



**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OF TOURISM ENVIRONMENT  
CONSERVATION OF AIR MANIS BEACH PADANG,  
WEST SUMATRA, INDONESIA**

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**Abstract:**

This research aims to: (1) explore the role of public in preservation of Air Manis Beach tourism environment, (2) map and describe public awareness in preservation of the tourism environment, and (3) produce draft guidelines that can be used by public, local government, the environment agents and the tourism officers to collect and preserve the beach tourism environment. Public participation in preservation of the tourism environment is expected to keep the beach tourism object from being damaged and preserved for the sustainability of tourism. This research was conducted at Air Manis Beach Padang City. This type of research is Research and Development (R&D). In this first year, there are some procedures carried out in this research: (1) Formulation of the problem of the research, (2) Needs analysis, (3) Data collection and analysis of empirical findings, and (4) design draft guidelines for public participation in tourist areas, (5) doing a Focus Group Discussion (FGD), (6) revise the proposed guidelines, (7) validate the guidelines by experts, and (8) revise the guidelines by researchers. The technique of data collection was implemented by in-depth interviews with the subjects and informants of the research. To complete the data, the observation was conducted to the local community. To construct a guide to public participation, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted. The data is tested by means of triangulation extension of the involvement of researchers in the field, if the data found is still lacking. Triangulation of sources was conducted to the parties that understand the public participation for the sustainable environment in Air Manis Beach. Subjects and informants who participated in this research were determined in purposive sampling, involving tourism officers, and environment agents.

**Keywords:** community participation, preservation, tourism environment

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## 1. Introduction

The development in the State of Indonesia is carried out in all fields, and the purpose of development is to improve the welfare of the community, in this case in the context increasing the income of the public (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2019). The development sectors that really need to be developed at this time is the tourism sector. This is supported by the condition of Indonesia having beautiful tourism objects both natural objects and socio-cultural objects that are owned, thus enabling this sector to be used as a contributor in the economic development of society and government (Adinugraha, Sartika, & Kadarningsih, 2018; Dewi & Issundari, 2016; Setiawan, 2015). The potential objects and attractions of natural and cultural tourism that are owned by the State of Indonesia is a priceless gift from God. Indonesia has valuable biodiversity, uniqueness and authenticity of traditional culture, natural beauty and cultural heritage that can be optimally utilized for the welfare of society (Hakim, 2013; Sutoyo, 2010). This condition provides positive benefits, namely nature and cultural tourism activities can play a role in improving the welfare and income of the community (Febriana & Pangestuti, 2018; Risman, Wibhawa, & Fedryansyah, 2016).

West Sumatra is one of the regions with attractive natural beauty, as its regencies and cities own various tourist attractions. If managed well, they will contribute to foreign exchange gain and boost local economy. Muslim (2016) argues that if tourist attraction managed well, it will improve the local income of the region. Therefore, good management is a must following the vision of Padang city, as stipulated in Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) of 2019-2024 that is Padang as the educational city, trading and prosperous tourism, religious and cultural (Pemerintah Kota Padang, 2018). Furthermore, the Padang City Tourism and culture agents 2019-2024, aim at developing tourism to increase the contribution of the tourism sector to the economy.

One of the popular tourist sites in West Sumatra is Air Manis Beach renowned for its legend of Malin Kundang. This becomes one of the reasons why people need to raise awareness of environmental conservation. Some earlier research on tourism was conducted by Aini & Hayatunnufus (2019), Aini, Hayatunnufus, & Ismaniar (2019) and Aini, Ismaniar, & Hayatunnufus (2018) about the low awareness of souvenir sellers in Bukittingggi. Souvenir vendors have yet to show commitment to improving regional tourism. The issue is indicated by the poor service they provide for the local foreign tourists. A few problems can be seen such as offering merchandise at a high price and unable to keep orderliness, cleanliness, and beauty (K3) at the location. Further research was conducted by developing tourism awareness module for souvenir sellers and after the examination and implementation, the tourism awareness was improved.

Observation on July 25, 2019, found several environmental issues at Air Manis Beach, such as trash fills along the coastline, culinary and souvenir places are disorganized and the absence of beauty along the hill descent or garden to attract tourists. Based on the problems, this study aims to: (1) explore the role of public in the

preservation of the Air Manis beach tourism environment, (2) map and describe public awareness of environmental preservation, and (3) produce draft guidelines that can be used by the community to participate in preserving the tourist environment. This research becomes important for improving and developing Indonesia tourism in general and West Sumatra in particular. Detailed urgencies are described as follows: (1) suggestion for regional government in advancing the industry of tourism, (2) improving the role of community in eco-tourism conservation, (3) enhancing people's understanding about advantages of environmental conservation development for regional development, and avoiding disadvantages of procurement of tourism facility by protecting the environment.

