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**Bandar Bakau Tourism Object:  
The Efforts to Maintain Environmental Sustainability and Improve The Socio-Economic Community**

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**Abstract**

Bandar Bakau tourism is an initiative from the community, the local government, and the company. The research objective was to analyze and explain the effects of Bandar Bakau tourism on environmental, social, and economic sustainability. This research used a qualitative method with interview data collection techniques, observation, and documentation. Bandar tourism was well managed, which could provide benefits in maintaining land erodes from seawater so as not abrasion. In terms of the economy, it provided business opportunities and jobs for the surrounding society. This research could be a model of environmental management in coastal areas that integrated community initiatives and ecological and economic interests based on the active participation of all parties.

**Keywords**

Mangrove, environmental, social, economics

**Abstrak**

Wisata Bandar Bakau merupakan inisiatif dari masyarakat, pemerintah daerah, dan perusahaan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis dan menjelaskan pengaruh pariwisata Bandar Bakau terhadap kelestarian lingkungan, sosial, dan ekonomi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Wisata bandar yang dikelola dengan baik, dapat memberikan manfaat dalam menjaga erosi tanah dari air laut agar tidak terjadi abrasi. Dari segi ekonomi memberikan peluang usaha dan lapangan pekerjaan bagi masyarakat sekitar. Penelitian ini dapat menjadi model pengelolaan lingkungan di wilayah pesisir yang mengintegrasikan inisiatif masyarakat dan kepentingan ekologi dan ekonomi berdasarkan partisipasi aktif semua pihak.

**Kata kunci**

Mangrove, lingkungan, sosial, ekonomi

**Introduction**

The mangrove forest is a tropical beach vegetation community (Cannicci, et al., 2021) dominated by several mangrove trees capable of growing and developing in the tidal area of muddy beaches (Saru, Idrus, & Ilham, 2019). The mangrove ecosystem is a set of biodiversity and non-biological components that functionally relate to each other and interact to form a system (Carugati, et al., 2018). The existence of mangrove forests, including mangroves in coastal areas, is vital, especially in maintaining the environment from abrasion (Eddy, Ridho, Iskandar, & Mulyana, 2016). In terms of socio-economic, mangroves can benefit household income (Yumanraya, Wijaya, & Anugrah, 2020) for people who use them directly or not (Arfan, 2018). People on the coast that live around the region of the mangrove regularly utilize mangroves for economic sources such as firewood. At the same time, indirect utilization is indicated by making the mangrove area for cultivation and the like without processing in wood.

The issue of abrasion in Riau in the last ten years has become a conversation in various scientific discussions and action projects in line with the availability of mangroves reduced by a reasonably high abrasion rate (Fitriani & Meiwanda, 2021). Even coastal areas such as Bengkalis and the Meranti Islands will disappear in a few years due to abrasion supported by non-wise mangrove utilization (Nabilla, Mubarak, & Elizal, 2021). A total of 155,540 hectares of mangroves in Riau in critical conditions that require mangrove rehabilitation is done immediately as a quick step to avoid the adverse effects of the beach abrasion (Utami, 2021).

Various steps are pitted by the government, the private sector, and the public to use independent initiatives or donor assistance to overcome the problems. The efforts made not only replant mangroves or manage existing mangroves into a tourism object but also apply the model keeping the environment with mangrove management being a tourism object as a part of the integration between ecological and economic interests in coastal areas, including some regions in Riau. This model positively affects the environment and the surrounding community, especially financially. Research conducted by Safuridar and Puti Andiny provides affirmation related to the benefits of mangrove management, especially as a tourist area, namely opening new jobs, increasing individual and household income, improving welfare, providing public facilities, and increasing regional income (Safuridar & Andiny, 2020). Meanwhile, other research by Juhadi *et al.* explained the benefits of mangrove management in tourist areas of environmental aspects, such as reducing potential ecological damage, especially sea waves, which can cause land loss or abrasion (Juhadi, Rahma, & Santoso, 2019).

Managing mangroves to be a tourist object has shown its functions in terms of the economy and the environment, although in some areas, this effort requires a relatively long time. It is also done in Dumai City. The Dumai city area is not entirely in coastal regions. Even so, in the context of the abrasion, its potential is quite enormous, especially in the area adjacent to the sea. Furthermore, unproductive land has been managed into a green space overgrown with mangroves to prevent this abrasion. Bandar Bakau tourism object was a manifestation of the Dumai City Governments initiative to seek environmental safety. At first, it was a land area owned by Pertamina's confession, then turned to Pelindo, who was not processed and unmanaged.

