



Analysis of Wildlife Tourism and Community Based Tourism (Case Study of Sungsang IV Village Banyuasin District South Sumatra Province, Indonesia)

Sri Mariati^{1*}, Fetty Asmaniaty¹, Myrza Rahmanita¹

¹Trisakti Institute of Tourism, Jakarta, Indonesia

srimaryati@iptrisakti.ac.id
fettyasmaniaty@iptrisakti.ac.id
myrzarahmanita@iptrisakti.ac.id

*Corresponding author: srimaryati@iptrisakti.ac.id

Abstract: Sungsang IV Village is located in the Sembilang National Park buffer zone, where Sembilang National Park is the largest wetland in Western Indonesia (83,447 ha), a stopover for migrating birds from Russia to Australia and habitat for many critically endangered species such as the Sumatran tiger (*Pantheratigris sumatrae*), clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*), sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*), Dolphin without a dorsal fin (*Neophocaena phocaenoides*), Estuarine crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), and more than 32 species of water birds, including species whose population status is vulnerable (vulnerable) in the world. This study aims to analyze the potential of wildlife as a tourist attraction in Sungsang Village. This study uses a qualitative approach with a survey research design. To identify and analyze the potential for wildlife tourism around the Sembilang National Park buffer zone, an inventory was carried out through direct observation and interviews with selected respondents in the tourism management environment in Sungsang IV Village, which includes tourism managers and local communities, sampling using purposive sampling. Data from respondents' responses in this study will be analyzed using a spatial approach with a Geographic Information System (GIS) using ArcGIS software to determine the potential for community-based wildlife tourism in Sungsang IV Village, Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province. The results showed that the existence of wildlife such as water birds, eagles, monitor lizards, and migratory birds became one of the tourist attractions that became the branding of Sungsang Tourism Village and the management of this tour was managed by the community, thereby increasing the company's interest in helping develop it through CSR funds. The uniqueness of the wildlife attractions has made Sungsang Village develop quickly and become one of 75 Indonesian Tourism Villages.

Keywords: Wild Tourism, Community, Attraction, Sustainable Tourism.

1. Introduction

In the last decade, the tourism sector has been recognized as the world's largest industry and is seen as one of the main catalysts in the development of a country. This is reflected in the UNWTO annual report (United National World Tourism Organization, 2013), that the growth of the global tourism industry in 2012-2013 increased by 5%, or 1,079 billion USD to 1,159 billion USD. The condition of world tourism development has increased, to be precise since 1995-2013 the number of international tourist arrivals in the world has reached 704 million tourists. In 2022, the Travel & Tourism sector contributed 7.6% to global GDP, an increase of 22% from 2021 and only 23% below 2019 levels (Travel & Tourism Economic Impact; World Travel & Tourism Council).

Behind this fantastic number, there are actually interesting things, especially for developing countries which still occupy the position of being the host. It is no secret that according to some people, tourism has impacts and implications that lead to "neo-colonization" and environmental damage. Mistakes in ego-sectoral planning are one of the factors that cause polarization of visions of tourism development and development. At least as a driving force in a development, the tourism sector must be able to provide real and simultaneous welfare to the local community, besides that it must be able to protect the existence of local wisdom and/or the socio-cultural values of the people they have. In the context of the environment, tourism must be able to encourage a movement that cares for nature and loves the environment as called for by the Summit on sustainable tourism development which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

As one of the areas considered to have great potential to be developed as a tourist destination is the Berbak Sembilang National Park area. In addition to the completeness of natural resources, as recently designated as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in July 2018 the other day, the uniqueness of human resources with various tourism collections owned by local communities is also considered to have great potential for optimizing their utilization. Even though there is an abundance of potential tourism resources in the TNBS area and supporting villages, it will be meaningless if the misalignment of the tourism development vision which is also accompanied by weak human resource capacity is not able to optimize the attraction of tourism resources.

The strategic location of the buffer village of Berbak Sembilang National Park consists of five villages, namely Marga Sungsang Village, Sungsang 1, Sungsang 2, Sungsang 3, and Sungsang 4 Village. Where these five villages are the oldest fishing villages in South Sumatra Province which have been established in the past XVII century.

