



Strategies for Rapidly Achieving Sustainable Tourism Development: Stakeholder Roles and Policy Impacts

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Abstract

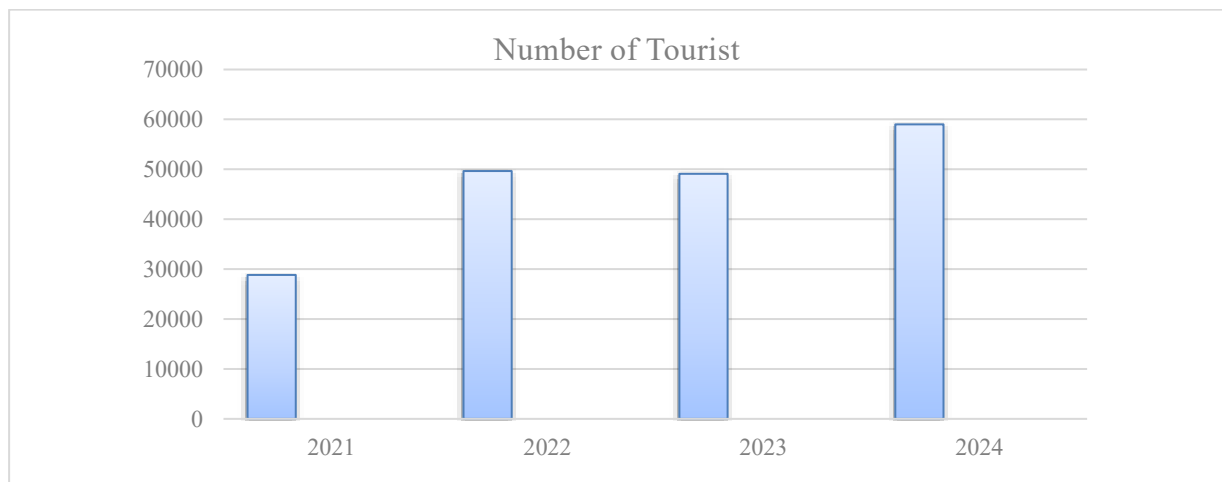
This study explores sustainable tourism development on Rupert Island, the outermost island of Indonesia. It discusses the strategic role of stakeholders and policy implications in realizing sustainable tourism faster and more effectively. Although research on sustainable tourism development has been widely conducted, research on the active involvement of various stakeholders and the impact of policies is still very much needed. The purpose of this study is to develop the concept of sustainable development of Rupert Island tourism objects in Indonesia by analyzing the role of stakeholders in planning, implementation, and supervision, as well as the impact of policies that greatly determine the success of sustainable tourism development. Data was collected using a qualitative approach by conducting in-depth interviews with ten informants and analyzing three local media outlets using the capture feature of the Nvivo 12 plus application related to the management and development of tourism objects on Rupert Island, Indonesia. The data obtained were coded and analyzed using the same application. The study results indicate that the role of government, private sector, local communities, academics, and media are very much needed and synergize with each other in accelerating the realization of sustainable tourism. In addition, effective policies, such as strict regulations on environmental impacts, incentives for sustainable businesses, and strengthening community capacity, are key factors in accelerating the transformation of the tourism sector towards sustainability. With a collaborative approach and sustainability-based policies, the tourism sector can thrive without sacrificing the balance of the environment and local culture.

Key Words : Tourism, Development, Stakeholders, Policy , Strategies, sustainability

Introduction

Tourism is a rapidly growing economic sector and contributes significantly to global and national economic growth (Lapuz, 2023). Tourism is considered an indispensable economic and social development industry, which can positively impact employment, gross income, and production (Alcalá et al., 2025). However, the development of the tourism industry that is not well managed can cause various problems, such as environmental degradation, exploitation of local culture, and social and economic inequality (Luo et al., 2024). Therefore, sustainable tourism development is becoming increasingly important to ensure that the current generation can enjoy the benefits of tourism without sacrificing the needs of future generations (Chang & Zhang, 2024). One of the tourist attractions designated by the government as a National Tourism Strategic Area (KSPN) is Rupert Island, Indonesia. Rupert has the potential to be a leading tourist attraction in Indonesia because it has a beach with a stretch of white sand about 17 kilometers long and borders directly with Malaysia, so it has enormous potential to be developed. The management of Rupert Island tourist attractions currently does not involve the community, and the lack of community involvement results in economic benefits for sustainability not being felt; in addition, the problems and obstacles faced by tourists when visiting Rupert Island are the limited connecting transportation using ships, then access roads from the South Rupert and North Rupert areas. The readiness of accommodations such as lodging, restaurants, and shopping centers that are not yet optimal is also a problem that must be fixed to develop Rupert tourism into one of the tourist destinations. When viewed from the number of tourists visiting from 2021 to 2024, which reached 183,000 tourists, the Rupert Island tourist attraction has excellent potential to be developed.