In the process, the government sought management by partnering with the community to plant mangrove trees, and they had a nursery and planting program through voluntary contribution to everyone or any institution who wanted or could contribute mangrove seeds. Collaboration by various parties, including the Dumai City Government and the community around the Bandar Bakau tourism object, has shown promising results. The mangrove area was flourishing, and the tourism object opening was in demand by tourists.

This paper would reinforce the benefits of managing mangroves as a tourism object for the environment and the coastal socio-economic community in the research site. Although some previous research has presented the positive benefits of mangrove tourism management for the environment, social, and economic, this research had a legal location, analysis, and theoretical approach. Social perspective, especially sociology, sees that managing the mangrove area into tourism objects seen and nourished can be done through tourist interactions with the community. Humans as actors have the nature of damaging nature with intentional acts or not and being able to control, plan or realize efforts to protect wildlife (Dwi Susilo & Dharmawan, 2021). Humans and the environment have close linkages so that behaviors carried out, both conscious and unconscious, will contribute to social change and the surrounding environment where they are (Takome, Suwu, & Zakarias, 2021). At the analysis phase of the findings to the withdrawal of conclusions, this paper was expected to contribute to the academic world and stakeholders in terms of mangrove management as a rescue effort and community welfare.

## Method

This research was conducted in the Pangkalan Sesai Village, West Dumai District, Dumai City, Riau Province. This research used a qualitative approach and carried out interviews and observations with related parties, including tourist and community managers. The Pangkalan Sesai was a region directly adjacent to the sea or better known as coastal areas. With shed coastal conditions and muddy sand along the coast, there were mangrove ecosystems. The geographical situation in the Pangkalan Sesai village was the lowlands and swampy. This area was close to the city and has become a densely populated settlement area.

This research used a qualitative approach and carried out interviews and observations with related parties, including managers and communities. The data collection phase has been completed with data reduction, which aimed to choose and retrieve data from *Turn-in* results in the field (Graue, 2016). The reduction process was continuous during qualitative data research took place. At the reduction stage, the author sorted data based on a more specific category. The next stage was the presentation of data. This process displayed processed field data



through qualitative writing art with valid data (Mohajan, 2018). Finally, it was the draw of conclusions by looking at two perspectives, namely the point of view of the author himself and field viewing.

## Results

### *History and Conditions of Bandar Bakau Tourism Object*

Bandar Bakau was a conservation area fought by a nature lover named Darwis Muhammad Saleh to save the environment from environmental damage due to irresponsible human activities and only dampen his profits. His struggle was not easy and took a long time. Darwis made an organization to maintain and manage this Bandar Bakau called PAB (*Pecinta Alam Bahari* or Nautical Nature Lovers). The establishment of this Bandar Bakau resulted from environmental reform, which PAB triggered. PAB was established on August 16, 1999. PAB was once under the auspices of the local cultural organization, namely Dekam (*Depot Kreativitas Anak Melayu Dumai* or Dumais Malay Childrens Creativity Depot).

In the PAB, a conscious tourist group (*Pokdarwis*) was formed on August 16, 2019. The address of the Secretariat was within the Mangrove Conservation Area with the following membership:

**Table 1**

The Composition of *Pokdarwis* members

NO.	Name	Position/ Field
1.	Darwis Mohd. Saleh	Chairman
2.	Dante Maiyendra	Vice-Chairman
3.	Andra Junaidi	Secretary
4.	Siska Dewi	Treasurer
5.	Zulkarnaian	Security and Order
6.	Taufik Hidayat	Cleanliness and Beauty
7.	Rendra Affandi	Tourist Attraction and Memories
8.	Rasidin Amin	Public Relations and HR
9.	Nur Arifah	Business Development and Marketing
10.	Zulkifli	Art and Culture
11.	Herjito Aldexs	Documentation and Information
12.	Ijol	Facilities and Infrastructures
13.	Gelombang Reformasi	Culinary
14.	Darwati	Craft Industry ( <i>Batik</i> )
15.	Haryadi	Craft Industry ( <i>Handicrafts</i> )

Source: *Bandar Bakau Manager*, 2019

Bandar Bakau was located on Nelayan Laut Ujung Street, Sesai-Base Village, West Dumai District, Dumai City, Riau Province. Bandar Mangrove has an area of around  $\pm 20$  Ha, which was initially only 2.5 hectares. Initially, this conservation area was declared in 1999 by some community leaders and the local government as a mangrove conservation effort at the Dumai River estuary and opened to the public to be a tourism object began in 2011.

