongs to the Minahasa Utara District (Fig. 1). The area is inhabited by over 2,697 fishermen who live in three coastal villages: Lihunu, Kahuku and Libas (Table 1). The Sangihe-Siao ethnic group is considered to be the indigenous inhabitants of the Bangka Island area. They live by selling fish and commercial products such as copra, cloves, maize, and some vegetables. The island residents basically had little access to formal education [14].

Forest degradation and habitat loss have been occurring for several decades. Based on the land use classification, the percentage of abandoned land is the dominant one (c.a. 22.61%). It is followed by orchards (c.a. 18.22%), shrubs and secondary forest (c.a. 14.14%) and coconut plantation (c.a. 14.14%). In particular, coconut plantation becomes dominant in the coastal area of the island. Copra production is still the most important sources of income for the local community in Bangka Island. Another group of land uses are those associated with beach and mangrove forests. While it is important to protect coastal environment, the Mangrove ecosystem occupies about 1.98% of the total island area [14]. During the past decade, there has been rapid changes in forest cover size in NSP, including in Bangka Island.

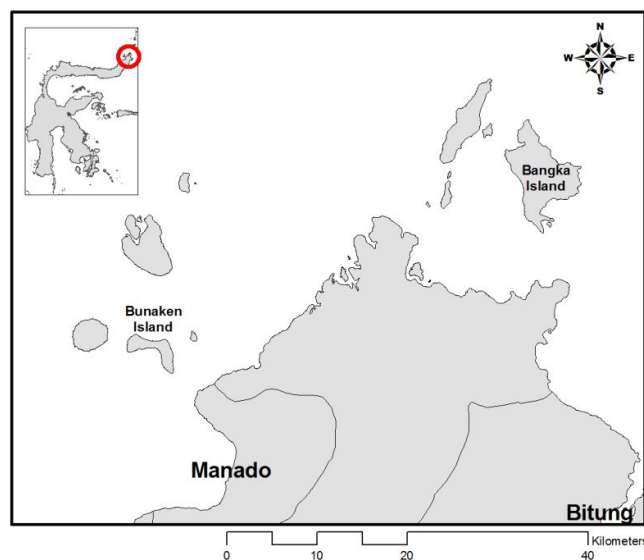


Fig. 1. Geographic position of Bangka Island in North Sulawesi

Table 1 Administrative management of Bangka Island

Villages	Area (Ha.)	% of total area of Bangka Island
Lihumu	1.446	49,54
Kahuku	791	27,10
Libas	682	23,6

Research was done following several steps. Firstly, we described the natural capital of the island as a potential tourism attraction. Focus was paid to the physical and biological aspects of coastal area of the island. Data were collected through direct observation. Photographs and annotated diagrams of all potential coastal resources encountered were drawn. Secondary data were obtained from numerous institutions including university, central provincial offices, and district offices. Secondly, we interviewed tourism stakeholders in Bangka Island. The interviews contained a series of questions designed to get research goals. In Bangka Island, important stakeholders encompassed legislator (provincial and district), resorts investors and developers, NGO and civil society members. Practically, we interviewed the site manager of the four cottages, two informal leaders, and one governmental representative in Bangka Island. Sites and times arrangements were negotiated with the respondents of research to generate the data and information. Respondents' opinions and expectations were analyzed descriptively to provide insight into tourism characteristics, practices, and future scenarios in Bangka Island. The researcher lives in the villages during the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Natural resources for tourism

The landscapes of Bangka Island have been influenced by human significantly. Almost all the lowland tropical forest in the centre part of Bangka Island degrades due to anthropogenic factor. Forest cover has decreased, mostly on the central part of the island. Nowadays, the amount of grassland on the island is 660.4 ha. The majority of which is dominated by *Imperata cylindrica*, an exotic and invasive species which are able to threaten biodiversity of small islands. Invasion of such species can be seen as a function of the number of land uses changing regimes. In Bangka Island, human population growth during the past decades has been one of the causes of lowland forest degradation. Settlement may be responsible for the changes of forest cover. The policy to cultivate Cashew nut (*Anacardium occidentale*) during the past decade moreover triggered the forest cover decrease. The cultivation of Cashew nut has become part of the efforts to increase income earning throughout the production of marketable fruit [15]. However, there are problems in cultivation. These include poor soil, farmer skills, and availability of water. In 1990s, a large area of Cashew nut orchards caused serious damage to many tropical forest patches in Bangka Island. Field survey confirms slash-and-burn farming is a common practice among the local farmers of the Bangka Island. This practice significantly contributes to land degradation.