Therefore, the Belantara Foundation formed a consortium with other parties such as the Trisakti Tourism Institute, the Banyuasin Regency Government, the community and other NGOs, to preserve and protect the natural capital in Berbak Sembilang National Park. In addition, by optimizing revenue generated from ecotourism for the community. Make sure that the National Park buffer zone will be secured and finances will be sustainably established.

The development of tourism which is an instrument so that local people in Sungsang Village can protect the environment with two things, namely mass tourism: to go to Sungsang Village with a variety of tourism, and special interest tourism for tourism to the Sembilangnya National Park by looking at the potential for natural beauty. This is in accordance with the opinion of Smith and Eadington (1992), stating that there are two types of tourism, namely mass and alternative tourism. Mass tourism is characterized by large numbers of people seeking cultural holidays in popular destinations, whereas alternative tourism, also known as special interest tourism or responsible tourism, is usually defined as alternative forms of tourism that emphasize contact and understanding of ways of life, local population and natural environment.

Wildlife tourism is often promoted as a mechanism for raising the socioeconomic value of wildlife as well as enhancing awareness of and support for conservation (Rizzolo, 2017). Risks associated with wildlife tourism include changes in the natural behavior of animals, infrastructure growth, depletion of natural resources, trade in wildlife to meet tourists' demand for souvenirs or live animal entertainment, and normalization of the use of captive wild animals for human entertainment (Rizzolo, 2021). Tourists are generally unable to accurately assess the risks associated with their actions. Although a large number of wildlife tourism attractions have substantial and negative effects on individual animals and endangered species, tourist perceptions of these places tend to underestimate the environmental welfare and their animal impacts (Moorhouse et al., 2015).

Seemingly insignificant behavior can have dramatic cumulative effects on wildlife when carried out by many tourists over time. Posing with wild animals for "selfies" (photos where the self is the main focus) may seem benign, but the growth of selfie safaris has contributed to extensive hunting of wildlife, animal suffering, and wildlife deaths, often in violation of environmental protection laws and animals (World Animal Protection, 2017). Even businesses labeled as environmentally friendly, such as dolphin encounters, often ignore environmental regulations (Hooper et al., 2021). Documentation of the impacts of tourism on wildlife reinforces the importance of understanding and managing the impacts of "non-consumptive" tourism (Christiansen & Lusseau, 2015; Rizzolo, 2020). Furthermore, the limited capacity of tourists to self-select wildlife tourism sites that benefit the environment (Moorhouse et al., 2016) indicates the need for empirical research on the impacts of various forms of wildlife tourism to inform wildlife tourism policy.

The development of the Tourism Village in Sungsang IV with the potential for wild animals such as migratory birds coming from Serbia and going to Australia, millions of wild birds have become an attraction and become an annual event in this area to bring in both national and international tourists. For this reason, it is necessary to carry out an analysis of wildlife and community-based tourism in Sungsang IV Village, Banyuasin District, Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province.

2. Methodology

In order to identify and analyze the potential for wildlife tourism around the Sembilang National Park buffer zone, an inventory was carried out through direct observation and interviews with selected respondents in the tourism management environment in Sungsang IV Village, which includes tourism managers and local communities, sampling using purposive sampling. Data obtained from respondents' responses in this study will be analyzed using a spatial approach and description analysis.

This study uses a qualitative approach, with a survey research design. Data obtained from respondents' responses in this study will be analyzed using a spatial approach with a Geographic Information System (GIS) using ArcGIS software to determine the potential for community-based wildlife tourism in Sungsang IV Village, Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province.

3. Results and Discussion

Sungsang IV Village is one of the villages in the Banyuasin II Sub District, with an area of 188,750 ha. The boundaries of the Sungsang IV Village area include (1) To the North: Kuala Banyuasin; (2) To the West: Sei. Ants and Umbrella Island; (3) To the South: Sungsang III Village; (4) To the East: Tanah Choose Village and the Bangka Strait. Meanwhile, Dusun Sei Sembilang is a hamlet which is administratively part of Sungsang IV Village, Banyuasin II sub-district, Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province. The location of the Dusun Sembilang area is far apart from the area of Sungsang IV Village. The area of Dusun Sei Sembilang is around 35 hectares or around 7500 m². Sembilang Hamlet has a height of 15 meters above sea level and has the following

settlement boundaries: (1) To the North: Sanjang River (Berk Sembilang National Park); (2) To the West: Palu Cabe River, Bangka Strait; (3) To the south: Simpang Satu River (Berk Sembilang National Park); (4) To East: Alang Gantang (Berk Sembilang National Park).

