

Increasing the Role of Local Communities in Protecting Turtles on Liukang Loe Tourist Island: Maritime Diplomacy Policy of the Local Government

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the role of local communities in tourism development and their involvement in economic cooperation on Liukang Loe Island, Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi. One example of the local community's contribution is the management of a turtle hatchery as a tourist destination, which is entirely managed by the local community. Shows that support and active participation from local communities are crucial for enhancing the economy and ensuring tourism sustainability. Furthermore, this research highlights the international cooperation between Bulukumba Regency and Canada in spice production, demonstrating local community involvement in supporting economic development. This study uses a qualitative approach through interviews with several local community stakeholders. The findings show that local community involvement positively impacts community income and strengthens the region's strategic role in the global economic cooperation network. These findings confirm that local community participation is essential in creating sustainable tourism and supporting regional economic development and international cooperation. On Liukang Loe Island, engagement in maritime diplomacy is still limited because the tourism development and the turtle hatchery still need to be connected to global networks. Indonesia's maritime, as outlined in the Djuanda Declaration, emphasizes the importance of integrating maritime economic development and marine.

Keywords: local communities, maritime diplomacy, economic enhancement, tourist destinations, turtle hatchery.

INTRODUCTION

Current literature indicates that local communities are integral to the tourism development agenda. Meanwhile, decision-makers have their perspectives and interests in managing tourist destinations. However, the representation of local community interests in the tourism development agenda is a complex issue that needs to be handled carefully (Muganda, Ezra, & Sirima, 2013, p. 53). The role of local communities is vital in tourism planning and development in an area.

Various actors are involved in tourism development, including the private sector, government, donor agencies, civil society, and local communities. Local communities are considered an essential asset in tourism development because activities occur in their territory (Muganda, Ezra, & Sirima, 2013, p. 55). Local communities play an essential role when tourism takes place in their territory. They have rights and responsibilities in tourism development. Decisions made by policy makers can have a direct impact on their lives. Needs and interests must also be taken into account in the decision-making process. Meanwhile, local communities feel significant economic impacts from tourism, such as increased income and job creation. Public perception aligns with economic growth, measured by household consumption expenditure (Levyda, 2020, p. 219). Public views on economic growth are reflected in increased household consumption expenditure.

Local communities respond to tourism development by offering boat rentals, accommodation, culinary, producing and selling souvenirs, and tour guide services. These efforts have resulted in increased sales. As a result, the community feels increased income, employment opportunities, and welfare from tourism. Residents

view tourism positively impacting the development of facilities, infrastructure, and transportation. Thus, community support for tourism development is reflected in community support and tourism promotion (Levyda, 2020, p. 220). As support for tourism development continues to grow, the community provides various additional services and facilities, which lead to increased income, employment opportunities, and welfare due to tourism.

The importance of tourism is reflected in the number of tourist arrivals in a country. According to data collected by the Ministry of Energy and Tourism in 2018, this number exceeded 82 million in 2017, indicating an increase of 8.9% (Alcocer & Ruiz, 2019, p. 1). The increase in tourists visiting Indonesia suggests an increase in foreign exchange earnings.

Several studies have investigated the relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction worldwide. The concept of tourism satisfaction has been widely discussed in academic literature, providing a clear definition: satisfaction is the pleasure visitors feel as a result of their travel experience that meets their desires, expectations, and needs related to that experience. Therefore, in tourism research, destination image is considered a direct factor influencing satisfaction (Alcocer & Ruiz, 2019, p. 6). The relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction is essential because satisfaction is defined as the pleasure experienced by tourists when their trip meets their expectations and needs, making destination image an important factor influencing tourist satisfaction. The turtle hatchery on Liukang Loe Island represents the image of the tourist destination in Bulukumba Regency. This destination has become synonymous with Bulukumba because of the many tourists who visit the turtle hatchery. This study is critical because it increases our understanding of Liukang Loe Island, which is located on Bira Beach in Bulukumba Regency. The novelty of this study lies in the absence of data analysis of Liukang Loe Island in Bulukumba Regency.

METHODS

This research method uses a qualitative research method, namely research that produces descriptive data regarding spoken and written words, and observable behavior from the people being studied, this explanation is explained by Taylor and Bogdan in (Suyanto & Sutinah, 2022, p. 166). Considerations of time, effort, and cost underlie the form of embedded research, meaning that data collection has been directed according to the objectives and the question guide in it has been limited in advance to the aspects chosen.

