Mechanism Construction and Implementation Pathways for Building a World-Famous Tourist Destination in Fujian through Mountain-Sea Collaboration

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Abstract. Mountain-Sea Collaboration is the core strategy for overcoming the fragmentation of regional cultural and tourism resources and spatial structural bottlenecks, and for promoting the building of a world-famous tourist destination in Fujian. Research indicates that Mountain-Sea Collaboration embodies an inherent logic of resource complementarity, strategic synergy, benefit symbiosis, and industrial linkage. It is necessary to establish four key operational mechanisms: region-wide coordinated planning, multi-party win-win benefit sharing, digitally-enabled factor mobility, and territory-wide integrated market linkage. A world-famous tourist destination can be built through four dimensions: resource integration, infrastructure connectivity, international branding and marketing, and industrial convergence.

Keywords: Mountain-Sea Collaboration; world-famous tourist destination; collaborative governance; implementation pathway

1 Introduction

Against the backdrop of the deepening implementation of the cultural and tourism integration strategy, regional collaborative tourism development has become a significant direction for promoting high-quality development in the industry. Fujian Province's geographical pattern of being bordered by mountains and sea has created spatially differentiated yet complementary resource characteristics. Mountain-Sea Collaboration is conducive to promoting the high-quality development of the cultural and tourism industry and has achieved notable results in addressing regional imbalances in economic and social development (Jin & Wang, 2023; Qiu & Gong, 2024)[1-2]. According to the development patterns of mature global tourist destinations, their competitiveness depends on the efficient integration of resources and factors across administrative boundaries and the capacity for value co-creation. The core constraints currently facing Fujian Province stem from the fragmentation of resource ownership rights, self-interested competition among local fiscal authorities, and the absence of flexible performance as-

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sessment mechanisms. This has resulted in institutional contradictions between the territorial jurisdiction over tourism resources and the need for integrated cross-regional tourism products, alongside an underdeveloped framework for cross-regional benefit distribution.

Existing research predominantly focuses on the development strategies of single resource-based destinations (Shao, 2009; Zhu & Zhu, 2012; Yang, 2024)[3-5] or the development models of world-class tourism cities (Lu et al., 2024; Xu & Zhan, 2024)[6-7], with less attention given to exploring how institutional design can overcome deep-seated obstacles to regional collaboration from the perspectives of governance mechanisms and transaction costs. In light of this, this paper aims to analyze the inherent logic of Mountain-Sea Collaboration for building a world-famous tourist destination, construct a systematic collaboration mechanism, and explore specific implementation pathways, with the goal of providing theoretical insights for deep regional tourism cooperation.

2 The Theoretical Logic of Mountain-Sea Collaboration for Building a World-Famous Tourist Destination in Fujian

Mountain-Sea Collaboration is not merely regional alliance but a deep integration model based on differences in factor endowments, synergy of strategic objectives, symbiosis of multiple interests, and industrial ecological linkages. The comprehensive theoretical framework of this collaborative mechanism is illustrated in Figure 1.

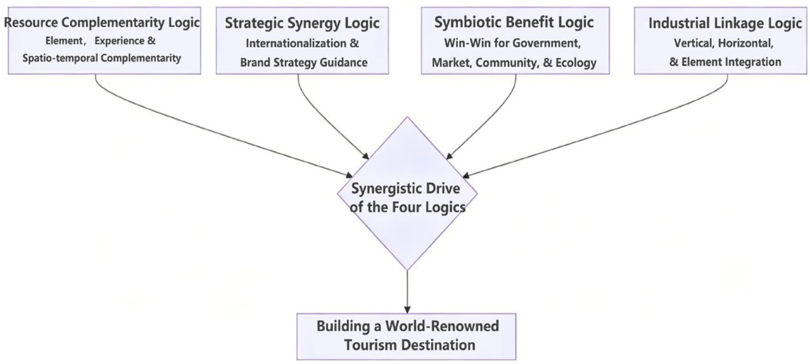

Fig. 1. The Theoretical Logic of Mountain-Sea Collaboration for Building a World-Famous Tourist Destination in Fujian

2.1 Logic of Resource Complementarity

Resource-based theory posits that heterogeneous resources are the source of competitive advantage (Huang & Cheng, 2005; Zhang et al., 2023)[8-9]. The structural differences in factor endowments between the mountainous and coastal areas of Fujian constitute the material foundation for collaboration. The mountainous areas, represented by the Wuyi Mountains' dual World Heritage status and Hakka Tulou, possess monopolistic cultural and ecological resources. The coastal areas are centered around the Maritime Silk Road heritage in Quanzhou and the coastal urban leisure offerings of Xiamen. This resource gradient from vertical altitude space to horizontal economic space enables Fujian tourism to construct a complete consumption chain of "deep experience—efficient leisure" through "mountain-sea connection."