In Bangka Island, beach was identified as a key component of tourism. Although there is no statistical count on tourist arrival, respondents argued that tourist arrival increases. Increasingly, beach is being recognized as a crucial component of tourism destination. The reasons for this include attractive and interesting seascapes of tropical islands. Since 2000, a large number of tourism attractions in Bangka coastal region have been identified. The potential beaches for tourism attraction are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Potential beach for coastal tourism development in Bangka Island

No	Beach	Length (m)	Tourism Attractions
1	Kalipepu	850	Coastal stone <i>Batu Gosoh</i>
2	Besar	600	Diverse coastal ecosystem
3	Panjang	1200	Long sandy beach with coconut plantation
4	Sahaung	550	Coastal stone <i>Batu Kuhia</i>
5	Sabora	700	Granular white sandy beach (called "Pasir Merica")
6	Pahepa	750	Sandy beach and mangrove
7	Luwonas	350	White sandy beach

One of the most interesting aspects of the tourism in Bangka Island is the intensive uses of marine and coastal resources as tourism resources. Field survey suggests that coastal and intertidal constitutes important ecosystems for a variety of tourist programs. Marine has been identified as an important resource for tourism. Field observation confirms that the most popular activity within the Bangka Island waters is diving and snorkelling. Such activity is not exclusive to Bangka Island, but is also common to some island tourism destinations in NSP [9]. In such activities, direct contact with huge marine creatures has become the focus of the experience for tourists. Most of the beaches suitable for tourism development are located at the southern part of the island; the northern coastline is usually rocky [12].

Terrestrial ecosystem such as coconut orchards, mangrove, and secondary forests are other potential resources for tourism planning and development. Nevertheless, they are ignored and are little developed as tourist attractions. This is partly due to the fact that these ecosystems did not attract tourists. However, their contribution in coastal protection is considered crucial. Their ecological functions are numerous including coastline protection, fishery production, and coastal biodiversity conservation. At present, Bangka Island has mangrove forest of about 57.8 ha. The important mangrove trees area *Avicennia*, *Rhizophora*, and *Sonneratia*. Most mangroves are lost during the past decades [12].

Bangka Island is also the habitat for some animals such as Javanese deer / Javanese rusa (*Cervus timorensis*), common phalanger (*Phalanger orientalis*), and wild boar (*Sus scrofa*). The common phalanger (in Indonesia is called Kuskus) is native to Indonesia Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste [16]. However, no records on population number and structure which were apparent. In Bangka Island, one reason for this is that it is difficult to obtain such data.

Contribution of tourism stakeholders in Bangka Island

The research differentiates stakeholders into three groups: tourism investors, governmental officials, and local people. Each group has distinctive characteristics based on a combination of knowledge levels and occupational status. In general, the tourism investors are foreigners and they have a greater understanding about the value of natural resources as tourism attraction. This is similar with what happen in other parts of Indonesia, in which the dominant investors in such industry are foreigners.

1. Tourism investors

This study reveals that tourism investors are crucial in tourism development. It is generally accepted that tourism investors become a catalyst for tourism development in Bangka Island. They complement the tourism industry and may be very crucial in every step of the tourism development. A number of projects in Bangka Island have been implemented since 2000. It varies from planning and developing resorts to promoting Bangka Island as a tourism destination. Since then, the tourism industry in Bangka Island has expanded significantly. The commitment of the investors to the tourism development in Bangka is a critical factor in laying foundation for the initial tourism development in Bangka.