### *The Effects of the Bandar Bakau Tourism Object on the Environmental Aspects*

It was mentioned in the previous section that the Bandar Bakau tourism object was an initiative to maintain the environment of the potential of abrasion disasters. Since its inception, the main goal has not been a tourism object. The planted mangrove tree was a part of utilizing vacant land to be productive. In line with the desire to use the empty land, in terms of potential disasters, the research location is also vulnerable to abrasion. They both reinforced the establishment that planting mangroves was the best choice for environmental aspects.

Then, how many its effects on the environmental aspects? That mangrove trees that grow fertile and lush are the key to preventing abrasion disaster. In this context, measuring the tourist attraction on environmental aspects was based on the opinion and experience of the surrounding community. In general, since the Bandar Bakau tourism object has been built, the environment was better. Additionally, this tourism object also provided green space for the community and preserved various mangrove species and animals. The abrasion could be pressed and reduced by the pace of the case, even though there was no research carried out directly on the effects of Bandar Bakau Tourism Object for abrasion control at the research site.

### *The Effects of Bandar Bakau Tourism Object for Economic Aspects*

Bandar Bakau Tourism Object was the targeted object for the community to capture current opportunities. The community could use these opportunities to open a business or work. Some people opened the trading stalls around the tourist spot and saw an increase in trading people. It was especially since the construction of connecting bridges that connected the Bandar Bakau to the city. It made this area often passed by people with various purposes. At least these people stopped to join and fill their stomachs, although not to visit the tourism destination. Therefore, there was an increase in the number of traders who built trading stalls because of their interests in this condition. It could be interpreted that the increasing business field since Bandar Bakau opened was the media to establish a business.

### *The Effects of Bandar Bakau Tourism Object for Social Aspects*

The social and the economic aspects were interconnected. If the economy in the community were good, there would be a slight possibility of disputes, conflict, social crime, and so on. Meanwhile, if social relations in the community was good and friendship relation was broad, it would be easy for someone to get links to work and open a business in meeting economic needs. Collaboration between the two aspects would improve social welfare. Of course, the object of the community development made it easier for them to realize those two aspects. Just as in this research, Bandar Bakau was an aspect of socio-economic development in the community.

### **Discussion**

This research found that the Bandar Bakau tourism object had essential roles and contributed to the environmental, social, and economic aspects of the surrounding communities. These three aspects were interrelated chains and directly impacted these tourist attractions. Initiatives in environmental management that were in harmony with ecological needs showed that humans had a shared strength-building solidarity in overcoming the problems they faced (Setiawati, Rahmi, & Bethari, 2021). The development of the mangrove area as a tourist attraction consciously could control their behavior and activities to protect the environment. When it became a tourism object, the community was also faced with a condition where the tourism must continue to be superior and improve the welfare and improvement of the quality of the environment (Gunawan, Yunita, & Zakaria, 2016).

There was no conflict, both conceptually and theory and previous research. This article had the same hand in having the same perception that the development of mangrove tourism objects was the ideal model for the environment and the community. However, several things to be highlighted were related to the governments roles as a party who had authority in preparing regulations and supporting every step of tourism object development, especially those associated with the coastal environment. This research saw that cooperation between the government and the community was excellent. The community was given an opportunity openly in the planning stages to realize every activity leading to the principle of a mutual agreement (Putra & Putra, 2019).

On the other hand, the research criticized the governments roles in terms of social control of the peoples behavior involved in managing this tourism object. Some people could damage the environment of tourist activities, such as littering. It was genuinely alarming that besides being difficult to decompose, plastic waste was the source of various environmental problems in the sea. The environment was the main point where humans carried out daily activities must be well maintained. However, this action for violations was not explicit. Supervision as a control prevented damaging behavior or endangering the environment, such as waste disposal in the mangrove tourist area still lacking and need to be improved. Good cooperation from the government and the community by providing an open opportunity to engage in tourist attractions must be balanced with control of maintaining the attraction itself to remain in good condition.

### **Conclusion**

This conclusion ended in a statement about the governments success and the community managing Bandar Bakau tourism object. These attractions affected socio-economic, which was the effects on the environment significantly. The mangrove guarded and maintained then processed into interests can contribute to the greening area of the sea area and avoid coastal abrasion. Hence, such management forms need to be supported and applied to regions with the same



problems and potential natural resources. Although it was still critical in the direction of the Bandar Bakau tourism object in general, the model of managing attractions could be ideal and appropriate.

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