Graph 1. Tourists visiting from 2021 to 2024



Source: Bengkalis Regency Tourism Office, Indonesia 2025

Graph 1 shows that the number of tourist visits increased from 2021 to 2024; this indicates excellent interest from tourists visiting Rupert Island. This data is the basis for the importance of accelerating the development of Rupert Island tourist attractions by prioritizing sustainable values. Sustainable tourism development aims to balance economic, social, and environmental aspects in managing tourist destinations (Manthiou, 2025). With the strategic location of Rupert Island, the potential to become a leading tourist attraction is a very large tourist destination for foreign tourists, supported by the rapid economic growth of

neighboring countries (Amerta, 2017). However, in its implementation, the development of Rupert Island tourism has been very slow; the challenges faced often include weak coordination between stakeholders, lack of adequate regulations, and low awareness of the importance of sustainability in the tourism sector (Zheng & Yang, 2023). Therefore, an appropriate strategy is needed to accelerate the realization of sustainable tourism development (Deng & Hu, 2024). Stakeholders in the tourism industry, including government, business actors, local communities, academics, and the media, have a vital role in realizing sustainability. The government is responsible for designing supportive policies and regulations (Redy et al., 2024), while business actors can adopt environmentally and socially friendly practices (Putra, 2019). As part of the tourism ecosystem, local communities must be empowered to participate in actively managing and benefiting from tourism (Huang et al., 2021). In addition, academics can provide research-based insights and advocacy to encourage more inclusive and sustainable policies. Effective policies are a key factor in accelerating the achievement of sustainable tourism development (Budhi et al., 2022). Clear regulations, incentives for sustainable businesses, and strict monitoring and evaluation mechanisms can help overcome various obstacles in implementing sustainability policies (Manthiou, 2025).

Based on this background, this study aims to develop the concept of sustainable tourism object development with stakeholder collaboration to accelerate sustainable tourism development in Rupert Island, Indonesia. This study discusses the role of each stakeholder and the policy implications that can accelerate the implementation of the sustainability concept in the tourism sector in Rupert Island, Indonesia. By understanding and optimizing the role of stakeholders, the impact of policies, and practical strategies, the tourism sector can develop while maintaining a balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects.

Sustainable tourism balances environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects to ensure long-term benefits for all stakeholders, including tourists, communities, and the environment (Sejfijaj et al., 2025). Sustainable tourism development is a significant goal for many countries that want to optimize this sector without damaging the local environment and culture (Zhao et al., 2024). Furthermore, sustainable tourism has various definitions. Sustainable tourism fully considers current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, meeting the needs of visitors, industry, environment, and communities (Budeanu et al., 2016). Sustainable tourism must ensure optimal use of environmental resources, respect the socio-cultural characteristics of local communities, and still provide socio-economic benefits to stakeholders (Streimikiene et al., 2021). To achieve sustainability quickly, synergy between stakeholders and appropriate policies are needed (Font et al., 2023), and a more holistic perspective is needed that allows us to consider all sectors and resources that tourism relies on (Huang et al., 2021). (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018) emphasizes sustainability criteria by minimizing negative environmental and social impacts, reducing the carbon footprint of transportation, normalizing visitor behavior, reducing tourist density, compensating for negative impacts caused by tourism, and serving destinations. (Grytsiuk et al., 2017). Sustainable tourism development strategies aim to improve residents' quality of life (Cortez & Rivera, 2016), highlighting that sustainable tourism development is related to people's self-actualization and requires planning.