The main transportation in Sungsang IV Village consists of speedboats, cars, and tricycles (especially in the village area). In this village, clean water sources are rainwater, drilled wells, and rivers. Disturbance to wild animals such as the Sumatran tiger occurred in 2003 when this tiger entered the village and attacked one resident. The population of Sungsang IV Village is heterogeneous. The monograph data for Sungsang IV Village in 2019 shows that the total population of Sungsang IV Village is 5,886, of which 2,864 are male and 3,022 are female, with 1,471 household heads. As for the area of origin of the residents of Sungsang Village, Banyuasin II District, namely the natives of Sungsang, residents who come from Bugis, residents who come from Java, residents who come from Riau and residents who come from Ogan and Komerang.

Meanwhile, Sembilang IV and V hamlets (which are in Sungsang IV Village, Banyuasin II District, Banyuasin Regency) are fishermen's settlements which are thought to have existed since 1979. Most of the Dusun residents come from the indigenous people of the Sungsang clan. Almost all the houses in the Sembilang Hamlet settlement are above the water. Based on the narrative of the Head of Hamlet 4 and Head of Hamlet 5, the population of Dusun Sei Sembilang is 640 men and 700 women, with a total of 1,340 people or 372 Heads of Families (Bappedalitbang, 2017).

Most of the population in Sungsang Village and Sei Sembilang Hamlet are indigenous people from the Breech Tribe. The language used in everyday life is breech and Palembang. There is no difference in the meaning of the two languages, the only difference is the basis of the dialect, where breech uses the particle "E" while Palembang uses the particle "O". Communities generally live on stilt houses or stilts on the banks of the river (river houses), and also partly in land areas (mangrove areas) in Berk Sembilang National Park. Especially for houses that stand on the river coast, the materials for the house are made of Nibung (a local tree) as the caganya (a local term meaning pillar), mangroves and nipa palm as the walls, and corrugated iron and or also nipa as the roof. If the water is receding, the settlement will be higher, and if the water is high, the settlement will be lower (almost parallel to the water). In terms of cultural rituals, traditions that are still maintained and carried out by the community are traditions of birth, marriage, death, and others.

Peat swamp forests play a very important role in preventing global warming and extreme climate change with their ability to store the world's carbon so that it is not released into the atmosphere and causes the greenhouse effect. However, one thing must be of particular concern to stakeholders, namely the risk factor of a peat swamp park. Peat swamp forest is a wetland ecosystem that is prone to fire hazards. With part of its territory in the form of peat swamp forest, the Berk Sembilang National Park is also inseparable from this one risk. The last fire in Berk Sembilang National Park that occurred in October 2019 burned around 400 hectares of peat swamp forest. Developing the Berk Sembilang National Park as a tourist destination of course requires some concrete actions, including sustainable efforts in terms of preventing forest fires, which can endanger all the flora and fauna in it, which is one of the tourist attractions owned by the Berk Sembilang National Park and also not an accident.

The problem of peat swamp forest fires is not recent, in fact, since 1997, several projects have been implemented that aim to solve the problem of peat swamp forest fires, including the ISDP Berk Jambi Project (1997–2000) The JICA Project in Sei Rambut Village, Berk (1997–2000), the GEF Berk Sembilang Project (2000–2004) and the CCFPI-CIDA Berk Sembilang Project (2002–2005). From the various projects mentioned above, several strategies for handling peat swamp forests have been launched, including closing canals, forest rehabilitation, reviewing existing policies, temporary logging moratoriums, creating alternative livelihoods, establishing industrial forest plantations, environmental awareness campaigns, eradicating illegal logging, etc. Communities around the Berk Sembilang National Park mostly work as farmers and fishermen. Community activities, both as farmers and fishermen, are often carried out within the Berk Sembilang National Park area. Various efforts, including coaching the community, especially fishermen, who carry out livelihood activities in the National Park area, have been carried out to prevent things such as forest fires caused by humans inside.