2.2 Logic of Strategic Synergy

World-famous tourist destinations generally feature a high proportion of international tourists, unique brand recognition, well-developed service systems, and standardized management. The strategic logic of mountain-sea coordination in Fujian Province should be anchored in coastal gateway hubs such as Fuzhou and Xiamen, transcending administrative boundaries to channel international tourist flows, thereby facilitating the global translation and symbolic representation of the cultural and ecological resources from its mountainous regions. Furthermore, as a core area of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and a National Ecological Civilization Pilot Zone, Fujian can transform the dividends of national strategies into international competitive advantages for the tourism industry through Mountain-Sea Collaboration.

2.3 Logic of Benefit Symbiosis

According to the core tenets of intergovernmental governance theory and stakeholder theory (Wang & Jiang, 2007; Wang, 2008)[10-11], the sustainability of Mountain-Sea Collaboration depends on the balanced interests of multiple stakeholders. Collaboration breaks the "self-interested" game of single administrative regions, establishing a community of shared interests involving GDP sharing, ecological compensation, and market co-construction. Collaboration not only promotes destination transformation and product improvement (Fyall et al., 2012) [12] but also converts the externalities of regional development into endogenous motivation for community participation through benefit-sharing mechanisms (Duarte Alonso & Nyanjom, 2017; Phelan et al., 2020; Ringa et al., 2023)[13-15].

2.4 Logic of Industrial Linkage

Industrial cluster theory and value chain theory (An & Zhu, 2003; Xu, 2003; Guo & Qiu, 2020; Huang & Ni, 2020)[16-19] indicate that value addition relies on the smooth flow of factors. Mountain-Sea Collaboration drives the restructuring of the industrial chain. Mountainous areas, as the "resource supply side," undertake the authentic production of ecology and culture, while coastal areas, as the "market demand side," undertake the spillover of capital, tourist flow, and services. This value chain coupling of "upstream resources + downstream market" is the underlying driving force for enhancing regional tourism competitiveness.

3 Mechanism Construction for Mountain-Sea Collaboration in Building a World-Famous Tourist Destination in Fujian

3.1 Coordinated Planning Mechanism for Holistic Management

Establish cross-regional specialized collaborative planning for cultural tourism, shifting from administrative boundary planning to "tourism functional unit" planning. To ensure effective implementation of the plan, a cross-departmental collaborative task force led by the provincial government's responsible leader will be established, breaking down administrative barriers. Furthermore, the performance evaluation of local governments will be re-envisioned from a singular focus on local reception volume to a collaborative indicator system encompassing joint reception volume, brand co-construction, and consistency in transportation connectivity and services. This aims to guide cities from "zero-sum competition" towards "synergistic co-governance."

3.2 Benefit-Sharing Mechanism for Multi-Party Win-Win Outcomes

The profit-sharing mechanism is central to stimulating the intrinsic motivation for mountain-sea collaboration. First, establish a horizontal fiscal and tax allocation and revenue-sharing mechanism. A mountain-sea collaboration tourism fund pool will be set up to scientifically distribute the comprehensive benefits generated from inter-regional tourism linkages. Second, deepen cross-regional equity binding cooperation. Promote joint ventures and restructuring between coastal enterprises and mountainous scenic areas and resource developers to build a community of shared interests involving "co-construction, co-ownership, and co-sharing," enabling mountainous residents to deeply share development dividends through tourism employment and the supply chain. Third, improve the green ecological and cultural compensation mechanism. Extract special funds from the total cross-regional tourism revenue to reinvest in and support the protection of ecological reserves and cultural heritage sites.

3.3 Digitally Empowered Factor Flow Mechanism

An efficient and unhindered factor flow mechanism is crucial for enhancing resource allocation efficiency. First, establish a blockchain-based cultural tourism resource trading platform to promote the digital confirmation of rights and asset registration for resources such as mountainous scenic spots, ancient villages, and intangible cultural heritage. This will facilitate point-to-point matchmaking and circulation of mountain-sea projects, thereby reducing cross-regional investment costs. Second, construct a cultural tourism data middle platform. Leveraging multi-source data and intelligent algorithms, this platform will predict tourist behavior and flow, guiding capital, technology, and other factors to be precisely allocated to mountainous areas with high potential. Third, implement a digitally-driven flexible talent-sharing mechanism. Utilizing online expert and operational talent pools, this mechanism will facilitate remote collaboration and short-term on-site assignments, promoting the flow of intellectual resources from coastal areas to mountainous regions.

