



Bali's Sustainable Tourism Practices: Efforts and Challenges

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Abstract. For decades, Bali has been the hot spot for international tourism attracting visitors from every corner of the globe. Although the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the surge of international travel, Bali continues to be the one of the most sought after destinations chosen by international visitors. Tourism activities all over the world have been greatly impacted by the pandemic and thus contributed to an unproductive state of economy towards countries that rely on tourism. This in turn has made governments rethink about tourism policies that could benefit stakeholders that are affected by the pandemic, which have been hotels, restaurants, society, and etc. One notable policy conducted by tourism authorities all over the world is to boost domestic tourism. For instance, the “Work From Bali” campaign initiated in 2021 has contributed to Bali’s economy and specifically to the local businesses that face hardship throughout the pandemic. With the decrease in Covid-19 cases, and hopefully the end of a pandemic status, the tourism industry in the upcoming years is designated to be the foundation of Indonesia’s economy. However, the tourism industry also comes with its liabilities such as overflow of tourists, cultural site conservation, nature conservation, safety and security of travelers, and many more. The answer to such liabilities is through the practice of Sustainable Tourism. Fortunately this concept has been asserted in the existing legal framework at the national and provincial levels while also taking into consideration international best practices. The focus of this paper is as follows: What are the sustainable tourism applications in the Province of Bali? and What are the governing laws that contribute to sustainable tourism practices in the Province of Bali? Methods used in this paper is normative legal research. The research approach uses the following methods: statute approach, and historical approach.

Keywords: Bali · Sustainable Tourism · Regulation

1 Introduction

The Bali Archipelago is a leading tourist destination known all over the world. Its popularity can be statistically noticed by the number of foreign tourists entering the Bali region in 2019 which reached 6,257,210 million people. The number is an increase from the previous year where it stands at 6,070,473 in 2018. The early days of the pandemic saw a drastic decrease in foreign tourist arrivals due to travel restrictions, foreign tourists who came directly to the Province of Bali in 2021 were recorded as low as 51 visits, down

99.9% compared to the previous year which was recorded at 1,069,473 visits (Central Statistics Body of Bali Province, 2021). Bali has been the hotspot for tourism ever since the first European tourists stepped foot in the 1920s. Its popularity was popularized by artists and scientists creating and diffusing the idea of Bali as a “paradise” among the Western world (Sylvine Pickel-Chevalier and Budarma Ketut, 2019). Bali’s tourism has been a significant contributor to national foreign exchange income accounting for 28,9% of the total 270 Trillion Rupiah in 2019 (Balipost Portal Berita, 2020). Being the center of tourism and economic activity, the flow of tourists poses great concern towards Bali’s state of sustainable tourism practices.

The issue then, is how will Bali in the upcoming years after the Pandemic can sustain its destination by means of formalizing sustainable tourism practice? The simple answer to such a question is by means of regulation and long-term coordination among government bodies at the national and regional levels. The success of tourism programs is a collaboration between regional officials and the community among tourist attraction destinations. Government programs at the regional level developed for tourism purposes must accommodate the cultural and socio-economic interests of local communities in tourist areas. This objective is in line with the definition of “Tourism” described in Law Number 10 Year 2009 concerning Tourism, stating that tourism activities have a “multidimensional and multidisciplinary nature that emerges as a manifestation of the needs of each person and country as well as interactions between tourists and local communities, fellow tourists, the Government, Regional Governments, and entrepreneurs”. Departing from this definition, tourism program planning is an important foundation in order to accommodate various interests by considering clear and measurable directions, specifically the ones aiming for sustainable tourism practices.

This paper will further discuss the following issues: What are the sustainable tourism applications in the Province of Bali? What are the governing laws that contribute to sustainable tourism practices in the Province of Bali?

