



# Tourism Policy in the Situation of Public Spatial Conflict in Bintan Regency

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**Abstract .** Tourism has become an important sector in the development of regional economic corridors in Bintan Regency, Indonesia. This district is famous for its attractive tourism destinations, especially Lagoi Tourism and Kampung Baru. However, this tourism development also faces serious challenges related to public space conflicts. This research aims to analyze existing tourism policies and how these policies influence public space conflicts in Bintan Regency, especially in Lagoi Tourism and Kampung Baru. The research method used is qualitative by conducting policy analysis, interviews with stakeholders, and literature studies. The results of the study show that tourism policy in Bintan Regency has played an important role in the growth of the tourism industry. However, this policy has also triggered public space conflicts, especially related to changes in land use, environmental impacts, and local community participation in decision making. This conflict involves various stakeholders, such as local government, developers, local communities, and tourists. The economic corridor seems to be a justification for all government actions in vacating or relocating land that has been settled by citizens. A number of government programs that fall into this category are MP3EI, MIFE, PSN, SEZ and so on. Through the decision of the governor of Riau in 1992, PT. Buana Mega Wisata succeeded in gaining control of around 23,000 hectares of land with ownership for 80 years. This research aims to elaborate on the alignment of the Bintan district government in fulfilling citizenship rights in terms of access to public needs for 42 households that are still in the special economic zone.

**Keywords:** CSR, SDGs, Mining Industry, Quality Education

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism policy is an effort directed at advancing the tourism sector in a country or region with the aim of increasing economic growth, creating jobs, and improving the image and attractiveness of tourist destinations. Tourism has been recognized as a sector that has great potential in supporting the economic growth of a region(1). If we look at the tourism potential in Indonesia, many investments have been made apart from the industrial sector, the tourism sector is also very popular and currently in this tourism sector, many hotels, resorts and even islands have been established on the basis of

consensus with foreign investors(2). However, behind the expected benefits from tourism policy, there is the potential for conflict that arises in the public sphere. This conflict arises as a result of various differences in interests, values and perceptions between various stakeholders involved in the tourism industry. Conflicts can arise as a result of the various facilities provided(3).

In tourism investment, for example, conflicts can arise due to local community public spaces becoming disputed. Public space is an arena where various community interests meet and interact. Looking at a simple definition, public space is open space outside buildings, including: roads, fields, city parks, etc(4). In the context of tourism policy, the public sphere includes tourist areas, local communities, non-governmental organisations, governments, businesses, tourists, and other stakeholders.

Conflicts in the public sphere related to tourism can come from many sources, such as tourism development planning, natural resource management, distribution of economic benefits, social and cultural issues, and influence on the environment. Looking at the spatial perspective, the phenomenon of contestation, negotiation, consensus, and conflict in investment policy can be understood as a form of power relations from spatial planning actors including the government, the community, and the market(5).

This conflict involves various stakeholders, such as the local government, developers, local communities and tourists. Economic corridors seem to justify all government actions in vacating or relocating land that has been inhabited by residents. A number of government programmes that fall into this category are MP3EI, MIFE, PSN, SEZ and so on.

Through a decree by the Governor of Riau in 1992, PT Buana Mega Wisata gained control of around 23,000 hectares of land with 80 years of ownership. In such a long consensus and with such extensive control of Lagoi land, it certainly raises the phenomenon of whether the change in spatial function is really the answer to the problem of limited public space? In addition to changes in function, what other phenomena occur in public space in overcoming the limited space? For this reason, it is necessary to study the phenomena that occur in public space, especially in space conflicts over tourism investment policies with the welfare of the community over their control over their territorial space.

