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POTENTIAL FOR ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT ON PULAU PEUCANG

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the potential and challenges of sustainable ecotourism development on Peucang Island, which is part of Ujung Kulon National Park. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive approach with data collection techniques through field observations, in-depth interviews with managers and local communities, and documentation studies. The results of the study indicate that Peucang Island has unique natural attractions, high biodiversity, and adequate basic infrastructure to support ecotourism activities. However, the management of this destination still faces challenges such as limited environmentally friendly facilities, lack of regulations on tourist carrying capacity, and suboptimal local community participation. The discussion emphasizes the importance of implementing sustainability principles in tourism marketing and management, including limiting the number of visitors, ecotourism training for the community, and conservation-based promotion. The conclusion of this study is that Peucang Island has great potential as a leading ecotourism destination, but requires an integrated and conservation-based management strategy. It is recommended that managers and related parties develop policies based on regional carrying capacity and increase local capacity to support sustainable and inclusive ecotourism.

KEYWORDS: - Ecotourism, Sustainability, Peucang Island, Ujung Kulon National Park.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Peucang Island is one of the islands in Ujung Kulon National Park (TNUK) which is known for its well-managed accessibility, available facilities, and is expected as a visitor reception area (Wiyono et al., 2018). This island can be accessed by sea travel using a fast or slow boat, with a travel time of around 2-6 hours from Carita, 3.5 hours from Labuan by slow boat, or 3 hours from Tamanjaya, or from Pelabulan Sumur 3 hours. Tourists visiting Peucang Island have increased significantly since 2011 to 2024, the average number of tourists visiting Peucang Island between 2018-2020 was

± 13,000 people per year. The number of tourists increased from 2018 to 2019 and decreased in 2020 (Permana et al., 2023).

The potential of Peucang Island is very good, in terms of physical and biological natural resources on Peucang Island, it is the main attraction for ecotourism development in TNUK. With these attractions including white sandy beaches and clear blue sea water for beach activities, as well as wildlife such as wild boar, deer, and long-tailed monkeys that are often seen along the Karang Copong forest trekking trail. However, tourism activities in protected areas can have direct and indirect impacts on the natural environment, especially because the increase in the number of visitors can threaten the ecological balance.

To ensure the sustainability of the natural environment in TNUK, effective management and regulation of resources are needed. The concept of carrying capacity is a basic approach to achieving sustainable development while protecting natural areas. Although it has good potential for sustainable ecotourism, it is necessary to pay attention to protected areas so that the existing ecology is not lost by the presence of tourists visiting. (Wiyono et al., 2018).

In this study, it was found on an island which is an island located in the Panaitan Strait, Pandeglang Regency, Banten or west of Ujung Kulon National Park. Peucang Island is also accepted as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, along with Panaitan Island and Handeuleum Island. The name Peucang Island is taken from the name of a type of snail that is often found on the coast of Peucang Island. The snail is called "Mata Peucang" by residents around Ujung Kulon National Park, although on Peucang Island, there is no Kancil which in Sundanese is "Peucang" (Ujung Kulon National Park Office, 2024).

2.0 METHOD

The methodology used in this study is a qualitative approach with literature study as the main basis. This literature study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the ecotourism potential on Peucang Island, as well as the challenges faced in managing nature in the area. The focus of this literature review is on factors that influence ecotourism development, such as the carrying capacity of the area, environmentally friendly tourism facilities, the impact of tourism on the ecosystem, and the local role in managing sustainable tourism communities. References used in this study include the results of previous studies on ecotourism on Peucang Island and its surrounding areas, as well as studies related to the management of national parks and other ecotourism destinations in Indonesia..

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Potential Carrying Capacity of the Area (Carrying Capacity)

Ecotourism is "Tourism involving travel to areas of natural or ecological interest, usually under the guidance of a naturalist, for the purpose of observing wildlife and studying the environment, and focusing on wildlife and promoting environmental understanding and conservation. Commercialization is a threat to the environment on which tourism is based. The quality and characteristics of the environment are essential to attract. Ecotourism developers are needed. The idea of ecotourism is a new approach to tourism and the preservation of natural potential. Ecotourism is travel that provides to natural areas for the cultural and natural history of the

environment, while maintaining the integrity of the ecosystem, while creating economic opportunities that make conservation and protection of natural resources profitable for local communities.

Ecotourism can be recommended as a tourism program that is based on natural ecology, sustainable, with education and interpretation as the main components, and from which local communities benefit (Chougule, 2011). Ecotourism offers great opportunities for providers who have a clear vision and make efforts to organize and maintain their offerings. Many countries have recognized the importance of ecotourism and are implementing ecotourism projects to generate income. However, if ecotourism grows too fast beyond a certain limit or develops without planning and organized efforts, then several problems can arise. This can cause the following negative impacts:

1. Social dislocation.
2. Ecological degradation and visitor dissatisfaction.
3. Economic dependency.
4. Loss of cultural heritage.