Recently, there are four tourism resorts in Bangka Island (Fig. 2). The pioneer in promoting and developing tourism programs in Bangka Island has been Murex Resort. Murex was established in 1987 in Manado and expanded their resort in Bangka in 2000's. The motive behind the resort development in Bangka Island was to enlarge tourist capacity and increase benefits. In NSP, the tourism development recognizes the importance of coastal area. In 2000, the owner of Mimpi Indah Resort bought the land in the coastal area of Lihunu Village for 25,000 IDR per m². In 2008, tourism accommodation began to be built to meet tourist needs. To develop more the tourism sector in Bangka Island, an Indonesian-Germany couple was invited to rent a land in Lihunu. In 2004, the couple rent the land for 20 years to open Blue Bay Resort. Lihunu has now been considered as an important area for tourism development. According to the resort owner, tourism facility development in Lihunu is associated with its physical landscape characters. Lihunu has many sites for diving and snorkeling, and there are also numerous spots of sandy beaches.

The most interesting fact is that foreigner investors seem to play an important role in resort development (Table 3). Capital factor may affect the tourism business in small and remote islands. In this regard, scholars point out that the principal functions of the investor deal with the cash money for the start-up of a new business [17]. Despite this potential, there are a number of social and environmental issues. In the perspectives of development, this situation has been relatively known as "capital owner centered", with little attention given to local people vision [5]. Consequently, local people involvement has largely been ignored.

Table 3 Resort in Bangka Island

Resorts	Owner	Remarks
Mimpi Indah Resort	Indonesian and Dutch couple	Opened in 2008 in Lihunu
Blue Bay Resort	Indonesian and Germany couple	Rent land in Lihunu for 20 years Start to operate in 2004
Murex Resort	Indonesian	Start to operate in 1987 in Manado
Mata Karang Resort	Indonesian and Italian couple	Start to operate in 2010 in Lihunu

Effort to promote Bangka Island as an international tourism destination has been done significantly. The challenge is to create an effective promotion for potential tourists. Hence, foreigners are particularly creative in their attempts to promote Bangka Island as a tourism destination. In such activity, they pioneered new strategy of island tourism marketing. Websites become significant tourism promotion vehicles. Such media provide valuable information to increase the flow of tourists to particular destinations. In Bangka Island, all resort have developed their own website in many languages, including Indonesian language, English, Dutch, Germany, and Italian.

Supporting biodiversity conservation is often a problem in tourism implementation. Interestingly, effort to link tourism and conservation has been done systematically. In general, the resort manager is more interested in offering adventure tourism programs. The sites may differ, but their setting is the same. For instance, Murex Resort offers a special program to visit Minahasa Highland, Mahawu Volcano, Tangkoko-Duasudara Nature Reserve, and some mangrove forests in NSP. In Mata Karang Resort, growing coral reefs becomes the main tourism program to enhance marine conservation program. Mata Karang represents one of the rare cases where tourism resort is contributing to biodiversity conservation. The Mata Karang experience provides another example on how tourists can participate in coral reefs conservation program.

This study confirmed that resort owners were willing to improve local people knowledge about the tourism industry. This will become the opportunity for community based tourism initiation. There were 25 people involved in Blue Bay Resort as permanent staff, 13 people in Mimpri Indah Resort, 9 people in Murex Resort, and 7 people in Mata Karang resort. Most of them come from Manado and its surrounding area. Few local people involved as resort staff. According to the local government, these numbers were under the optimal level to meet tourism objectives, particularly to help minimize unemployment.