To develop a sustainable tourism industry, (Sejfijaj et al., 2025) suggest several strategies, such as ensuring tourist safety, planning sustainable economic benefits, more environmental regulations, informing the community about sustainable tourism, and developing the necessary infrastructure. (Stoddard et al., 2012) suggested that tourism

development organizations adopt a triple-bottom-line framework, including economic, environmental, and social sustainability strategies to enhance sustainability. They showed that the triple-bottom-line framework can improve the strategic decision-making of tourism development organizations. (Bramwell et al., 2017) stated that tourism development can benefit the economy but harm the environment. Therefore, a well-designed plan is needed for tourism development. They also pointed out that tourism authorities should pay more attention to environmental protection, and businesses should operate with ecological considerations. In sustainable tourism development, collaboration between stakeholders is essential, where the government, local communities, business actors, media, and academics must work together to create a tourism system that is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable (de Lurdes Calisto et al., 2023). The success of sustainable tourism can only be achieved if all parties are aware of and committed to sustainability principles (Putra, 2019).

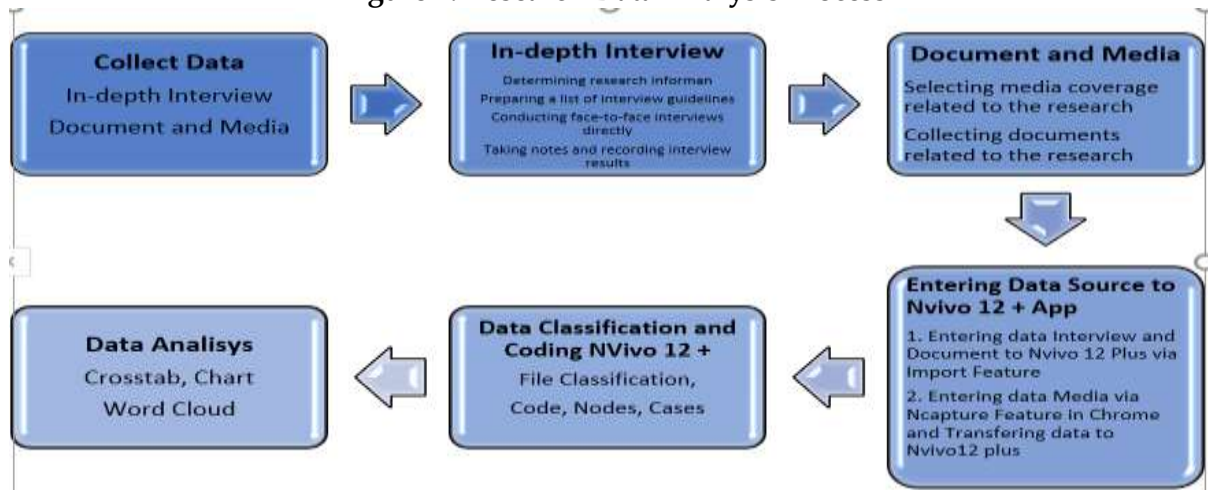
The dynamics of the role of stakeholders in accelerating sustainable tourism show how sustainability can be improved through dialogue, stimulating continuous learning processes, strengthening relationships between stakeholders, building more solid networks, and opening access to new sources of funding for tourist destinations. These dynamics also trigger positive mechanisms that go beyond the initial scope of the scheme, strengthening the argument that the role of stakeholders in sustainable tourism directly causes targeted policy changes. (Grytsiuk et al., 2017) Emphasized that the formulation of a management mechanism for the development of tourist destination organizations and the development of an effective cooperation model between government, business, and society (Budhi et al., 2022) can produce a sustainable tourism development strategy by strengthening stakeholder commitment, increasing the role and capabilities of local communities (Lapuz, 2023), as well as by enforcing the principles of sustainable tourism, and developing responsible tourism marketing, (Mustafa Ayobami Raji et al., 2024). (Nowacki et al., 2018) evaluated the tourism development strategy in Poland, pointing to strategic planning, stakeholder involvement in the process, and the principles of sustainable development. (Lundgren & McMakin, 2009) Stated that sustainable tourism development is influenced by an unrealistic understanding of how policy is made; a lack of understanding of sustainable policymaking impacts policy change and sustainability. Sustainable tourism reflects the principles of evidence-based policy, as the evidence generated by indicators has a linear and rational function in the policymaking process: indicators are collected, problems are identified, solutions are understood, policies are changed, and sustainability is improved (Crabolu et al., 2024)