This form of research will be able to capture various qualitative information about the picture of increasing the role of local communities in protecting turtles on the Liukang Loe tourist island, a case study of maritime diplomacy, local government policies. The objects of this research include community leaders, hamlet heads, turtle hatchery owners and women who are active as tourism entrepreneurs. Researchers interviewed 17 respondents. The selection of snowball sampling research subjects is a data source *sampling technique*, which was initially small and gradually became large.

The following table shows the number of people we interviewed

Table 1.1 List of Respondents

NO	Position	Background education	Amount of people
1	Community leader	Senior High School	1
2	Village head	Senior High School	1
3	Owner of a turtle sanctuary	Senior High School	4
4	Women enterpreneur	Senior High School	5
5	Domestic tourist	university student-Ph.D.	6

Source. Self Analyzed Data

Table 1 above shows the number of respondents interviewed at the research location.

The following is a map of Liukang Loe Island, the research location.



Figure 1. Maps turtle island

Source: https://www.google.com/maps/place/Pantai+Pulau+Liukang+Loe/@-5.6409493,120.4306983,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x2dbbf17f81743:0x65745e2786c16cc8!8m2!3d5.6409546!4d120.4332732!16s%2F21c0qgp2f8!5m1!1e1?entry=tту&g_ep=EgoyMDI0MDkyNS4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D

The first picture above illustrates the location of Liukang Loe Island. Liukang Loe is a small island located south of Sulawesi Island, about 3.5 kilometers from Bira Beach and Bara Beach, with an area of less than six square kilometers. One can take a boat from Bira Beach or Bara Beach to reach this island; the journey takes about 20 minutes (Wisatabira, 2021).

Liukang Loe Island, located in Bontobahari District, Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi, is one of the favorite tourist destinations when visiting Bulukumba (Harianto, 2024). Based on data from the Bulukumba Central Statistics Agency in 2020, the population of Bontobahari District reached 28,225 people (Bulukumba Central Statistics Agency, 2021).

Liukang Loe Island in Bulukumba is a turtle hatchery managed by a private company. There, visitors can interact with several turtles. In addition to its natural beauty, the island also offers various attractions, such as swimming with turtles, snorkeling, and diving around Liukang Loe Island, so visitors can enjoy its beauty to the fullest (Haya, 2024).

Tanjung Bira, one of the region's leading tourist destinations in South Sulawesi Province, has become a tourism center. The South Sulawesi Provincial Government and Bulukumba Regency are actively building infrastructure to improve visitor comfort and create business opportunities in the tourism sector. Ongoing projects, such as the Lemo Lemo-Bara-Bira ring road construction, the Floating Mosque, sports facilities, and the development of the zero point area, aim to make Tanjung Bira a driving force for the regional economy. Unsurprisingly, the Tanjung Bira Tourism Area has received between 500,000 and 700,000 tourist visits in recent years. Making Bulukumba district the area with the highest number of visits in South Sulawesi. The Deputy Regent of South Sulawesi, Syafruddin Mualla, also appreciated improving facilities and services in the Tanjung Bira tourism area. It should be noted that last week, the Tanjung Bira tourism area was still crowded with visitors during the long holiday. The Bulukumba Youth and Sports Tourism Office (Disparpora) recorded 6,559 tourist visits to Bira from 9-11 May 2024 (Medcom, 2024).

Table 2.2 Interview Instrument

NO	PERTANYAAN
1	When did the turtle sanctuary start?
2	Is the number of turtles increasing or decreasing?
3	Is this a community-driven initiative to establish a turtle sanctuary, or does it receive government funding for turtle conservation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Local community

Tourism development will mean something if its benefits, whether socially, economically, or environmentally, are felt by the local community, especially in developing countries. The extent of local community involvement in tourism development. The participation of local communities in tourism development is essential to bridge the gap between governance and utilization of resources in tourist destinations (Muganda, Ezra, & Sirima, 2013, p. 54). The role of local communities helps ensure that the management and utilization of resources in tourist locations can be more balanced. Tourism will only positively impact if the local community feels its social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Theoretically, the role of local communities in tourism development depends on the type and level of participatory approach in a tourist destination. There are various levels of participation, ranging from sharing information to full responsibility (Muganda, Ezra, & Sirima, 2013, p. 55). The involvement of local communities in tourism development in a region depends significantly on the extent of their role and participation in the tourist destination.