2 Method

The methods in this paper serve to examine how the data is collected and how the data is analyzed, as well as how the results of the analysis will be implemented. This journal research is normative legal research. The research approach uses the following methods (Johnny Ibrahim, 2007): statute approach, and historical approach.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 The Sustainable Tourism Applications in the Province of Bali

3.1.1 Efforts

Historically, efforts towards sustainable tourism in the Bali region have started as early as 1987, this was in part due to the establishment of BPSD (Bali Sustainable Development Project) the same year when the sustainable development discourse was created (Sylvine Pickel-Chevalier and Budarma Ketut, 2019). Due to early investments by

local and national players and assistance from international organizations, Bali benefited from a growing interest in sustainability (Sylvine Pickel-Chevalier and Budarma Ketut, 2019). The expansion of the Ngurah Rai Bali Airport in 1969 and the opening of a new international resort in Nusa Dua in 1971, with the help of the World Bank and an international consultancy (SCETO of France), respectively, led to an increase in the number of domestic and foreign tourists visiting Bali, which sparked this early interest. The World Commission on Environment and Development defined the sustainability paradigm as the ability to maintain ecological integrity and diversity, to meet basic human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, to increase inter- and intra-generational equity (or reduce injustice), and to foster community involvement. These goals were all included in the BSDP, which was developed with Western partnerships (Sylvine Pickel-Chevalier and Budarma Ketut, 2019).

Aside from history, the spirit of maintaining sustainability lives to this present day. That paradigm has sustained due to Bali's local values and wisdom, the "Tri Hita Karana" that philosophize a "harmonious relationship with God, with other human beings and with the environment". The Balinese people cannot separate humanity from spirituality and the environment, according to this philosophy. The three spheres of the religious, human, and natural, including agricultural areas, must each be reflected at each destination. As a result, nature is profoundly ingrained in all of the Balinese people's activities. They are expected to appreciate nature as everything in Bali is said to have a spirit and purifying properties. Unsurprisingly, the underlying philosophy has been further codified and formalized in Bali's regional regulation. Furthermore, the concern for sustainable tourism has been envisioned by Bali's Governor missions. Tourism being listed as priority field number states that: "The direction of tourism development policies and programs is quality-oriented covering various aspects, namely: development of tourist destinations, tourism products and industries, tourism promotion and marketing, tourism facilities, tourism services, and foreign tourists coming to Bali. In the context of quality tourism, the targets of tourists are: tourists stay longer, tourists shop more, tourists care about the environment and culture, tourists empower local resources (local labor, local commodities, local products, local investment)".

The Province of Bali at a glance have regulated sustainable tourism practices through the; Bali Provincial Regulation Number 10 Year 2015 concerning Bali's Province Tourism Development Master Plan 2015–2029, Bali Provincial Regulation Number 5 Year 2020 concerning Standards for the Implementation of Balinese Cultural Tourism, and Bali Governor Regulation Number 28 Year 2020 concerning Bali Tourism Governance. The mentioned regulations have been practically inline with the Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals concluded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Despite there are no strict definition regarding sustainable tourism, UNDP defines it as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (United Nations Development Program, 2018). The role of regulations will be further discussed in Sect. 3.2.

3.1.2 Challenges

Poorly managed tourism strategies can highly contribute to the deterioration of our vital cultural assets, the degradation of the environment, and the disruption of social institutions. Therefore, the entire tourism industry - including policymakers, businesses, tourists, and other tourism stakeholders - as well as the development community at large, will need to work together to promote responsible and sustainable tourism around the world in order to maximize its positive effects and mitigate its potential risks. The answer to that challenge have in fact been prepared for by Law Number 10 Year 2009 concerning tourism, which states that tourism activities have a “multidimensional and multidisciplinary nature that emerges as a manifestation of the needs of each person and country as well as interactions between tourists and local communities, fellow tourists, the government, regional governments, and entrepreneurs”.