Tourism is one of the industries affecting the social, and economic financial and environmental side of a country. Many countries are engaged in tourism as one of the infrastructural sectors, especially in developing country including Indonesia. As one of the biggest industries in the world, tourism is expected to improve the country's economic growth and raising the local welfare of the regional destination (Adinugraha et al., 2018; Dewi & Issundari, 2016; Febriana & Pangestuti, 2018; Setiawan, 2015). West Sumatra is targeted as one of Indonesia's main tourist attractions. The province has vast potential to be developed as a tourist site, for both natural and cultural tourist attractions (Ferniza, 2017; Ningrum & Kuswardani, 2017; Syahputra, Yuliana, & Kasmita, 2017; Umar, 2018). West Sumatra as a tourist destination is still afflicted by environmental issues. For instance, trash scattered around the site, culinary and souvenir vendors have their goods disorganized, and less attention on the environment (Ferniza, 2017; Fryonanda & Gatac, 2019; Hesna, Suraji, Istijono, Hidayat, & Ophyandri, 2017).

We need to protect the environment at the tourist sites, not only limited to permanent tourist objects but also all areas of the site including the road we take to the destination. The tourist site needs to be clean, organized, beautiful and equipped with an adequate facility. To ensure the hygiene and beauty of the environment of the tourist site, locals should be attentive to their environment. Public awareness of ecotourism conservation is needed to attract more tourists. Dinas Pariwisata Seni dan Budaya Sumatera Barat (2004), developed seven enchantments (*Sapta Pesona*): safe, orderly, clean, cool, beautiful, friendly and memorable. (1) Safe means a condition when tourists are in the sense of peace, protected and free from fear, threat, thievery, fraud and other things that make tourists uncomfortable. Safe also means to be free from disturbance like counterfeit goods from street vendors and ignorant and irresponsible acts. (2) Orderly reflects a condition of discipline in various aspects. It could be in terms of transportation; organized and swift public transportation. Another example is queue; standing in line when entering ATM room. Thus, every service is operated orderly, swiftly and professionally. (3) Clean means a waste-free environment. When trash scattered around the area, it covers the scenic view and causes disease. Such problems can decrease tourist visits to the destination. The cleaner environment will attract more tourists, make them be more comfortable and stay longer. The clean environment should involve all areas of the destination, be it in the hotels, prayer rooms, and restaurants. (4) Cool means a state

of peaceful atmosphere, indicated by a lovely environment, green view and cool air. Green environment can be implemented by planting flowers to adorn the area. Ornamental plants can be placed at each house and trees can be planted along the road. This way, tourists will find beautiful landscapes and be attracted to visit. (5) Beautiful is a state that radiates attraction in the eyes. In this context, beauty means the space decoration of hotels with colorful layout, organized shops and orderly parking lot. When space is organized and cleaned, it shows the beauty of the place which attracts tourists. (6) Friendly socio-cultural environment. It means a friendly culture such as welcoming the tourist with pleasantness and familiarity, helping the visitors with the information they need. Providing information also includes some explanation about traditional regulations, what things should be respected and what not. For example, dress code, traditional Minangkabau outfit for women is *baju kurung* and Muslim women wear attire that covers their body parts. Friendliness is the culture that adhered to most Indonesian's personalities and needs to be maintained. (7) Memorable means a good impression that visitors receive during the visit and the experience lasts long in their memory. Memories can be good or bad. The memories expected after tourist visits are the good ones and pleasant reminiscence at the heart. Several elements to generate the good impression of tourist attractions are: (a) traditional performing arts such as traditional dance, traditional vocal performance and traditional ceremony, (b) pleasant accommodations such as clean environment, satisfactory and professional service, as well as friendly welcome for visitors (c) regional special culinary with appetizing looks (d) numerous unique merchandise with good quality, portability and affordable price.