Seeing from what has been explained, on this occasion we will discuss tourism policies that result in public space conflicts in an area, namely Bintan Regency, precisely in the Lagoi Tourism Area and Kampung Baru Sebong Lagoi. Kampung Baru Sebong Lagoi is surrounded by Banyan Tree Resort, Sanchhya Resort, Nirwana Resort, and Treasure Bay. The total area of Kampung Baru is  $\pm 2.7$  Km<sup>2</sup>. Kampung Baru Village falls under the jurisdiction of Sebong Lagoi Village which is 15 km away from the sub-district capital, the distance requires 1.5 hours travelling time. It is inhabited by 42 households and some of these are within the Lagoi Resort area(6).

Geographically, Kampung Baru is surrounded by quite a lot of resorts in one lagoi tourist area. With the beauty of tourism that Bintan Regency has on the basis of this consensus, there is one hamlet that is so contrasted when compared to the luxury of the Lagoi. That village is Kampung Baru. A coastal village in the middle of a luxury resort. Kampung Baru is located in Lagoi, Sebong Perih Village, Teluk Bintan District. There

the lives of the people who live there are so far different from the progress of tourism in Lagoi.



Fig. 1. Map of the Kampung Baru Area, Sebung Lagoi Village, Bintan Regency, Indonesia

Source : Google Maps, 2023

It can be seen from the location map above that the location of Kampung Baru is squeezed by tourism sites, the number of luxury resorts around and in this research will describe the empirical conditions of the village by comparing the contrasting facts from the aspects of public space and conflict over space from the tourism investment policy.

## 2 METHOD

This research is a study using qualitative methods. Data collection was conducted from key informants selected in accordance with this research. The key informants were community leaders in Kampung Baru and village officials. In addition, literature studies, documents and observations were also conducted to obtain relevant data. Techniques and ways of analysing through data collection, data reduction, and drawing conclusions.

## 3 FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Space can play several socio-economic functions. Firstly, space serves as one of the forces of production. Second, space can be a variety of commodities (real estate/property) that are consumed. Third, space politically facilitates the control of economic and political systems. Fourth, space will strengthen the reproduction of productive relationships(7). This confirms that space is not something or a product of social interaction alone, but rather a product of a series of political interactions that occur simultaneously, between the forces of capital, government, and society, so that space truly becomes part of the process of accumulation and circulation of capital.

Tania Muray li and Pujo Semedi explain in *Living with Giants: Humans and the Occupation of Palm Oil Plantations* states that; Life in the palm oil plantation area is life under occupation(8). Even in the analysis of the political technology approach, it was found that plantation companies in Indonesia were given a mandate from the state to bring prosperity to remote areas and were allowed to reorganise the economy and ecology on a large scale. In line with this, the influx of tourism investment in Bintan Regency through the legal facilitation of the 1992 decree of the Governor of Riau, PT Buana Mega Wisata managed to control around 23,000 hectares of land with ownership for 80 years.

Kampung Baru is a settlement located in Sebong Lagoi village, Teluk Bintan sub-district, inhabited by 42 families who work as; fishermen, construction workers, casual daily labourers and workers in the tourism sector and is the only settlement area within the tourism concession managed by PT Buana Mega Wisata. It is appropriate then to borrow Tanwey's postulation to provide a picture of life after the presence of tourism investment in the new village "rural residents are like people who stand submerged in water up to their necks"(9).

Management, the tourism sector is seen more as a great economic potential for economic growth (developmentalism)(10). In this case, the tourism sector developed on the basis of consensus is precisely to fulfil the demands of global capitalism. The need for public goods, which is the responsibility of the government as a spatial planning actor, should be able to provide public good for the community because it has the power to operate in the fields of planning, utilisation, and supervision/control(7).

There are four types of goods that correspond to the original forms: (1) personal consumption goods that are easy to provide; (2) shared consumption goods that are easy to provide; (3) personal consumption goods that are difficult to provide; and (4) shared consumption goods that are difficult to provide. These four ideal types of goods and services are quite important and will be referred to in naming these types of goods by the terms: (1) individual goods (often called private goods), (2) toll goods, (3) common-pool goods, and (4) collective goods (often called public goods)(11). The reason for classifying goods and services in this way is important, as the identification of their properties determines the means required to fulfil their provision.