Regulatory enforcement in Indonesia has been a long issue and debate among academics, research has shown that pursuing sustainable tourism systematically needs the support of the local community. In a study titled “Sustainable Tourism in Serangan Village Bali, Indonesia” conducted by I Gede Putra Nugraha, Made Antara, Made Budiarsa, and Syamsul Alam Patursi concluded that “The role of the government does not significantly influence the quality of destinations in the Serangan Village. Community participation has a positive and significant effect on the quality of destinations in Serangan Village” (I Gede Putra Nugraha, Made Antara, Made Budiarsa, and Syamsul Alam Patursi, 2020). The authors further mentioned that social capital has a favorable and considerable impact on Serangan Village’s destinations’ quality. This implies that the Serangan Village’s tourism attractions are higher when one’s social capital infrastructure is built. This demonstrates how social capital can be expressed as a principal motive to the standard of tourist attractions in Serangan Village as mentioned by the authors.

The Province of Bali has been the most attended destination across Indonesia. The central government and regional government take great concern in making Bali’s existence stand out as a tourism destination. That statement has been supported by the Work From Bali program, an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy in 2021 which aims to revive the economic wheels of the island’s tourism sector during the Pandemic. The challenge towards maintaining sustainability will then be more present in the coming years after the pandemic. The government both in central and regional level will have to fully coordinate issues regarding the flow of local and national tourists, waste management, environmental security for sacred destinations, and equipping the local economy with equal opportunities.

3.2 The Governing Laws that Contribute to Sustainable Tourism Practices in the Province of Bali

The government regulations that support the implementation of sustainable tourism in Bali Province are grouped according to their levels as follows.

3.2.1 National Level Regulation

Talking about tourism, then we will not be separated from cultural and economic aspects. In this regard, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia has given several

mandates, including in Article 32 concerning culture, and also Article 33 concerning the economy. The two articles are the basis for the implementation of sustainable tourism governance.

To realize all things mandated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 10 Year 2009 concerning Tourism was formed which became the basic reference regarding tourism. According to Article 1 Number 3 of this law: "Tourism is a wide variety of tourist activities and is supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, entrepreneurs, governments, and local governments". Therefore, in building and developing tourism cannot be separated from the elements of society, entrepreneurs, and the government. In addition, tourism governance must also be implemented in a sustainable manner. This is based on Article 2 Letter h of this law which states that one of the principles of tourism is the principle of sustainability.

The implementation of sustainable tourism governance requires not only basic regulations, but also implementing regulations. For this reason, there are several implementing regulations such as Government Regulations and Regulations of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, both of which are implementing regulations at the national level.

In government regulations, there are several sustainable tourism regulations, one of which is: Government Regulation Number 50 Year 2011 concerning the National Equality Development Master Plan for 2010–2025. The establishment of this government regulation is an implementing regulation caused by the provisions of Article 9 Paragraph (1) of Law Number 10 Year 2009 concerning Tourism. The regulation, which discusses in more detail about sustainable tourism, provides an understanding in Article 2 of this rule that the development of national tourism includes: tourism destinations, tourism marketing, tourism industry, and tourism institutions. Based on this regulation, it is also known as the division of areas for the development of national tourism, where the divisions include:

a. *National Tourism Destinations*

National Tourism Destinations are Tourism Destinations on a national scale. National Tourism Destinations are divided into 50 regions, where Bali Province is included in the 23rd group of regions, namely the National Tourism Destinations of Bali – Nusa Lembongan. The region has 10 National Tourism Development Areas.

b. *National Tourism Strategic Area*

National Tourism Strategic Areas are areas that have the main function of tourism or have the potential for the development of national tourism that have an important influence in one or more aspects, such as economic, social and cultural growth, natural resource empowerment, environmental carrying capacity, and defense and security. In this government regulation, the national tourism strategic area consists of 88 regions. Bali Province is recorded to have 10 areas out of the 88 regions, including:

- 1) Kuta – Sanur – Nusa Dua;
- 2) Bali Utara/Singaraja;
- 3) Karangasem – Amuk;
- 4) Menjangan – Pemuteran;

- 5) Taman Nasional Bali Barat;
- 6) Tulamben – Amed;
- 7) Bedugul;
- 8) Nusa Penida;
- 9) Ubud; and
- 10) Besakih – Gunung Agung.

c. *National Tourism Development Area*

Bali Province which is included in the Bali – Nusa Lembongan National Tourism Destination has the following National Tourism Development Areas:

- 1) Bali Utara/Singaraja;
- 2) Menjangan – Pemuteran;
- 3) Taman Nasional Bali Barat;
- 4) Bedugul;
- 5) Kuta – Sanur – Nusa Dua;
- 6) Nusa Penida;
- 7) Ubud;
- 8) Kintamani – Danau Batur;
- 9) Kintamani – Danau Batur; and
- 10) Tulamben – Amed.