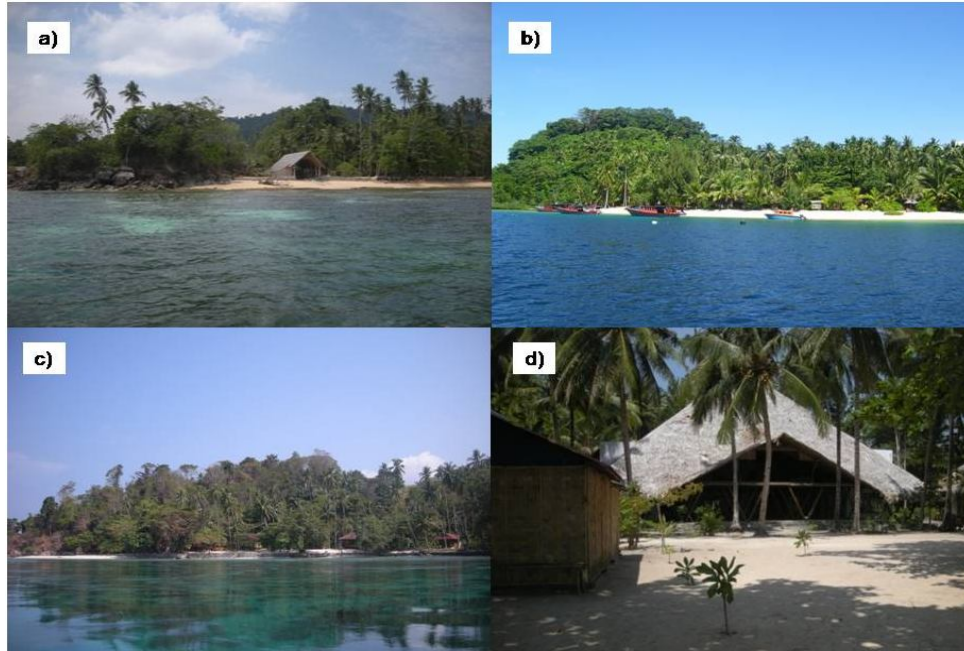


Fig. 2. The tourism resorts in Bangka island and its environmental settings. (a) Mimpri Indah Resort, (b) Blue Bay Resort, (c) Murex Resort, (d) Mata Karang Resort

2. Government

Tourism has recently become a significant component of the economy for NSP [11]. Given the remarkable role of the tourism industry in the local economy earning, tourism recently is viewed as a new machine of the regional and local development component. In Bangka Island, the local government argues that tourism sector is essential to enhance recent local development. Administratively, local government has tried to promote their roles by acting as legislators and facilitators. Numerous regulation and local laws related to tourism sector are issued in the Bangka Island. In such document, the local government argues that the involvement of local people in the tourism industry can enhance local community wealth and prosperity [18].

While the contribution of the local government to initiate and drive tourism sector is considered important, there was a lack of capacity within the government leading to poor community-based tourism implementation. There are many planning for tourism development, but often these are not brought into practical implementation. Another aspects related to poor implementation is a lack of substantial financial support. According to scholars, such problems had significant implication for the development of community-based tourism [7] [5].

In the perspectives of the local government, the role of the local people is lower than the role of the outsiders, suggesting a paradox of community-based tourism development. The most often cited reason for the failure in involvement is the quality of human resources of the local people. Whatever the reasons are, foreign investors are ubiquitous in many small islands in developing countries. In Indonesia, it could be seen in Kepulauan Seribu (Thousand Islands) in Jakarta Bay [2] and Bali Island [19] and East Java [20].

The local government successfully maintains the socio-political situation in Bangka Island. No actual conflict is known to happen within Bangka Island. Observation, however, suggests that potential conflicts occur between local people and immigrants. According to informants, the important way to prevent the issues of local people and investors is by considering the community-based tourism. The informants point out that in order to implement such model, it is necessary for the local government to establish regulation, enforcement, and provisions in order to enhance community-based tourism implementation in Bangka Island.

3. Local community

Local community in Bangka Island is one of the main stakeholders for any tourism planning and development. In Bangka Island, local community has often been a major issue for tourism development. This study confirms that the capacity for local dwellers to operate the tourism sub-sectors seems limited. In Bangka Island, the socio-cultural constraints to be taken into account encompass lack of basic education and poor skills. Poor living conditions also become an important issue. The causes of such factors are manifold and closely related. Scholars have long discussed the consequences of the problems on tourism development.

The education level of the local dwellers in small islands in developing countries is well known in a general sense. Resident of Bangka Island has crucial problems related to education access. Principally, geographic barriers become the limitation factor to access education infrastructure. Basic education is crucial for local people to participate in tourism planning and development. Recent survey on tourism development shows that adequate education is essential for the local community to gain access to and participate in decision-making process. Poor education led to lack of innovative ideas to obtain outside funding or development assistance [1] [21].