Public goods themselves are goods that are consumed by the community for free, but in practice many public goods are privatised by the government so that people cannot enjoy them for free(12). In contrast, private goods and toll goods can be fulfilled by the market, and government action only takes a small role in certain goods, especially in the establishment of basic rules of market transactions, ensuring the safety of the use of private goods, and regulating the way toll goods are fulfilled. Government action cannot be ignored to ensure the continuity of availability of common-pool goods and public goods(11).

With the presence of the Lagoi tourism area, the residents of the new village at least experienced a reduction or even to some extent lost access to rights as befits citizens related to public good including; access to roads and electricity. As mentioned in Rahmi's research, the unpaved road to Kampung Baru, which is still inhabited by 42 households, is still surrounded by wilderness without any lighting to pass this road at

night, this is certainly different from the company road which is directly adjacent to the road(13).

The above conditions show a shift in the objectives of the State as stated in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia in the 4th paragraph which states as follows:

"Then from that to form a Government of the Indonesian State that protects all Indonesian people and all Indonesian blood spills and to advance the general welfare, educate the nation's life and participate in implementing world order based on independence, lasting peace and social justice, then compile the Indonesian National Independence in an Indonesian State Constitution, which is formed in an arrangement of the Republic of Indonesia with people's sovereignty based on the Supreme Godhead, fair and civilised Humanity, Indonesian Unity and Democracy led by wisdom in deliberation / representation, and by realising a social justice for all Indonesian people" is a state goal that has a deep philosophy."

The sentence "and by realising a social justice for all Indonesian people" is a description of the state's obligation to provide justice for every Indonesian citizen, one of which is obtaining public good (a) roads and (b) electricity.

Roads in the economic category are included in public goods that are non-rival and excludable. Non-rival means that one consumer's use of a good will not reduce the opportunity for other consumers to also consume the good. Everyone can take advantage of the goods without affecting the benefits obtained by others. Non-excludable means that if public goods are available, no one can prevent anyone from benefiting from them.

Firstly, road access. Kampung Baru has become isolated from the outside world, this is because there is no road access for residents to carry out mobility out and into the new village, the only access road available is through the Lagoi tourism area. Even if there is access to the road in and out without going through / entering the Lagoi tourist area, the condition of the road cannot be traversed when it rains and will actually increase the distance to be addressed (Chairman of RT 003 / RW 011 Kampung Baru).

Second, Electricity. The provision of electricity for all citizens is basically one of the human rights stipulated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The state should not delay or even make it difficult for people to exercise their right to enjoy electricity services.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources (ESDM) Sudirman Said said electricity is a basic need of modern society. Without electricity, modern civilisation would not exist. Electricity is the path to modern civilisation and without electricity, development cannot proceed normally. "More extreme, in my opinion electricity is a modern human right, therefore the state or government has an obligation to provide access to electricity to everyone,"(14).

Every day, the residents of Kampung Baru can only enjoy electricity through generators with a very limited range of lighting time, which is only 5-6 hours. According to the village secretary of Sebong Lagoi, this is because the new village area is in the area of Lagoi tourism. The condition of not having electricity as a basic need of residents, so that residents who inhabit new villages often say that the Government of Bintan Regency is only able to promise every year, but never able to realise it.

## 4 CONCLUSION

Tourism investment policies in the Lagoi area show the triggers of public space conflicts, especially related to land use change, environmental impacts, and local community participation in decision-making. Through consensus in the decision of the Governor of Riau in 1992, PT Buana Mega Wisata managed to control around 23,000 hectares of land with ownership for 80 years. The results of this research show a description of the government's impartiality in fulfilling citizenship rights in terms of access to public goods needs for 42 households that are still in the special economic zone. This condition is evidenced by the fact that basic needs such as electricity cannot be fulfilled properly. Then, road access is also a problem until now the area seems isolated with the condition of the dirt road.

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