

Analysis of the potential of Sendang Silowo in Mandirejo Village, Merakurak District, Tuban Regency as Aquatic Ecotourism

¹Hana Dwi Andayani, ² Riska Andriani
^{1,2} PGRI Ronggolawe University

Email: andriani1risk@gmail.com

Abstract

Ecotourism is a tourism activity that places responsibility on preserving nature and is able to provide a positive economic impact and welfare to local communities. Ecotourism focuses on three things, namely sustainability of nature, providing economic benefits, and being accepted in the social and cultural life of society. Tuban Regency is one of the districts in East Java Province which is located on the north coast. Tuban Regency has aquatic ecotourism which attracts many tourists, for example Sendang Silowo Ecotourism which is in Mandirejo Village, Merakurak District. In this research, the research method used is a qualitative descriptive method, data collection uses field observation methods, interviews, and uses SWOT analysis which is presented in the form of a simple SWOT analysis table to find out how far along the development and management process of Sendang Silowo Ecotourism is. This analysis aims to maximize the potential that can be developed into sustainable aquatic ecotourism in accordance with ecotourism principles.

Keywords: *Aquatic, Ecotourism, Conservation, Sendang, Silowo*

Article History: 22-02-2024; Received in revised form 12-03-2024; Accepted 31-03-2023 Available online 31-03-2023

1. Introduction

Indonesia has thousands of islands with various potentials and attractions. The natural wealth in Indonesia is often utilized to create an ecotourism sector. Ecotourism becomes one of the tourism attractions for travelers. Ecotourism is a form of tourism activity that emphasizes responsibility for environmental preservation and is able to provide positive impacts on the economy and welfare of local communities (Fatmaningtyas et al., 2016). The concept of ecotourism aims to enhance sustainable tourism industry development and support environmental and cultural conservation. Ecotourism focuses on three main aspects:

environmental sustainability, providing economic benefits, and being acceptable in the social and cultural life of communities (Laras & Safitra, 2021).

The principles that ecotourism areas should adhere to include: 1) Minimizing negative impacts on the environment, social, and cultural aspects, 2) Building awareness and concern for culture and the environment among both local communities and visitors, 3) Providing positive experiences for tourists and local communities, 4) Beneficial financial distribution for nature conservation, 5) Beneficial financial distribution for local communities, and 6) Demonstrating high concern for political, environmental, and social

situations for the country as a policy stakeholder (Munawaroh et al., 2021). These principles should ideally be firmly held by ecotourism area managers and stakeholders involved in ecotourism. Ecotourism development involves planning, utilization, and control of ecotourism activities. Ecotourism development aims not only to preserve the environment but also to preserve the existing culture in the area, such as performing traditional rituals, celebrations, and others (Ketut et al., 2023).

Various promotional efforts are carried out by the government to attract tourists to visit ecotourism destinations in Indonesia. Ecotourism will invite people to enjoy traveling closer to nature, taking a break from routine work activities or urban density, and enjoying the serene atmosphere offered by nature (Nugroho, 2017). Tuban Regency is one of the regencies in East Java Province located on the northern coastal line. Judging from its position, Tuban Regency has many tourism potentials, including natural, artificial, cultural, and religious tourism (Sutedjo & Murtini, 2007). One of the ecotourism destinations that attracts the attention of the local community in Tuban is water-based ecotourism, such as Sendang Silowo Ecotourism located in Mandirejo Village, Merakurak District. This relatively new ecotourism destination needs attention to ensure its development and sustainability that benefit the people of Tuban, especially in Mandirejo Village, Merakurak District, Tuban Regency.

2. Material and Methods

The research method used in this study is qualitative descriptive method, data collection is done through field observations, interviews, and using SWOT analysis and presented in the form of a simple SWOT analysis table. The subjects of this research are the local community of the ecotourism area in Mandirejo Village,

Merakurak District, Tuban Regency. SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in an area. This analysis aims to identify internal and external factors that support or hinder the achievement of goals (Meilani, 2013).

3. Results and Discussion

Tuban Regency is located at the western end of East Java Province. Its location on the northern coast has led to the presence of many beach tourist destinations in Tuban. In this land of Ronggolawe, there are also other natural attractions such as caves, waterfalls, and natural baths. There is a new ecotourism destination that offers enjoyable scenery and activities called Sendang Silowo Ecotourism. Sendang Silowo Ecotourism is located in Mandirejo Village, which was established in 2019 but was temporarily halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, in December 2022, Sendang Silowo Ecotourism was reopened with a better concept and was officially inaugurated by the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) and the Department of Tourism. Mandirejo Village is one of the villages located in Merakurak District, Tuban Regency. According to the local community's story, the name Mandirejo comes from the words "mandi" (bathing) and "rejo" (crowded). Thus, when combined, it means a crowded bathing place. This village has a strategic location, as it is not far from the city center, with a distance of approximately 10 km from the city center.

Sendang Silowo also has a historical background. According to the elders of Mandirejo Village, "silowo" is a place where religious teachers used to meditate in the swamp. As for the focus of this tourist spot, it is a spring that has clear water directly from the source. Sendang Silowo offers a panorama similar to

Kalimantan. Visitors can swim, explore the spring by canoe or motorboat, and enjoy culinary delights made from sago.