The Berk Sembilang National Park area presents a unique opportunity to address the challenges associated with peat swamp forests, particularly by exploring alternative livelihoods. One such strategy involves harnessing the potential of tourism to create alternative sources of income for local communities. A symbiotic relationship can be established by empowering local residents to take on roles as tourism workers or service providers within the national park. This is where the concept of community-based tourism comes into play, emphasizing the community's ability to develop and manage tourism enterprises within their own surroundings. Beyond community-based tourism, another promising avenue lies in wildlife tourism, focusing on the Sumatran tiger. As the sole remaining Indonesian tiger species following the extinction of the Javan tiger and Bali tiger, the Sumatran tiger's survival is a matter of great concern, with an estimated population as low as 400 individuals. The efforts to rehabilitate the forest within Berk Sembilang National Park offer hope for the Sumatran tiger's well-being and reproduction. From a tourism perspective, there is a need to design packages that cater to tourists interested in gaining a closer understanding of the Sumatran tiger. However, it is imperative that these tourism services actively contribute to preserving the Sumatran tiger's natural habitat. This entails safeguarding Berk Sembilang National

Park against potential harm stemming from various human activities. Additionally, addressing Sumatran tiger poaching is paramount, which may involve captive breeding programs and taking legal action against poachers. Such initiatives require collaboration among all stakeholders and careful decision-making, as they demand not only attention but also financial support for successful implementation. The collective efforts of the community, government, and various organizations are crucial in safeguarding both the Sumatran tiger and the pristine natural environment of Berbak Sembilang National Park.

Apart from that, other wildlife tours, namely viewing migratory birds, the process of migrating water birds from areas as far as Siberia in certain months every year can also become other wildlife tourism attractions. Moreover, Berbak Sembilang National Park is a habitat for the most complex water bird community in the world. If developed and managed properly, the process of migrating waterbirds and seeing native waterbirds from the Kelindan area, environmental conservation efforts, especially from the risk of forest fires, and the development of community-based tourism and wildlife tourism in the local Berbak Sembilang 5 National Park in their immediate habitat, will definitely attract many tourists, especially for bird watchers. When the local community is actively involved in developing community-based tourism and wildlife tourism, it is hoped that the community will also actively participate in conserving the biodiversity in their area, including the peat swamp forest within the Berbak Sembilang National Park. Peat swamp forests have many benefits. Aside from being a carbon sink, peat swamp forests can also function as agricultural land and educational sites. With this, it is very clear that efforts to conserve biodiversity, especially the ongoing efforts of many parties to prevent forest fires, have a mutually beneficial relationship. Community-based tourism businesses will bring economic benefits to the community as well as enable them to participate in preserving the native flora and fauna habitat, which is the main attraction of wildlife tourism. Efforts to conserve biodiversity will also increase the number of flora and fauna, which will attract both community-based tourism and wildlife tourism. Through this research, the authors also want to provide suggestions for further research, namely the development of clean air tourism. With more and more cities in the world having very high levels of pollution, places with fresh air have the opportunity to become the choice of tourists.

The term wildlife tourism covers a wide range of activities such as observing and photographing wildlife, using wildlife for entertainment (e.g. circus shows), wildlife-based transportation (e.g. elephant riding), hunting and fishing, visiting zoos and aquariums, and visiting protected areas or asylum (Newsome et al., 2005). Wildlife tourism is often conceptualized with three dimensions. First, wildlife tourism can occur in captive, semi-captive, or wild environments (Tisdell & Wilson, 2012). Second, wildlife tourism can emphasize conservation or entertainment (Shackley, 1996). Although most animal tourism sites incorporate aspects of both conservation and entertainment, they differ in the relative emphasis they place on these two objectives (Fennell, 2012). Third, wildlife tourism has traditionally been conceptualized as consumptive or non-consumptive. Non-consumptive wildlife tourism is defined as human recreation that does not permanently remove or change wildlife, while consumptive tourism is traditionally defined as activities that result in the death of wildlife, such as hunting, trapping, and fishing (Duffus & Dearden, 1990). However, there is increasing concern about the detrimental effects for conservation and animal welfare of live animal encounters such as elephant rides and “selfie safaris” where tourists pose with captured or baited wildlife (World Animal Protection, 2017).