The seven enchantments (*Sapta Pesona*) 2004 explained above are implemented to attract tourists in tourist destinations. People of the region need to raise awareness of the seven enchantments to increase tourist visits in the region. Tourism involves an activity like traveling to find the pleasure of a place. Tourism gives significant influence to the destination that contributes to the growth of local income (Heriyantara, Kasmita, & Waryono, 2015). As stated by Fitriana (2017) that creative economy development in 2025 will be placed in the quality of government, education and tourism awareness of the agent of tourism development in Indonesia. In the future, the tourism industry will provide a positive impact on national economic growth. People in the community can sell and introduce the local culture to the tourists. For instance, Padang with its natural beauty has many attractions for tourists to visit. If beaches in Padang are managed effectively, local income will raise from selling culinary, accessories and local souvenirs. Public participation to conserve the environmental conservation is explained further. According to the Department of Education and Culture 1996, awareness derived from the word conscious which means realize, feel, know and understand. In other words, awareness means a state of realizing and understanding. Public awareness means people understand or perceive the ecotourism of Air Manis Padang Beach in pursuit of preserving the environment. Thus, people must protect the environment to be sustainable, orderly, clean, and beautiful. The tourism environment as stated by Sunaryo (2013) consists of the physical environment and social environment. The physical

environment includes natural environment and artificial environment. Natural environment is the natural condition of plants, animals, plants living around the area, while the artificial environment is maintaining K3 (cleanness, orderliness, and beauty). The social environment means interaction among humans around the area, including the traditional culture. In terms of socio-culture, it involves hospitality which is how the local community welcoming tourists, introducing traditional culture such as local culinary and traditional performing arts. Public awareness is essential in the implementation of sustainable development, especially in environmental conservation.

The development of ecotourism must involve community participation. Therefore, improving community participation in the management of tourism should be implemented and not simply taking profits of tourism potentials in West Sumatera. Several things executed through the act of community-based economy are, commercializing local products and culture to the visitors and providing environmental education for the community through guidance from the regional tourism office, and Department of Environment (DLH). Society is expected to own knowledge of preserving the tourism environment and maintain a sustainable environment. People need to be aware of the significance of advance tourists. Community participation is important in improving awareness of tourism conservation. For example, people who build lodging facilities or hotels need to ensure that the area is free from waste. This way, the area will attract more domestic and foreign visitors. Waste is not only a major hazard to water resources for daily use and also a threat to marine waters and coastal areas. For those in the community who build lodgings or houses in the plateau region must not cut down trees to avoid landslide and flood.

Public participation will arise from the direct benefits of the tourist area. To gain more benefits, the environment needs to be maintained. It is a reciprocal relationship of tourism activity from the management and environmental benefits. If we protect nature, we can gain benefits from sustainability. Similarly, if we protect the tourist site effectively, the local community will benefit economically (Mahdayani, 2009). We need to maintain a sustainable environment. Department of Education and Culture 2004 attempts efforts to attract more visitors (tourists) by implementing the seven enchantments (Sapta Pesona); safe, orderly, clean, cool, beautiful, friendly, and memorable. To foster public participation of the sustainability of the tourism environment, the community needs to be empowered. Community empowerment of the destination area through tourism business is one of the development models that has been gaining a lot of attention from various parties and will be an important agenda in the process of future tourism development.

Community Empowerment as stated by Adimihardja in Sunaryo (2013) is defined as a process that includes not only building the economy of the community, but also seeks to improve the dignity, respect, confidence and self-esteem, and cultural value of the region. According to Woodley (1993) *Local people, participation is a prerequisite for sustainable tourism*. The concept of empowerment is described to improve community participation in tourism activities and maintaining a sustainable environment. Three

components need to be implemented: (1) enabling setting; strengthening the situation of destination area by accommodating infrastructure to encourage the community creativity, (2) empowering local community; improving knowledge and local community skills through education, training and other forms of development, and (3) socio-political support; social and political support, as well as networking from local government, tourism agencies and other elements.

## **2. Method**

This research was conducted at Padang Air Manis beach. This type of research was Research and Development (R&D). According to Sugiyono (2014) development research is often done to develop learning models. The result of this study was the development of guidelines for increasing community participation in the preservation of the tourist environment (year 2)

In the first year of this study used a qualitative method with a view to finding a broad and in-depth about; (1) public participation in the preservation of the tourism environment, (2) public awareness of the preservation of the tourist environment, and (3) constructing a draft development of a tourism environment preservation guide. Qualitatively data processing according to Miles and Huberman in Moleong (2013) as follows: (1) data reduction by collecting data obtained in the field and sorting data from field notes, (2) data display that presents data based on the research focus that has been formulated, and (3) draw conclusions and verification

