

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF AGRO-TOURISM MANGROVE ECOSYSTEM IN LUBUK KERTANG, LANGKAT REGENCY

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Abstract: Mangrove ecosystem management. Mangrove forests on the east coast of North Sumatra continue to decline based on data from 4 different measurements (1977, 1988/1989, 1997 and 2006), namely 14.01% (remaining to 88,931 ha), 48.56% (remaining to 53,198 ha) and 59.68% (only 41,700 ha remaining) of the initial area of 103,415 ha in 1977 (Onrizal. 2010). The decline in mangrove forests is caused by various land conversion factors, including residential areas, fishery business activities (ponds and aquaculture), clearing of oil palm land and tourism. Development of a sustainable tourism destination based on a case study of the creative economy of the Klong Kone mangrove community, Thailand in 5 (five) ways: 1) Encouraging involvement of the community and related parties, 2). Creative development with various skills 3) Sustainable communities Community cost-based studies Planning new ideas for community-based tourism strategies (Aunkrisa Sangchumnong. 2019). This development model is designed to ensure environmental sustainability for local communities through three things: 1). Preserving and restoring natural resources, 2). Raising awareness of the importance of conserving and restoring natural resources 3). Creating benefits from natural resources and the environment without destroying it. Agrotourism studies can be used as environmental conservation areas that have the potential to preserve mangrove forests and provide economic impacts that can be used as a source of income for the surrounding community. To realize this concept, there needs to be support from various parties, especially the regional government, local communities and what is no less important is promoting mangrove forest agrotourism.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has the largest mangrove forest in the world. Mangrove forests in the world reach an area of about 16,530,000 ha spread over 7,441,000 ha in Asia, 3,258,000 ha in Africa and 5,831,000 ha in America (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1994), while the area of mangrove forests in Indonesia

is 3,112,989 ha, or 22, 6% of the world's total mangrove area (Hamilton, S. E., & Casey, D. 2016). Furthermore, Thus, Indonesia's mangrove forest area is almost 50% of the Asian mangrove area and almost 25% of the world's mangrove forest area. The east coast of North Sumatra was once a vast mangrove forest as a habitat for existing flora and fauna. However, the area of mangrove forests on the east coast of North Sumatra continues to decline based on data from 4 different measurements (1977, 1988/1989, 1997 and 2006), which amounted to 14.01% (remaining to 88.931 ha), 48.56% (remaining to be 88.931 ha). 53,198 ha) and 59.68% (only 41,700 ha remaining) from the initial area of 103,415 ha in 1977 (Onrizal. 2010)

According to (Ginting, 2006) The highest damage to the mangrove forest ecosystem in North Sumatra is in the East Coast of North Sumatra, namely Tanjung Balai City (Asahan Regency) which reached 12,900 Ha (89.6%) from 14,400 Ha. Then Medan Labuhan District (Medan City) of 150 Ha (71.8%) of 250 Ha, Deli Serdang Regency and Serdang Bedagai Regency 12,400 Ha (62%) of 20,000 Ha, and Langkat Regency 25,300 Ha (60%) of 35,300 Ha. , while the damage to mangrove forests in Labuhan Batu Regency was only 500 Ha (29.4%) out of 1,700 Ha.

Currently, hundreds of hectares of mangrove forest have been found in the area which have been converted into residential areas and economic activities including fishery activities (ponds and aquaculture), agriculture and tourism. This causes the quality of the mangrove forest to be threatened, so good and wise handling and management is needed. One of the potentials that have coastal resources that can be used as marine tourism is the mangrove ecosystem. Mangrove forest is a unique and distinctive form of ecosystem, generally found in tidal areas in coastal areas, beaches and small islands. The mangrove ecosystem has high economic and ecological value. For this reason, innovative breakthrough efforts are needed in utilizing all the potential of the mangrove ecosystem in this area to be managed and developed so that the sustainability of the mangrove ecosystem will continue and will continue to exist in the future and to improve the welfare of the local community while maintaining sustainability. With the characteristic advantages of its natural resources, mangrove ecosystems and local archives in the East Sumatra region have the potential to be developed into agro-tourism products.

RESEARCH METHODS

The method used is descriptive analysis with a qualitative approach which focuses on literature studies in the form of relevant references in order to discuss theories and several journals as analytical tools, so that conclusions can be drawn from the results of the analysis and synthesis

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1.1. Social Aspects

The community around the tourist attraction plays an important role not only in the process of implementing tourism directly but also in the management of the tourist area later. The role of the community is needed in a tourism conscious society. Tourism in the Mangrove ecosystem is mostly filled by the community. Starting from traders, cleaners to parking attendants have been filled by the community. In addition, the community also enlivens if there are big events in the area. The forms of local wisdom that exist in the village community are in the form of values, norms, beliefs, and special rules. These various forms result in the function of local wisdom being various as well. The functions of local wisdom include: (1) conservation and preservation of natural resources; (2) developing human resources; (3) development of culture and science; and (4) instructions on advice, beliefs, literature, and taboos. The social life applied in the village community in the mangrove ecosystem area can be seen from their daily life. The community helps each other and works together if someone needs help, this usually happens when the local community is going to hold a thanksgiving event, a wedding, or an accident that happens to one of the families.