Local community support is still not optimal because many local guides are unaware of the importance of preserving coral reefs and marine biota. Likewise, the low awareness of local communities regarding waste management could make the environment more comfortable for tourists. Therefore, local community support is significant for tourism development (Levyda, 2020, p. 218). The need for more awareness regarding the importance of environmental conservation, especially coral reefs, is a significant challenge for tourism development, in addition to inadequate waste management practices.

Several general theories are used to describe local community support for tourism, such as community engagement, social exchange, and empowerment. These theories are used to examine the interactions of individuals and groups in the exchange of activities (Levyda, 2020, p. 218). There are several reasons why residents support tourism. For example, they need to preserve and develop tourism potential in their area. In addition, social interactions that occur between residents and tourists can also increase support for tourism.

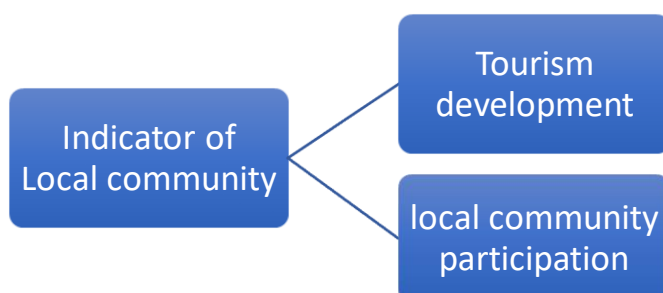


Figure 2. Indicator of Local Community

2. Maritime Diplomacy

Maritime diplomacy is an essential instrument in foreign policy that aims to secure national maritime interests and strengthen Indonesia's position in the international arena. Maritime diplomacy also serves as a means to attract foreign investment and technology needed to develop marine industry and infrastructure. Maritime diplomacy has become essential for archipelagic countries to uphold their sovereignty and marine interests and encourage economic growth (Yunias Dao, 2024, p. 49). Maritime diplomacy is a strategic means to maintain Indonesia's naval sovereignty and open up opportunities for profitable international cooperation through such diplomacy.

Several factors explain Indonesia's national interests in maritime development, including interrelated aspects of security, economy, and geopolitics. Therefore, Indonesia's naval diplomacy reflects a solid commitment to utilizing its maritime potential to achieve national interests within the Golden Indonesia Vision 2045 (Yunias Dao, 2024, p. 51). Indonesia is aware of the importance of the sea for security, economy, and relations with other countries. As planned, Indonesia aims to become an advanced and prosperous maritime country by 2045.

Diplomatic practices carried out by countries today have developed; one example is the use of information and communication technology advances such as email, social media, and others. The spread of this technology is believed to influence the broader and faster dissemination of information so that diplomacy becomes more effective. With the rise of digital diplomacy, countries must prepare several strategic options to face these challenges. First, finding the proper mechanism for coordination across ministries, institutions, and local governments is crucial in the current situation with the increasing use of the Internet in everyday life. Second, ministries need to empower their digital command centers to ensure fast, comprehensive, and well-coordinated processes with other ministries, especially when facing emergencies or crises. Third, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must improve its officials' ongoing training programs on media engagement and outreach (Dita Birahayu, 2023, p. 173). Diplomacy today has begun to utilize digital technology. This digital technology brings both benefits and challenges. Countries must be prepared to meet these challenges by increasing intergovernmental cooperation, enhancing crisis preparedness, and improving diplomats' ability to use digital technologies effectively.

The critical role of maritime diplomacy in shaping international relations highlights the importance of naval capabilities and maritime activities in securing trade routes, addressing global challenges, and projecting national power and influence. Maritime diplomacy serves as a means of power projection and a strategic tool for managing international relations. These efforts aim to strengthen regional stability, promote security cooperation, support economic integration, and advocate for environmental sustainability. In essence, maritime diplomacy is an approach that encompasses the various objectives and benefits involved in conducting diplomacy at sea (Islam, 2024, p. 4). Naval diplomacy is essential because it encompasses multiple aspects, from military power to collaboration with other countries, to maintain security, stability, and prosperity in the maritime region.