The procedures in this study are: (1) formulation of the problem of the research, (2) needs analysis, (3) data collection and analysis of empirical findings, and (4) design draft guidelines for public participation in tourist areas, (5) doing a Focus Group Discussion (FGD), (6) revise the proposed guidelines, (7) validate the guidelines by experts, and (8) revise the guidelines by researchers. Data collection techniques used in-depth interviews with subjects and research informants. To complete the data, observations were made on the community in the tourist environment. To construct a guide to community participation, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted. To test the validity of the data in this study by means of triangulation extension of the involvement of researchers in the field, if the data found is still lacking. Then triangulation of sources is carried out to parties who know the participation of the community in the tourist area. The subjects and informants in this study were the people in the tourist areas that were determined purposively, and the local government in this case was the Department of Tourism, and the Department of Environment of the City of Padang.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Public Awareness of Physical Environment Conservation

Public awareness of physical environmental conservation falls into two aspects. First, the preservation of the artificial physical environment involving orderliness, cleanliness, and beauty (K3). Orderliness is an effort to a system of regulation in the tourism environment. Orderliness can be seen from the culinary space of the area, like selling foods, beverages, clothes, accessories, and souvenirs. In this case, the researcher failed to find the orderliness of the vendors in the location. The research also found the absence of the arrangement of the visitor parking lot. Despite parking lot becomes one of the factors for visitor attraction; there was no available space for the visitors to park their vehicles in the location. Less orderliness of the parking lot will damage the beauty of the beach.

Furthermore, the issue in regards to a comfortable and beautiful environment is the garbage problem. From the observation, garbage scattered around the beach in the tourist sites. People have low awareness to dispose of garbage in the available disposal site. The location has no available trash cans provided by local government or culinary merchants. Local people took parts of citizen's land as the landfill to pile up garbage and final waste disposal. Some culinary vendors even burnt the garbage (materials that have been wasted and no longer needed). Burning waste is an action that can damage the sustainability of nature, causing air pollution, and the infection of the lung.

In association with public awareness to preserve the beauty of Air Manis Beach environment, the research found low awareness of the community to make the trading location more eye-pleasant. The place where people sell foods, beverages and accessories was not arranged neatly and orderly. Information obtained from the informant is that certain location is prohibited for business, but people still place their merchandise there. Moreover, the location lacked flower gardens that could actually make the site more beautiful. Neither flower garden nor potted flowers planted in the location to make the view more eye-catching. Along the Bridge of Siti Nurbaya Bridge would feel arid because of the absence of trees shade as no trees or plants planted along the way to the location. The research findings illustrate in this case the Department of Tourism and the Environment agents plan to make the road to the beautiful sweet water beach tourist sites so that tourists / visitors can enjoy the trip. It was further explained that the legendary Batu Malin Kundang attraction was indeed in the renovation phase including the facilities at the Air Manis Beach location.

Second, research findings related to public awareness on the preservation of the natural physical environment. Based on the research, the groundwater that utilized for wudu is adequate. The water source is streamed naturally from Padang Mountain. The public awareness in preserving the natural environment of flora and fauna is also maintained. Flora grows in Padang Mountain remains preserved. Sustainability of the natural environment in the area needs to be saved and avoided from irresponsible hands. Concerning air pollution, the observation found that Air Manis Beach is free from air pollution because the area is located behind Padang Mountain, which is far from factory,

busy road and city noise. The location is natural and comfortable to visit. Air Manis Beach natural sources such as sea and its habitats like fish and reefs are safe and preserved. The beach is also utilized by traditional fishermen to catch fish that fulfill the needs of the local community. Flora and fauna reside in Padang Mountain are still protected. The community conserves the forest, animals, and plants. The information obtained from the locals said that they realize living near the coastline which is prone to the possibility of high waves and tsunami. For this reason, they always protect nature, and the mountain area is a safe and strategic place for evacuation location of the tidal wave and tsunami threat.

### **3.2 Public Awareness of Cultural, Environment, Social and Economy Conservation**

Findings on public awareness of conserving the cultural environment, in terms of the cultural value of the community hospitality, people welcome visitors friendly and politely. Meanwhile, on the preservation of cultural value, the community is still lacking in socializing the local culinary and local products of Minangkabau. Findings showed that the introduction of cultural values in the form of traditional dance, music or play to entertain visitors is unavailable. There has no cultural value socialization about what things should visitors do and what not. There are no specific rules to enter the tourist site of Malin Kundang stone. The general regulation available is only for Air Manis Beach. Every individual pays IDR 5,000; parking lot for a four-wheeled vehicle is IDR. 10,000 and the two-wheel vehicle is IDR. 5,000.