Sendang Silowo Ecotourism focuses on water conservation, as the spring water at Sendang Silowo is still clean, clear, and fresh. Sendang Silowo Ecotourism is surrounded by hundreds of neatly arranged sago trees. The surrounding ecosystem, which is still well-preserved and lush, as well as the diversity of local flora and fauna, are also very captivating. Additionally, there is a breeding facility for small fish such as "wader" fish in ponds around Sendang Silowo. Managed by the Local Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) of the village, this ecotourism destination attracts visitors from both within and outside the region. The offered fees are also affordable, only Rp20,000 per person from parking tickets to canoe rides. The income from this ecotourism is certainly used to preserve the ecotourism area. Silowo Ecotourism has a significant impact on the local economy and landowners, as residents can take care of and sell food and drinks in the Sendang Silowo Ecotourism area.

The development potential of Sendang Silowo Ecotourism seems promising but not yet optimal. The activities offered at Sendang Silowo provide a water exploration experience, allowing tourists to enjoy the comfort and avoid the heat or high sea waves. However, many visitors from various regions come every weekend to enjoy the natural freshness of Sendang Silowo, resulting in long queues due to limited space and a relatively small number of canoes and floaters. Additionally, facilities such as bathrooms and prayer rooms are considered not clean enough by some tourists. Below is a simple SWOT analysis table for Sendang Silowo Ecotourism.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of the Potential of Sendang Silowo as Aquatic Ecotourism

Analysis	Description
Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sendang Silowo features clear water, allowing tourists to see the bottom of the water clearly. -Swimming and exploring the clear waters of Sendang Silowo offer a new experience for tourists. -The pristine environment surrounded by hundreds of sago palm trees adds to the comfort of tourists. -Away from the hustle and bustle of the city. -There are currently no ecotourism destinations offering similar activities in Tuban Regency.
Weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Land utilization is not fully optimized. -Supporting facilities are not well-organized and adequate. -Inadequate parking facilities lead to the use of land in front of local residents' houses.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tourists' interest in ecotourism attractions located away from urban areas. -The ecotourism resources in the surrounding areas can still be utilized to their fullest potential.
Threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Environmental degradation caused by tourists. -Losing competitiveness compared to other ecotourism destinations in terms of marketing.

The development of Sendang Silowo has followed the principles of ecotourism, which include conservation, education, tourism, economics, and community participation. This is

important to ensure environmental sustainability and provide economic benefits to the local community. The greater the potential of an ecotourism area, the greater the potential economic and social benefits for the local community. Sendang Silowo has the potential to become a significant source of income for the surrounding community.

SWOT analysis indicates that there are still potentials that can be maximized in the development of Sendang Silowo Ecotourism. This includes strengths such as natural beauty and participation of the local community, as well as opportunities such as increasing tourist visits. On the other hand, there are also challenges such as limited facilities and threats such as potential environmental damage. The role of the local government is crucial in maximizing the potential of ecotourism and ensuring sustainable development. Supporting policies and appropriate development concepts are needed to optimize the benefits of Sendang Silowo Ecotourism.

Cooperation between the local community and tourists is key to preserving conservation and sustainability at Sendang Silowo. Active participation from both parties will ensure environmental preservation and positive tourism experiences.

4. Conclusions

The Tuban Regency has the potential to be developed as an ecotourism destination. This can be seen from the numerous tourist attractions in Tuban Regency such as caves, waterfalls, and natural bathing spots. The development of Sendang Silowo Ecotourism has been carried out in accordance with the principles of ecotourism established by the government, which include conservation, education, tourism, economy, and community participation. The greater the potential of an ecotourism area, the greater the economic and social activities for the

local community. Based on the simple SWOT analysis table, Sendang Silowo Ecotourism still has a lot of potential that can be maximized. The role of the local government is crucial in maximizing each potential and projecting them into the future to create an integrated tourist attraction. A suitable development concept is needed to minimize any unwanted impacts on the development of Sendang Silowo Ecotourism. Collaboration between the local community and tourists is also essential to achieve conservation goals at Sendang Silowo.

References

- Fatmaningtyas, T., Renwari, D. M. H., & Beljai, M. 2016. Analisis Kelayakan Sumber Air Panas Sebagai Obyek Wisata Alam di Kabupaten Manokwari Selatan. *Jurnal Kehutanan Papuaasia*.
- Ketut, W., Wayan, J. I., Syaefa, M., & Muhammad, A. 2023. Pemanfaatan Objek Wisata Otak Aik Tojang Sebagai Ekowisata Berbasis Pengabdian Masyarakat Di Desa Lendang Nangka. *Jurnal Karya Pengabdian*, 5(2), 86-93
- Laras, G., A., & Safitra, L. 2021. Upaya Pemerintah Desa Dalam Meningkatkan Peran Masyarakat Menuju Desa Ekowisata (Studi Pada Desa Rindu Hati Kec. Taba Penanjung Kab.Bengkulu Tengah). *Jurnal IDEA*. <https://jogjaprovo.go.id/>
- Meilani, C. 2013. Analisis swot untuk menentukan strategi kompetitif. *Academia*.
- Munawaroh, A., Fitriana, C., Hasan, D. A., Listiana, D. A., Faridah, E. Z., Zakiyad, F., Mustafid, A., Karomah, L. R., & Faizah, U. N. 2021. Profil Telaga Ngebel Sebagai

Potensi Kawasan Ekowisata.

<https://prosiding.iainponorogo.ac.id/index.php/pisces>

Nugroho, D. S. (2017). Desa Wisata Sebagai Community Based Tourism. Upajawa Dewantara, 1(2), 68–82.
<https://doi.org/10.26460/mmud.v1i2.1974>

Sutedjo, A. dan Murtini, S. 2007. Geografi Pariwisata. Surabaya : UNESA University Press.