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach in collecting primary data by interviewing ten in-depth informants consisting of stakeholders, community leaders, academics, the private sector, and the government. Interviews were conducted directly and online. Secondary data collection was also collected by collecting articles published in local and national online media discussing tourism development on Rupert Island. This study was analyzed using the Nvivo 12 Plus qualitative data processing application, making it easy to collect, manage, and analyze research data. The results of the interviews were inputted into the Nvivo 12 plus data processing application and then coded. At the same time, articles in online media were collected and coded through the Ncapture feature of the same application. The data that had

been classified was then visualized using the Nvivo 12 plus application through the crosstab, chart, and word cloud features. The data processing results were then analyzed qualitatively with data triangulation and presented descriptively.

Figure 1. Research Data Analysis Process



Source: Process by the Author, 2025

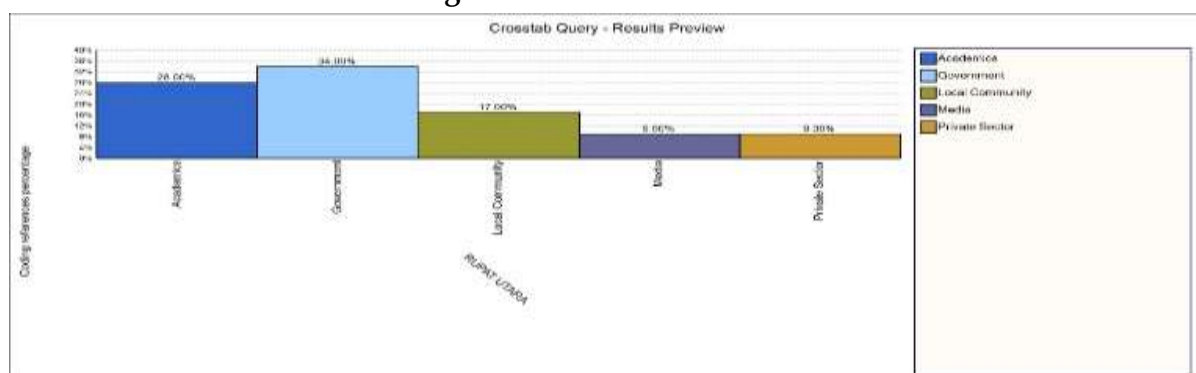
Results and Discussion

Sustainable tourism development requires a multi-faceted approach involving various stakeholders and implementing appropriate policies. Tourism planning and management, carried out in an integrated manner between multiple parties, is a systematic method that includes the involvement of all stakeholders in every stage, from planning and implementation to evaluation of tourism sector development. This approach aims to ensure sustainability, balance the interests of various parties, and optimize economic, social, and environmental benefits in the tourism industry. A study on the acceleration of sustainable tourism development on Rupert Island, which has been designated as a national strategic tourism area, highlights the role of five main sectors: academics, mass media, government, private industry, and local communities.

The Role Of Stakeholders In Accelerating Sustainable Development On Rupert Island, Indonesia

Using the Nvivo 12 Plus application, data processing is carried out using the crosstab feature and produces involvement from stakeholders, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1. Stakeholder Roles



Based on Figure 2, five stakeholders play a role in developing sustainable tourism in the Rupert Island Tourism Object: Academics, Government, Local Community, Media, and Private Sector. The study results show that the involvement of the Media and Private Sector in developing this tourist attraction is still very low, only around nine percent. The minimal contribution of the private sector hampers sustainable development on Rupert Island and impacts limited employment opportunities for the surrounding community. The low involvement of the private sector also causes the slow development of tourist attractions on Rupert Island. This is in line with (Johnston, 2015), which states that the private sector has an important role in sustainable tourism development, including in various aspects of planning and development. Private sector participation is expected in designing and building new tourist destinations, but minimal involvement has hampered tourism development on Rupert Island. This sector should contribute to the planning, designing, and implementing innovative tourism projects to attract domestic and international tourists, but this has not been optimal. In addition, the private sector is responsible for providing environmentally friendly tourism services and facilities and supporting the preservation of local culture, such as managing tourist attractions, accommodation, and quality food and beverage services. However, these facilities are still not adequately available on Rupert Island, resulting in low tourist attractions and less than optimal economic benefits for the surrounding community. This makes it clear that private sector involvement in sustainable tourism development with the principle of providing benefits (Amerta, 2017) for the community in Rupert Island tourist attractions has not been implemented. In addition, the low involvement of the private sector in sustainable tourism development results in a lack of funds, minimal innovation, slow infrastructure development, lack of promotion, and limited empowerment of local communities. In addition to the lack of private sector involvement, the role of the media in promoting Rupert Island tourist attractions is also not optimal.