3.4 Market Linkage Mechanism for Integrated Regional Tourism

In terms of brand marketing, provincial-level authorities will integrate domestic and international resources to overcome the limitations of fragmented municipal-level promotion and uniformly market the overarching image of "Fujian: Mountains and Sea Integrated." Regarding collaborative regulation, a cross-regional joint regulatory task force will be established, and service and complaint standards will be unified. Additionally, leveraging big data will facilitate mutual tourist source delivery and data sharing, thereby promoting the transformation of the tourism industry from fragmented development to holistic, coordinated regional development. For technical implementation, a "region-wide pass" digital consumption voucher will be developed based on a cross-regional digital settlement platform, enabling seamless cross-scenario consumption. Furthermore, intelligent contracts will automatically and in real-time clear funds, addressing the pain points of long settlement periods and frequent disputes associated with traditional joint settlements.

4 Implementation Pathways for Mountain-Sea Collaboration in Building a World-Famous Tourist Destination in Fujian

4.1 Pathway of Resource Integration and Product Innovation

Based on the concept of holistic tourism development and the idea of differentiated competition (Li et al., 2013; Yang, 2016; Li et al., 2016)[20-22], resource integration and product innovation are core pathways to solve the problems of fragmentation and product homogeneity in Fujian's mountain-sea tourism resources. Conduct cross-regional systematic resource assessment and database establishment. Break administrative boundaries to systematically inventory the spectrum of mountain-sea tourism resources, including islands, Maritime Silk Road heritage, World Natural and Cultural Heritage sites, red culture, and intangible cultural heritage. According to stratified market demands, create a composite product matrix of "mountain wellness + coastal resort." Design themed routes such as immersive study tours, Maritime Silk Road tracing, and outdoor challenges for different tourist segments. Enhance tourist stickiness and revisit rates through content creation.

4.2 Pathway of Infrastructure Interconnectivity

Focus on building a "fast in, slow tour" system. Externally, enhance the gateway capacity of Fuzhou and Xiamen international aviation hubs. Internally, optimize the connection between high-speed rail and tourist highways. Transform transportation infrastructure into important service carriers for tourist destinations by constructing tourist distribution centers at major transportation hubs. Build a provincial smart tourism service platform, implement barrier-free digital services with universal access codes, and improve the convenience of cross-regional travel.

4.3 Pathway of Brand Building and International Marketing

Refine the "Fujian Mountains and Seas" brand IP and strengthen international storytelling. Rely on core resources like World Heritage sites to construct a hierarchical brand communication system. Utilize international social media and global distribution systems (GDS) to conduct targeted digital marketing and cultural performances tailored to the preferences of different source markets.

4.4 Pathway of Industrial Convergence Development

Cultivate a deep "tourism+" cross-border integration ecosystem. Promote the deep integration of tourism with agriculture, wellness, and sports industries. Extend the tourism industry chain and enhance destination value spillover by developing characteristic eco-agricultural tourism products, constructing high-standard coastal wellness resort areas, and hosting international sports events.

In summary, these four implementation pathways dynamically couple with the underlying collaborative mechanisms to drive destination construction, as conceptualized in Figure 2.

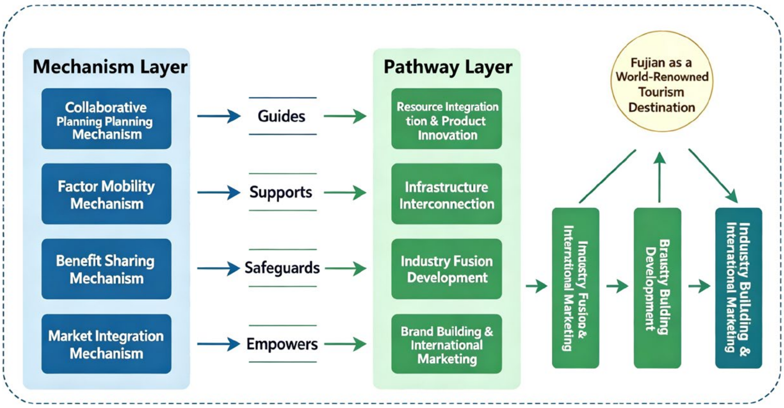

Fig. 2. Conceptual Model of the Coupling Relationship Between Collaborative Mechanisms and Implementation Pathways

5 Conclusions

Mountain-Sea Collaboration is the fundamental pathway for Fujian to overcome the spatial structural bottlenecks in tourism and enhance its global competitiveness.

Through institutionalized collaboration and structural empowerment, Fujian can not only effectively integrate fragmented mountain-sea resources but also explore a paradigm for building a world-class tourist destination within the context of high-quality regional development. In the future, efforts should further strengthen the institutional constraints and market incentive mechanisms for cross-regional governance, transforming Mountain-Sea Collaboration from a policy initiative into an endogenous driving force propelling Fujian's cultural and tourism industry toward becoming a world-class tourist destination.

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