In maritime diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral interactions are significant. These interactions often result in agreements that form regional cooperation mechanisms that support efforts in various fields, such as security, trade, environmental protection, and disaster management in maritime zones. (Islam, 2024, p. 8). There is cooperation between two or more countries. The results of this cooperation produce agreements that allow countries in a region to work together in various fields, such as security, trade, protecting the environment, and helping when disasters occur.

The Indo-Pacific concept emphasizes three areas of cooperation: maritime cooperation, infrastructure and connectivity, and sustainable development. Then there are seven pillars of Indonesian Maritime policies, namely (1) development of human and maritime resources, (2) maritime security, law enforcement, and safety at sea, (3) maritime governance and institutions, (4) development of the maritime economy, (5) management of marine space and maritime protection, (6) maritime culture, and (7) maritime diplomacy (Simatupang & Panggabean & Oktaviani, 2023, p. 186). Indonesia's maritime policy is interrelated with the Indo-Pacific concept. Thus, it emphasizes the importance of the sea as a precious resource that needs to be appropriately

managed. Indonesia is strongly committed to developing its marine potential and working with other countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

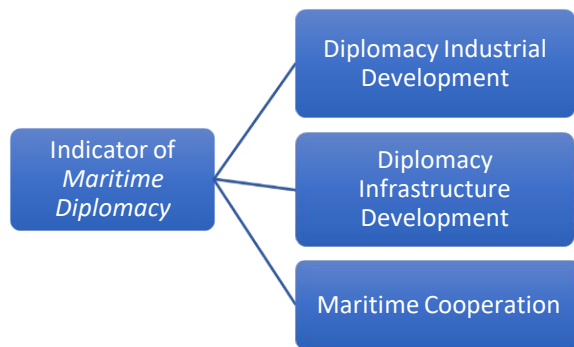


Figure 3. Indicator of Maritime Diplomacy

ANALYSIS

Local communities show the role they want in tourism development as workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry (Muganda, Ezra, & Sirima, 2013, p. 56). Therefore, local communities, such as workers and entrepreneurs, play an essential role in the tourism industry. This description is based on the tourism development indicator, which explains the role of local communities in tourism development. According to a local community living on Liukang Loe Island, this local community plays a vital role in turtle breeding, starting from taking food and catching turtles to replace tame turtles (interview, Liukang Loe Island, September 22, 2024). We can see the role of local communities in turtle breeding by tourism development, which emphasizes the role of local communities in tourism development.



Figure 4. Interview with respondents

Economic factors influence community support for tourism development, which states that the greater the financial benefits obtained, the greater the community support for tourism. Community support, it must be focused on increasing income, employment, and community welfare to increase. There are two ways to increase revenue: increasing the number of tourists and increasing tourist spending. The number of tourists, it is necessary to increase the number of tourist attractions, promotion of tourist attractions, and support facilities, especially transportation to increase. Tourist expenditure received by residents is expenditure on food and drink, boat rentals, and guide services (Levyda, 2020, p. 224). The economic benefits of tourism development and community support increase community income and welfare. This description explains the local community participation indicator supporting local community participation and the economic benefits of tourism development. According to a resident who lives on Liukang Loe Island, the local community here is very involved in helping to build a turtle hatchery, starting from building walls around the turtle hatchery to taking tourists to see turtles using boats. Local communities carry out their own turtle breeding efforts (interview, Liukang Loe Island, September 22, 2024). The participation of local communities in turtle hatchery

is by local community participation, which emphasizes local community participation in tourism development and helps improve the economy.



Figure 5. interview with respondents

Image is a fundamental element in promoting tourist destinations because what distinguishes one destination from another is the key to its success; this image then drives the success of a tourist destination that has been explored in much literature over the past four decades, with various studies conducted. A tourist's image of a destination can be very personal, because it depends on each tourist's individual perception of the place. Tourists' opinions are subjective because they can form their views of a destination based on very different backgrounds, which depend on their thoughts and emotions (Alcocer & Ruiz, 2019, p. 3). Discussing the existence of an image or important aspect in tourism promotion, which distinguishes one destination from another, and the role of image in the success of the destination.