The effect of low skill toward people participation in development project, including tourism sector, has been widely documented. Thomas and Long [22] identified that skill is needed in every part of tourism industry. The impact of human skill on tourism industry is especially well understood. From the resort owners' standpoint, good skill of staff may allow the competitiveness of their tourism facilities and products. In the perspectives of the resort owners, it will be increases economic benefits from tourist. According to the resort owners, identifying staff's skill prior to tourism services can reduce tourist dissatisfaction.

In Bangka Island, the limit to community involvement in tourism industry includes actual perception of local people on tourism. In the perspective of the local communities, the tourism industry was seen as a new business. Viewing tourism as something exclusive to particular people is common among local people. According to the respondents, practices on this business are related to high quality of human resources. Tourism area requires unique knowledge and professional experiences. High-cost has become critical to the operating tourism business. This often requires employment training. These opinions contribute to reducing community participation in tourism industry. As the result, involvement issue is difficult to build.

Towards community-based tourism

Until recently, Bangka's economic development has depended on the fisheries and limited agricultural products. The development of tourism, therefore, will provide new opportunity for local economic development. Nevertheless, Bangka Island, like other small islands in developing countries, has some limitations for tourism development. Environmental problems potentially arise when the number of visitors beyond beach carrying capacity. This could raise public concern related to beach degradation [2] [21] [23]. Therefore, the challenge of tourism development in Bangka Island is to focus not only on the marine and coastal resources, but also on developing the terrestrial ecosystem of the islands.

The experience of the Bangka Island demonstrates clearly that foreigner investors are dominant and play an important role in tourism industry. Although tourism industry in small islands has carried many advantages, the local people do not always capture these advantages. Very few local people are involved in tourism industry. Perhaps the most common weakness relates to the local people involvement in tourism sector. We found several explanations for the lack of community involvement in Bangka Island. The first is poor human resource quality. The poor human quality could mainly be related to lack of education and economic background. Secondly, there is weak communication and coordination. Principally, there was lack of engagement with travel agents, tour operators, and hoteliers. Constraining factors include the absence of formal agreement and cooperation among stakeholders. Thirdly, there is often low commitment to improving the people participation, and there is no significant program for development.

Bangka Island needs to reform the policy dealing with tourism sector. Community-based tourism will become the significant approach. According to scholars, community-based tourism could have a number of beneficial effects. As its name implies, community based tourism concern on community and stakeholders involvement. In Bangka Island, however, local people are unprepared to involve in tourism industry. In such a case, community-based tourism can only be implemented if the scenarios invite local peoples as one of the crucial actors of tourism industry. Moreover, this requires the ability to identify stakeholders and their roles. Tourism destination, especially in small islands, requires coordination among the members of the stakeholders.

In such schema, community members are encouraged to take part in tourism business operational. By collaborative works, enterprises will have easier access to the goods to meet enterprises needs. Foreigners should offer advice to the local community. Incorporating local people and tourism investor in Bangka Island into community-based tourism schemes represent a promising strategy and a model for sustainable tourism. Community-based tourism is costly to tourism investor, not only in term of funding but also in process. The role of government should be to provide regulation, guidelines and institutional framework to promote community-based tourism.

Threat to tourism in Bangka Island includes actual and potential conflict. Respondents expressed their concern about the potential risk of tourism. No strong relationship is apparent between local community and tourism investors. A potential conflict in tourism industry is the competition between resorts and the local dwellers for water, space, and other natural resources. Local people also frequently use natural resources used by tourism industry.

CONCLUSION

Tourism in Bangka Island should be able to accommodate biodiversity conservation and local economic growth, and to enhance socio-cultural identity integrally. A rise of tourism in coastal areas potentially led to environmental degradation. Therefore, the environmental conservation issues become crucial.

The lesson learned from Bangka Island illustrates the importance of foreigner investors in initial tourism development. Tourism investors and developers would benefit economically from tourism, but there are no contributions to local people. In such case, government should try to develop and maximize regulation to enhance community participation in tourism industry. Problems remain in the area related to local people involvement in tourism industry.

The process of developing and implementing sustainable tourism is based upon stakeholder collaboration, including the local people. There must be agreement among investors, government, and the local people to implement tourism practices and to share tourism benefit. Consideration should be given to the establishment of Bangka Island Tourism Board.

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