Theoretically, as stated by Sunaryo (2013), public awareness of ecotourism conservation includes preservation of the natural physical environment, preservation of artificial physical environment and preservation of the cultural environment, social and economy. Further, in a set of target development, the focused sectors in tourism as written in the *Millennium Development Goals/MDGs*, which is declared internationally by the member countries of the United Nations, aim to: (a) eradicate poverty and hunger through tourism, (b) promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in tourism, (c) ensuring environmental sustainability in tourism, and (d) building global partnerships for development in tourism.

Furthermore, it was stated by experts in the field of tourism Alister Mathieson in Sunaryo (2013), tourism development prioritizes sustainability and environmentally friendly (Sustainable Tourism Development / STD). The main focus and value pursued in the STD is that tourism development is not only pursuing the growth of foreign exchange investment, but more importantly is preserving the environment, sustainable development and improving the welfare of the community around the destination.

### **3.3 Community Participation in the Conservation of the Coastal Tourism Environment**

Based on the results of research on public awareness of the artificial physical tourism environment, natural physical environment, and socio-cultural and economic environment. The research findings illustrate that public awareness of the artificial physical environment and cultural, social and economic environment is low. This is



obtained from the results of interviews with people who are in the tourist area, and the results of observations. Public awareness to maintain order, cleanliness and beauty (K3), is still low in trash scattered around Air Manis Beach, in culinary shops, and in places selling accessories. At the tourist site, order for parking of two-wheeled vehicles or four-wheeled vehicles has not been arranged and has not been organized. Then related to the beauty of the physical aspects of the artificial environment, the absence of flower gardens arranged by the community at the tourist sites or along the hilly road to Air Manis Beach, there are no flower gardens or flowers planted on the flowers, it will add to the beauty of the tourist area. The low awareness of the community to maintain K3 in the Air Manis beach tourism area, also shows the low participation of the community in preserving the tourism environment from the physical environment aspect. The findings related to the preservation of a low cultural, social and economic environment, this is evidenced by the lack of public awareness to preserve the existing culture including socializing culinary and accessories typical of Minangkabau culture.

Research findings related to the preservation of the natural physical tourism environment, can be categorized sufficiently, this can be proven that the community has been preserving the forests in Mount Padang, not cutting down trees carelessly, and protecting the flora and fauna in the forest. People have understood that they have made Mount Padang a place for evacuation in the event of a high wave of sea water/tsunami. The community can preserve water and utilize water from Mount Padang for daily needs and for the benefit of residents for tourists who embrace Islam. Regarding the preservation of the marine and coastal environment, the community maintains its preservation without damaging the ecosystem in the sea, maintaining coral reefs, fish and so on. The community catches fish for daily needs using simple equipment that does not damage the flora and fauna in the sea. The location of the Air Manis beach is still free from air pollution, because the Air Manis beach is located behind Mount Padang, the forest is still awake.

Based on the findings, the low awareness of the community to maintain the artificial physical environment directly can be stated that the community's participation in the preservation of the artificial physical environment is low, and the preservation of cultural values is also low. Then the community's participation in the preservation of the natural environment is sufficient, because the community has begun to understand the importance of protecting the forest so that it does not flood and as an evacuation site in the event of a wave of sea water. Based on the research findings in general the role of the community in the preservation of the tourism environment is in the low category, for this reason the researcher designed a draft Guidelines for Community Participation in the Conservation of the Tourism Environment in the City of Padang Water Beach, and it is hoped that this guide can be guided by the community, the Tourism Office and the Environmental Service Life to preserve the beach tourism environment. Completion of the development of this guide was carried out in the second year of 2021 research along with testing the validity, practicality and effectiveness of the guide.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the research findings that researchers conducted relating to public awareness of preserving the artificial physical environment is in the low category. As evidence, it can be stated that public awareness to maintain K3 order, cleanliness and beauty is still scattered around the tourist environment, people sell culinary, accessories have not been regulated, have not maintained beauty, including parking lots that are not neatly arranged. Furthermore, the findings of public awareness research in preserving the natural physical environment are in the sufficient category. Then the findings of public awareness research in preserving the cultural, social and economic environment are in the low category. The people selling culinary and accessories are not yet produced from Minangkabau products, in general the community sells more culinary ready-to-serve food, and does not yet sell varied food. In general, it can be concluded that the tourism industry environment of Air Manis Beach is not yet well-developed, and the location of the Air Manis Beach tourist attraction is in the renovation stage, including the renovation of the legendary Malin Kundang Stone, the lawless child, and the stone is now untreated and has begun to be damaged by coastal abrasion. Community participation in the preservation of the tourist environment is still low. If the attraction of the Air Manis Beach is well managed it will be able to bring income to the community and local government, because this location is famous for its legendary story of the lawless child Malin Kundang.

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