Throughout history, diplomacy has played an essential role in forming the Indonesian state. Even before Indonesia adopted the concept of maritime diplomacy to realize its vision as the world's maritime axis, Indonesia had been actively involved in it. The Djuanda Declaration, inaugurated on December 13, 1957, is one crucial example. The Djuanda Declaration is an important milestone that has received international recognition. Amidst the increasingly complex geopolitical dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region, the implementation of Indonesian maritime diplomacy is very important to realize Indonesia's vision and maintain the pillars of maritime security (Yunias Dao, 2024, p. 53). Before Indonesia had a big plan to become the world's maritime center, Indonesia was already active in the maritime sector. The proof is that in 1957, Indonesia issued the Djuanda Declaration, which was recognized by many countries. Explains the indicator of industrial development diplomacy as one of the indicators of maritime diplomacy that strengthens the sovereignty of Indonesia's maritime territory which is the legal basis for managing and utilizing marine resources effectively. Local communities support the development of maritime, fisheries and sea transportation industries and enable international cooperation that strengthens Indonesia's economic position and maritime security.

The White Paper on Maritime Diplomacy defines maritime diplomacy as implementing a foreign policy to optimize maritime potential to fulfill national interests and international legal norms. Maritime diplomacy includes negotiating international agreements related to maritime issues, increasing maritime economic cooperation, securing maritime trade routes, and sustainable management of marine resources. Maritime diplomacy also contains aspects of defense and security diplomacy, focusing on critical issues such as piracy, illegal fishing, and marine pollution (Yunias Dao, 2024, p. 54). Maritime diplomacy is Indonesia's effort to establish cooperation with other countries and maintain maritime security. The goal is to achieve the Indonesian people's welfare and preserve the sea's sustainability. The description above explains the indicators of diplomacy infrastructure development that integrate infrastructure development diplomacy; Indonesia is trying to maintain its maritime sovereignty and build economic strength based on the maritime sector, where solid infrastructure development will support the creation of robust maritime connectivity and optimal utilization of marine resources.

Thus, digital maritime diplomacy confirms that the presence of digital diplomacy here is not to replace traditional diplomacy but rather to complement or strengthen the country's performance in international relations. This means that diplomacy can be carried out to influence various parties who have never even visited the embassy. Digital maritime diplomacy is positioned as an essential political communication and negotiation tool to maintain and fight for national interests in the marine sector (Dita Birahayu, 2023, p. 182). Digital diplomacy does not replace traditional diplomacy but complements each other. With digital diplomacy, we can reach more people and protect the interests of our country. The description above explains the maritime cooperation indicator where digital maritime diplomacy is not just a supporting tool. Still, it is a strategic force that complements traditional maritime diplomacy in achieving national interests and strengthening naval cooperation. Using digital technology, Indonesia can connect more widely with international partners, spread strategic messages more effectively, and build more inclusive and resilient maritime cooperation in digital globalization.

Maritime diplomacy is also carried out in several Asian and European countries, especially for countries that have large sea areas, such as China, the United States, Japan, India, and Australia. Each of these countries has maritime cooperation with Indonesia (Dita Birahayu, 2023, p. 176). Many Asian and European countries, especially those with large sea areas, are also active in maritime affairs. These countries often cooperate with Indonesia in various matters related to the sea. Bulukumba Regency and Canada cooperate in terms of Bulukumba spice products that are marketed abroad (Diskominfo, 2022). However, based on field data, we have yet to find any international cooperation between local communities and other countries in the turtle hatchery because the results of this turtle hatchery are the result of their efforts.

In an era where our planet's oceans are transitioning from natural barriers (bad weather) to interconnected and competitive routes, the role of maritime diplomacy is becoming increasingly significant. Various other maritime challenges (eg, environmental degradation, resource scarcity, piracy, and territorial disputes) (Islam, 2024, p. 2). Today, the sea has become a route connecting many countries. In addition to being a connecting route, the sea also faces many problems, such as environmental damage, dwindling resources, piracy, and territorial disputes. Therefore, the role of diplomacy in the maritime sector is vital. Consequently, the Bulukumba government must establish maritime diplomacy cooperation with other countries.

CONCLUSION

The existence of a turtle hatchery tourist spot on Liukang Loe Island is a form of local community involvement in tourism development. The role and support of the local community is vital in improving the local economy, even though this turtle hatchery is the result of the hard work of the local community. In addition, the cooperation carried out by Bulukumba Regency and Canada in producing Bulukumba spices is also a form of local community involvement.

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