Along with advances in technology and easy internet access, many tourists get references to tourist attractions from media reviews that interest them. However, from the results of searches on the internet, there are not many interesting reviews about Rupert Island tourist attractions. As a result, this tourist destination is still not widely known. Lack of information regarding routes and travel costs is also an obstacle for tourists who want to visit. The media has an important role in effective marketing, primarily through digital and social media, to introduce potential tourism potential to potential tourists (Zhao et al., 2024). However, this strategy has not been optimized in developing Rupert Island tourism. The media's role is crucial in increasing the exposure of tourist attractions at the national and international levels. Community involvement in the development of Rupert Island is still low, with a percentage of 17; this shows that the community as a local economic actor, cultural preservation, and environmental preservation are still low, which causes sustainable tourism development on Rupert Island not to be achieved. Local people best understand the condition of natural resources and culture that are tourist attractions.

Regarding the development of Rupert Island tourism objects, local community involvement is low. As a result, Rupert Island tourist destinations lack a strong local identity, which causes its sustainability to be vulnerable if there is no support from the surrounding community. The involvement of local people is still less visible from the economic benefits they have not felt, which causes sustainability in the development of Rupert Island tourism objects not to be achieved. Academics and government have relatively high involvement with a percentage of 28 and 34; academics show support for sustainable development on Rupert

economic growth. One of the causes is government policies that limit the role of the private sector, especially in investments such as hotel and restaurant development. Although Rupert Island has long been designated as a National Tourism Strategic Area (KSPN), the economic benefits for local communities are still not optimal. This shows a gap between policy objectives and reality on the ground, which is most likely caused by challenges in infrastructure development, coordination between stakeholders, and community empowerment, including economic growth, job creation, and income generation.

Policies also need to balance cultural promotion and preservation of its intrinsic values. Increased interaction with tourists and the demands of the tourism industry have the potential to change the social dynamics of the community, traditional social structures, and lifestyles that have long existed on Rupert Island. Therefore, careful planning and active community involvement are needed to minimize negative social impacts. Although policies have been designed to encourage community participation, community involvement in practice is still limited due to several factors, such as low awareness and lack of capacity development. In addition, Rupert Island still faces serious environmental challenges, such as worsening coastal erosion, indicating that existing policies or their implementation have not been effective enough in addressing this threat.

Other issues that are still obstacles are inadequate waste management and garbage in tourist areas, including on beaches and along roads. This emphasizes the need for more effective waste management policies and better implementation. Developing environmentally friendly infrastructure, such as sustainable waste disposal systems and green building practices, has not been a top priority or has not been optimally implemented by the principles of sustainable tourism.

Conclusion

The results of this study found the importance of close collaboration between stakeholders and policies that support sustainability. Stakeholders consisting of government, private sector, media, community, and academics are required to be able to collaborate and carry out their roles according to their interests (Budeanu et al., 2016), with good collaboration between the five sectors will accelerate the achievement of the goal of developing the Indonesian island of Rupert into a leading tourist destination. The results of the study showed that the involvement of two stakeholders with a low percentage, namely the private sector and the media, made the development of the Indonesian island of Rupert tourist attraction constrained, the minimal involvement of the private sector as investors in providing services for tourists became an obstacle in the development of sustainable tourist attractions, but this also happened as an impact of local government policies that limit private investment, especially in the provision of supporting facilities for tourist attractions. This policy aims to provide opportunities for local communities to provide services for tourists, but this harms the development of tourist attractions due to the limited capabilities of local communities. Therefore, to overcome this problem, policies and strategies are needed that encourage the private sector to be more active in supporting the development of tourist attractions by prioritizing local community empowerment.

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