If we want to protect and care for the fragile ecosystem of the area, the lying animals, and the ecosystem by educating the community and creating jobs for them, then it is necessary to conduct a study on the environmental carrying capacity.

3.2 Infrastructure and Facilities

There is great potential for the development of infrastructure that supports ecotourism activities, such as the construction of trekking trails, the improvement of environmentally friendly accommodation facilities, and other supporting facilities (e.g., tourist information centers, parking lots, and appropriate waste disposal areas). Adequate infrastructure ensures that it will improve the comfort of tourists and the ecosystem.



Figure 1. Resort on Peucang Island

Peucang Island does have attractive resorts, such as Nikki Resort which offers comfortable accommodation facilities. However, the price at Nikki Resort is quite expensive and the facilities available are still limited when compared to the needs of a more environmentally friendly and affordable resort for tourists who want to enjoy an ecotourism experience on this island. Therefore, efforts are needed to improve accessibility and the availability of more varied accommodation, at more affordable prices, while maintaining the principles of eternity and nature conservation.

3.3 Tourist Attractions

Peucang Island offers a number of attractive natural tourist attractions, such as white sandy beaches, clear sea water, and the Karang Copong forest trekking trail which can be used for ecotourism activities, such as birdwatching, trekking, and wildlife observation. In addition, snorkeling and diving activities around the coral reefs also have great potential to be developed as environmentally friendly tourist attractions.



Gambar 2.Trekking di Pulau Peucang



Gambar 3. Snorkling Pulau Peucang

3.4 Role of Local Communities

This study found that local community involvement is very important in the development of ecotourism on Peucang Island. Local communities can play a role in providing tourism services, such as tour guides, as well as in conservation and environmental maintenance efforts. Support from local communities can also increase awareness of the importance of preserving nature and ecosystems.

3.5 Environmental and Social Impacts

This study shows that uncontrolled ecotourism development can have negative impacts on the environment, such as damage to coral reefs, waste pollution, and disturbances to wildlife. Therefore, effective management is needed to minimize these negative impacts, including regulating the number of visitors and implementing responsible tourism activities.

3.6 Marketing and Promotion

Peucang Island has the potential to be promoted as a leading ecotourism destination in Ujung Kulon National Park. Effective promotion through social media, websites, and other marketing campaigns can increase tourist awareness of the natural beauty of Peucang Island and the importance of conservation. Marketing that emphasizes environmental desirability and responsibility can attract tourists who care about nature conservation. One of the marketing efforts that has been made is by

organizing affordable open trips, priced around IDR 600,000 to IDR 800,000 per person. This open trip aims to attract more tourists at a relatively cheaper price, so that more people can enjoy the natural beauty of Peucang Island without ignoring the principle of sneezing.



Figure 4.Open Trip Pulau Peucang

Based on the research results, several recommendations for the development of sustainable ecotourism on Peucang Island include:

1. Visitor management based on the carrying capacity of the area.
2. Development of ecotourism facilities that are environmentally friendly and based on the principle of curiosity.
3. Improvement in training for local communities and tour guides to ensure responsible ecotourism.
4. Stricter supervision and regulation of tourism activities that can damage the environment.
5. Collaboration between the government, local communities, and national park managers to maintain ecosystems.

4.0 DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that Peucang Island has great potential for sustainable ecotourism development, but careful management is needed to maintain a balance between tourism growth and environmental conservation. In the context of previous studies, this is in line with findings showing that ecotourism can provide significant economic benefits to local communities if managed properly (Wiyono et al., 2018; Permana et al., 2023). However, if not managed properly, negative impacts such as ecosystem damage and environmental degradation can occur, as also found in studies on sustainable tourism. Desire-based marketing, such as open trips at affordable prices, shows potential to attract tourists who care about nature conservation, as well as support an understanding of the importance of conservation. However, more attention needs to be paid to the

island's carrying capacity and environmentally friendly facility management to avoid social and ecological problems that may arise from an uncontrolled increase in the number of visitors. The concept of carrying capacity (carrying capacity) must be considered in every management policy, as discussed by several previous researchers in the context of ecotourism (Barton et al., 2017).

5.0 CONCLUSION

This study found that Peucang Island has great potential as a leading ecotourism destination in Ujung Kulon National Park. The sufficient carrying capacity of the area, adequate infrastructure, and unique natural and wildlife tourism attractions make Peucang Island an attractive choice for tourists seeking authentic and sustainable nature experiences. However, to ensure the sustainability of the ecosystem and avoid negative impacts, effective and sustainable management is essential. Some recommendations for ecotourism development on Peucang Island include:

1. Improving the management of environmentally friendly facilities and infrastructure.
2. Regulating the number of visitors based on the carrying capacity of the area.
3. Improving training for local communities and tour guides on the principles of sustainable ecotourism.
4. Promotion that emphasizes hatred and conservation to attract responsible tourists.

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