At the central or national level, there is also a Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy that supports the existence of sustainable tourism governance, in this case in Bali Province. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy issued Ministerial Regulation Number 13 of 2020 concerning Hygiene, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability Standards and Certification in the Tourism Sector during the Covid-19 Pandemic Handling Period. The existence of this regulation, one of which aims to restore the trust of the domestic and international community to travel safely, comfortably, and healthily as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on this, this rule is used as a guarantee to tourists and the public that the products and services provided have met the dimensions of cleanliness, health, safety, and environmental sustainability.

3.2.2 Regional Regulations

This regional regulation is a regulation issued by the Local Government that has a direct impact on the area concerned based on the background and culture of each region. Bali Province is a province that has supporting facilities in the form of government regulations that focus on sustainable tourism governance. Some of these Regional Regulations are in the form of Regional Regulations and also Governor's Regulations.

One of the regional regulations is Regional Regulation Number 10 Year 2015 concerning the Master Plan for the Development of Tourism in Bali Province 2015–2029. This tourism development master plan aims to be a guideline for tourism development in order to encourage equitable distribution of business opportunities and obtain benefits

and be able to face the challenges of changing local, national, and global life to increase the prosperity and welfare of the people in Bali Province.

The purpose of sustainable tourism in Bali Province is contained in Article 7 of this Regional Regulation which states that: "... *realization of quality and sustainable cultural tourism and competitiveness based on Tri Hita Karana which is able to encourage regional development and the welfare of the people*".

Based on the above, it can be seen that Bali Province is a province that emphasizes sustainable tourism in the field of culture, where in Article 1 Number 11 of this Government Regulation it is explained that: "*Balinese Cultural Tourism is Balinese tourism based on Balinese culture which is imbued with Hinduism and the Tri Hita Karana philosophy as the main potential by using tourism as a vehicle for its actualization, so that a dynamic mutual relationship between tourism and culture is realized which makes the two develop synergistically, harmoniously and sustainably to be able to provide welfare to the community, cultural and environmental sustainability*". So that in order to run sustainable tourism in the field of culture, Regional Regulation Number 5 Year 2020 concerning Standards for the Implementation of Balinese Cultural Tourism was also issued.

The last one is the existence of Governor Regulation Number 28 Year 2020 concerning Bali Tourism Governance which basically: Tourism business owners in Bali are required by government regulations to offer competitive, high-quality, and ecologically responsible services. Tourism firms must strengthen local resources in terms of management, labor, commodities, products, and investment in addition to services. The provisions outlined in this rule also cover spiritual tourism attractions such as self-purification (*pengelukan*), *tapa*, *brata*, *yoga*, *meditation*, *dharmayatra*, and *tirtayatra*. In order to improve the welfare of the community, organizers and participants in entertainment and recreational tourism activities, such as arts, sports, outdoor adventures, parks, nightlife, games, and massage parlors, must respect cultural values, traditions, customs, local wisdom, and environmental considerations.

4 Conclusion

Based on the discussion that has been submitted, this study has the following conclusions: Regulatory products toward Bali's sustainable tourism practices are at par with international best practices. Its plans have been well articulated at the regional level even going further with codifying and formalizing the values that are close with the Balinese community. Furthermore, the effort to practice sustainable tourism has been historically carried out with full support of the local community and government.

Bali should then be considered as a model province to be considered by other provinces in formulating sustainable tourism goals. However, further applying the exact models of regulation to other provinces will be carried out in another research opportunity since every region has its own local wisdom and political practices that need to be considered.

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