The Sei Sembilang area, consisting mostly of mangrove areas with many river mouths and extensive mud flats, is a fertile coastal area and rich in biodiversity. This area is the habitat for a number of important endangered species, such as the Sumatran tiger (*Pantheratigris sumatrae*), Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*), Sun Bear (*Helarctos malayanus*), Dolphin without dorsal fin (*Neophocaena phocaenoides*), Estuarine Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), and more than 32 species of Birds Water, including species whose population status is vulnerable in the world. The level of wildlife tourism visits starting in 2017 has been developed until now, the number of visits has increased from 300 people to 1000 tourists (Interview with the Head of Sungsang Village IV August 18, 2023). Per week, 50-100 people in 2023, a sharp increase post-covid (Interview with the Head of Sungsang Village IV August 18, 2023). The following is the potential for wildlife tourism in the Sungsang IV Village Area:

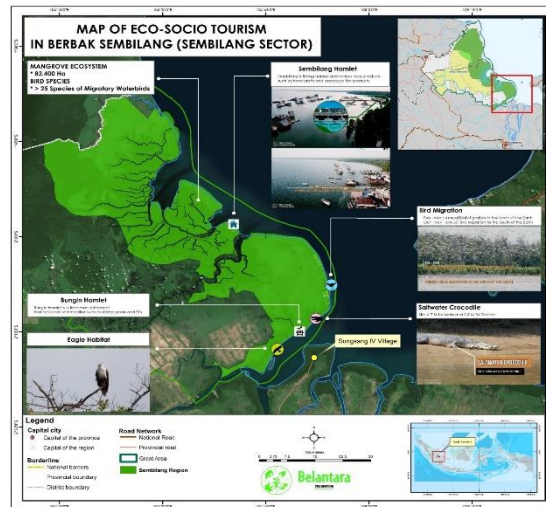


Fig 1. Map of socio and eco tourism in Berbak Sembilang NP.

Source: belantara-foundation-berbak-sembilang-ecotourism-program-resource.pdf.

Through community-based tourism, local communities are involved in tourism development by involving the community in decision making and benefit sharing (Garrod et al., 2001). Community involvement in decision-making also means providing opportunities for local communities to express their hopes, wishes, and concerns about tourism development, which also become input into the tourism product planning process (Gunn & Var, 2002). Meanwhile, profit-sharing means giving local people the right to economic benefits and a better quality of life.

4. Conclusion

In Sungsang IV Village, Banyuasin II District, Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province, there is a unique opportunity to cultivate both wildlife tourism and community-based tourism. The key lies in harnessing the abundant natural resources found within the Berbak Sembilang National Park, which holds immense potential as a thriving tourist destination. The park's allure stems from its rich biodiversity, encompassing a plethora of flora and fauna, including the protected Sumatran tiger. Additionally, the park hosts the annual migration of water birds from Siberia during certain months, adding to its appeal. Furthermore, the presence of endemic vegetation unique to Sumatran forests adds to the park's charm. By capitalizing on these natural treasures, tourism can serve as a catalyst for preserving and conserving Berbak Sembilang National Park while simultaneously creating alternative livelihoods for the local community, enhancing their quality of life. The active engagement of the community is pivotal in achieving this dual objective, underscoring the importance of community-based tourism as a complementary approach alongside wildlife tourism. This approach ensures that the benefits derived from tourism are widely distributed among the local populace. Moreover, the park's peat swamp forests, which have the capacity to sequester carbon and contribute to mitigating climate change, can serve as an additional attraction for a distinct form of tourism – clean air tourism. This intriguing prospect warrants further exploration in future research endeavors. Overall, this holistic approach to tourism development in Sungsang IV Village not only promises economic benefits but also holds the potential to safeguard the environment, promote biodiversity conservation, and combat climate change.

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