

POTENTIAL OF CILETUH GEOPARK ECO-TOURISM IN THE CONTEXT OF MARINE TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

The Ciletuh National Geopark area which is administratively included in the Ciemas and Ciracap Districts, Sukabumi Regency, West Java Province has a unique geological diversity and is the site of the oldest rock exposure in West Java. Because of its geological characteristics that are not found elsewhere, Ciletuh is a National Geopark (Earth Park) in Indonesia. In carrying out the Geopark concept, a supporting activity is needed to drive sustainable economic activity in the form of geotourism. The purpose of making this scientific article is to find out the potential for geotourism activities that can be carried out at the Ciletuh National Geopark.

INTRODUCTION

Sukabumi City is part of the West Java Province which is located in the south-central part of West Java, this city has a strategic position towards the Greater Jakarta area or Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi. The city is flanked by the city of Jakarta in the south and the city of Bandung in the west. Sukabumi City is one of the cities of choice for tourism because many local and foreign tourists visit this city for a moment to enjoy the beauty of the marine or mountainous nature, besides that Sukabumi City is known for its culture that has polite and courteous manners and speaks a soft Sundanese language. Geographically, Sukabumi Regency has an area of 4,161 km² or 11.21 percent of the area of West Java or 3.01 percent of the total area of Java Island. With such an area, Sukabumi Regency has the title as the largest regency in Java and Bali.

Sukabumi Regency has a territorial boundary which includes 40% bordering the ocean and 60% is land, however, the people in Sukabumi as the sons of the region who have the knowledge and potential to develop natural resources in their area do not care about that. Even though it is not surprising that Sukabumi Regency has various exotic natural beauties such as Cimaja Beach, Ujung Genteng, Buni Ayu Cave and Situ Gunung. The natural beauty that is still not well known is that which is found in Ciletuh, Ciemas District, Sukabumi Regency, geologically it is a distinctive, unique and rare area because in this area the oldest rock groups on the island of Java are exposed. The existence of an earth park or geopark makes this area very unique and rare.

The Ciletuh area is about 135 km from Sukabumi City, the contours of the road that go up and down, winding, coupled with the narrowness of the road and damage to a number of points have resulted in the distance to visit this area taking about six to seven

hours by land and about three hours by road. sea route that starts from the port of the queen. When viewed from a height the Geopark area in Ciletuh has a pattern resembling a horseshoe that opens to the Indian Ocean. The rocks exposed on the surface of the Geopark Area in Ciletuh show a very beautiful view, both in terms of rock composition and natural and marine beauty. The Geopark area in Ciletuh has stunning natural beauty, containing coral reefs as a home for various types of rare ornamental fish, Mandra Island, Manuk Island, Kunti Island, white sand which is only found on Cikadal beach which is adjacent to Ciletuh Bay, Sodong Cave. is a horizontal cave measuring about 10 meters long which can be penetrated directly showing the beauty of the ocean.

CILETUH GEOPARK

Geopark is an area that has prominent geological elements including archaeological, ecological and cultural values in it where local people are invited to participate in protecting and enhancing the function of natural heritage (UNESCO, 2004)^[4]. Geoparks not only present nature that is geologically monumental, but also the life in it, namely humans, animals and plants. Humans may have lived in it for generations, working in it so that more or less generate its own economic value. Through the development of Geoparks, local community economic activities will be stimulated through sustainable development activities, as well as stimulate the creation of local entrepreneurs, small businesses, accommodation industries that create new jobs, in line with sustainable educational activities that are activities within the region.

The key to the success of Geopark development and management lies in the role and participation of local communities who are active and understand the meaning of geopark itself, unfortunately in the Ciletuh Geopark area there are still some people who do not understand the meaning of geopark and still carry out rock mining and logging which is contrary to the principles of geopark. geopark, namely sustainable development^[4].

GEOTOURISM

Tourism Geography is a field of applied science that seeks to examine the geographical elements of an area for tourism purposes. The geographical elements of an area have different potentials and characteristics. Mountain landscapes with a cool climate, sloping beaches with white sand, forests with a variety of rare plants, lakes with clean water, are potential areas that can be developed for the tourism industry. Other geographical elements such as location/location, morphological conditions, population, affect the possibility of developing tourism potential.

Tourism development is largely determined by how much potential supply and demand are. The supply potential provides an illustration of how much attractiveness a tourist attraction has in a tourist destination. Meanwhile, the potential demand provides an illustration of how much potential tourists come from the Tourist Origin Area.

The relationship between geography and tourism can be seen from the analysis of the tourism system in tourism travel. In this system, there are three interrelated sub-systems, namely the tourist origin sub-system, the tourist destination sub-system and the Route sub-system. The role of geography in this system is as a liaison between the three sub-systems. The linkage of the system will be good if the distance or geographical disturbance can be recognized and managed by the three sub-systems^[2].

CULTURE TOURISM

One of the cultural beauties in this area is the culture of catching grasshoppers at night, this activity is usually carried out in the rice fields that have been harvested by women who are approaching marriage age. In addition, there are 54 cultures such as Gendang Pencak, Laes and Calung, which are traditional music performances. The languages spoken in this area are Sundanese and Indonesian, which have a lilting twist. This area has a complete natural beauty that can attract general and special tourism

interest if it is considered by the government, local residents and managed properly. This geopark area can improve the economy of the local community because in it there are activities that support to get economic value from visiting tourists.

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