1.2. Economic Aspects

Community Based Ecotourism is a concept of agro-tourism development by involving and placing local communities who have full control in their management and development so as to contribute to society in the form of increasing the welfare of local communities and the sustainability of local culture. The village that is used as the main tourist attraction is agro-tourism. The form of community participation in the existence of tourist objects can be in the form of direct participation, namely the community is involved

in the management and maintenance of tourist objects, as follows:

- (a) Local residents participate in the food and beverage business and are willing to cook directly from the water catches from visitors. In addition, the community can also cook food according to visitors' requests.
- (b) The local residents provide their homes as lodging places for visitors who want to spend the night in the mangrove ecosystem area or provide lodging in the mangrove ecosystem area.
- (c) Provision of vehicle parking spaces in the community's yard or in the field.
- (d) The community participates in the manufacture and sale of various souvenirs, parking guards and road guides in the mangrove agro-tourism area.

Based on the study conducted, there are several important points that are still homework for the government and various related parties in efforts to develop agro-tourism areas so that they can be in line with development efforts in the surrounding areas, namely as follows :

- (a) Increasing infrastructure capacity to make it easier for tourists to go to tourist objects and develop the potential of tourist objects needed by tourists.
- (b) The provincial government needs to immediately pay attention to this superior tourist attraction, because the facilities for tourism activities and the environment in this tourist area are very minimal, so it is still not comfortable and safe to visit.
- (c) The government needs to collaborate with the private sector and the community, especially for funding and managing the environment for tourism objects.
- (d) Promote continuously with annual events and also carry out promotions through print and electronic media
- (e) Improving the ability of human resources at tourist attraction locations so that they can create creative works, as an attraction for tourists to visit and want to spend their money on the work of the local community.
- (f) In an effort to anticipate the occurrence of an unpredictable disaster, it can be circumvented by providing counseling and training to local communities when a disaster occurs and also improving the quality of facilities based on disaster mitigation, so that tourists still feel safe.

With regard to environmental quality, the maintenance of the natural environment is a priority. The awareness of the community around the agro-tourism area needs to be grown and maintained, while increasing the capacity of its human resources in managing

the environment of the tourist area. The development of tourist villages in agro-tourism areas is an alternative in efforts to maintain the environment as well as improve the socio-economic conditions of the community (Febriana, R.T. 2015)

Development of sustainable tourism destinations based on the creative economy case study of the mangrove community of Klong Kone, Thailand in 5 (five) ways: 1) Encouraging the involvement of the community and related parties, 2). Creative development with various skills 3) Sustainable community Community cost-based studies Planning new ideas for community-based tourism-based strategies (Aunkrisa Sangchumnong. 2019)

This development model is designed to ensure the sustainability of the local community environment in three ways: 1). Preserving and restoring natural resources, 2). Creating awareness of the importance of conserving and restoring natural resources 3). Creating benefits from natural resources and the environment without destroying them (Patchakul Treephan, Parichart Visuthismajarn, Sang-Arun Isaramalai 2019)

Ecotourism is an alternative tourism that is considered as one way to improve the economic life of rural communities because it is considered to provide job opportunities, business opportunities, and increase the development of business skills (Scheyvens, R. 2000)

Based on the basic guidelines for implementing UNESCO ecotourism, there are five important elements that every tourism actor needs to know so that they can ensure environmental conservation and improve the welfare of local communities (Kete, S.C.R. 2016)

- (a) Ecotourism provides experiences and education to tourists that can increase their understanding and appreciation of the tourist destinations they visit.
- (b) Ecotourism minimizes negative impacts that are considered to be damaging to the environmental and cultural characteristics of the areas visited.
- (c) Ecotourism activities involve the community in their management and implementation.
- (d) Ecotourism activities provide economic benefits, especially to the local community, so that the implementation of ecotourism activities must be profitable.
- (e) Ecotourism can continue to survive and be sustainable.

Agrotourism studies can be used as potential environmental conservation areas for the preservation of mangrove forests and have an economic impact that can be used as a

source of income for the surrounding community. To realize this concept, it is necessary to have support from various parties, especially the local government, local communities and no less important is to promote agro-tourism of the mangrove forest (Purnobasuki, H. 2012)

CONCLUSION

The social aspect is related to the local wisdom of the local community related to habits in the form of values, norms, beliefs, and special rules. This variety of forms causes the function of local wisdom to be seen from their daily lives such as helping each other and working together if someone needs help, this usually happens when the local community is going to hold a thanksgiving event, wedding, or misfortune that occurs in one of the families.

The economic aspect is the concept of agro-tourism development by involving and placing local communities who have full control in their management and development so as to contribute to society in the form of increasing the welfare of local communities and the sustainability of local culture. The village that is used as the main tourist attraction is agro-tourism. The form of community participation in the existence of tourist objects can be in the form of direct participation, namely the community is involved in the management and maintenance of tourist objects, in increasing the economy in the form of selling food and beverage businesses, providing their homes as lodging, parking lots, selling souvenirs and so on.

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