

## TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF MAHORO ISLAND IN SITARO REGENCY, NORTH SULAWESI

Angelina T. Palandung<sup>1</sup>, Maria Heny Pratiknjo<sup>2\*</sup>, Very Yohanis Londa<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1-3</sup> Universitas Sam Ratulangi, Indonesia

E-mail: <sup>1)</sup> [angelinapalandung@gmail.com](mailto:angelinapalandung@gmail.com), <sup>2)</sup> [mariapratiknjo31@gmail.com](mailto:mariapratiknjo31@gmail.com),  
<sup>3)</sup> [verylonda@gmail.com](mailto:verylonda@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*This study examines the potential for tourism development on Mahoro Island, located in the Siau Tagulandang Biaro (Sitaro) Regency of North Sulawesi. A approach which focuses on attractions, amenities, and accessibility is utilized. The research adopts a qualitative methodology and follows systematic data analysis procedures as outlined by Miles and Huberman, including data disaggregation, clear presentation of findings, and the formulation of conclusions. The findings indicate that Mahoro Island possesses remarkable natural attractions, including exquisite white sandy beaches and an abundance of marine life. However, there are notable challenges; the management of these attractions is currently inadequate. Additionally, the island's amenities, such as accommodations and various services, are in need of significant enhancement. Furthermore, access to and navigation around the island are impeded by limited transportation options and suboptimal port facilities. To address these challenges, it is imperative to improve the management of tourist sites, upgrade the available facilities, and enhance transportation alternatives. Furthermore, fostering collaboration among government entities, tourism businesses, and local communities is crucial for achieving sustainable tourism development in the region. By focusing on these three components, we aim to position Mahoro Island as a premier tourist destination and contribute to the growth of the local economy.*

**Keywords:** Coastal Destination Management, Marine Tourism Potential, Island Infrastructure Development, Sustainable Destination Planning, Stakeholder Collaboration

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelago that has tremendous tourism potential, thanks to its natural wealth, cultural diversity and long history. Famous for its beaches, mountains and marine ecosystems, Indonesia also offers unique cultural tourism, from historic temple relics to ethnic traditions on various islands. With diverse destinations spread across 34 provinces, tourism is one of the most contributing economic sectors in Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). As a tropical country with more than 17,000 islands, Indonesia offers stunning natural tourism destinations, including beaches in Bali and Lombok, mountains in Papua and Sumatra, and diving areas in Raja Ampat and Wakatobi.

The Indonesian government has adopted several programs to support sustainable tourism. The concept of sustainable tourism is a priority in developing the national tourism

---

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Sam Ratulangi

Maria H. Pratiknjo

\*E-mail: [mariapratiknjo31@gmail.com](mailto:mariapratiknjo31@gmail.com)

sector. Sustainable tourism emphasizes environmental, social, and economic aspects so that it is not only economically beneficial but also provides benefits to local communities and preserves the environment. Community tourism programs are also being introduced in several destinations such as Yogyakarta and Flores, where communities are directly involved in tourism operations, providing authentic experiences for tourists, and helping to minimize negative impacts on local culture.

One form of sustainable tourism is ecotourism, which is increasingly in demand by both domestic and foreign tourists. The book *Tourism in Southeast Asia* (Hitchcock et al., 2009) notes that ecotourism in Indonesia includes areas such as Komodo National Park, which maintains a balance between the needs of tourists and environmental sustainability. Ecotourism is driven by the principle of environmental conservation that seeks to preserve local ecosystems, including flora, fauna and local culture (Setiawati et al., 2023).

Despite its great potential, tourism development in Indonesia also faces several challenges. One of the main challenges is infrastructure, especially in remote areas that have high natural tourist attractions but lack infrastructure attention. This results in limited accessibility and tourists often find it difficult to reach certain destinations, such as tourist areas in Papua or Southeast Sulawesi. The book *Tourism Development and Management*, Weaver and Lawton (2010) mentioned that tourism development must be balanced with infrastructure improvements that include road access, lodging, and public transportation. Another issue is environmental awareness in some crowded tourist destinations, such as Bali and Lombok, which face issues of waste accumulation and environmental pollution due to high tourism activity. This is further exacerbated by the lack of effective regulation and supervision (Nuur, 2021). Irresponsible travelers, as well as poor waste management on the part of destination managers, often lead to serious environmental degradation (Farista et al., 2022). In the face of these challenges, the government is working with various parties to improve tourism management. Environmental education programs for tourists and local communities are also being intensified. These efforts are in line with the goal of sustainable tourism, which is to minimize negative environmental and social impacts (Rahmafitria et al., 2020; Setiawati et al., 2023).

Tourism development in Indonesia faces a variety of complex challenges, both in terms of infrastructure, human resources, and environmental impacts. One of the main challenges is the limited quality and quantity of human resources skilled in managing the tourism sector, especially in remote areas that have great tourism potential but lack attention

in developing the capacity of local communities (Kurniawan, 2020). In addition, although Indonesia is rich in natural and cultural tourism destinations, the lack of adequate infrastructure, such as access to transportation, accommodation, and other public facilities, is often a major hindrance (Sari & Fretes, 2021). Another challenge is waste management and environmental conservation, especially in crowded tourist destinations, which can threaten the sustainability of local ecosystems (Salahudin Saiman, 2022). On the other hand, digitization and rapidly evolving information technology also bring their own challenges to community-based tourism, where many destinations have yet to fully utilize the potential of digital marketing to increase their visibility and attractiveness in the global market (Margaretha, 2024). As such, sustainable tourism development requires special attention to human resource capacity building, equitable infrastructure development, and better management of environmental impacts to ensure long-term benefits for local communities and economies.

A number of reports and studies show the great potential of tourism in Indonesia. For example, in an article from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (2020), it is mentioned that Indonesia is targeting up to 20 million foreign tourists per year before the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on improving facilities and promoting tourist destinations throughout the country (Sugihamretha, 2020). In another article, it is mentioned that Bali, which has been the main tourist destination, is starting to be directed as a model for the development of new destinations through the "10 New Bali" program (Nurjana, 2022). This program aims to distribute tourist arrivals so as to improve the welfare of other regions, including tourist areas in Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Papua.

North Sulawesi is rich in natural and cultural tourism, with Sitaro Regency comprising the islands of Siau, Tagulandang, and Biaro offering unspoiled beaches, coral reefs, volcanoes, and vibrant traditions. Among its top destinations is Mahoro Island, located in South East Siau. Known for its white sandy beaches, crystal-clear waters, and vibrant marine life, Mahoro is ideal for snorkeling, diving, and peaceful escapes. The island earned national recognition in 2018 as Indonesia's "Most Popular Hidden Paradise" and has even hosted the Korean show *Law of the Jungle*. Despite its potential, Mahoro faces challenges such as limited infrastructure, difficult access, and environmental risks. Sustainable tourism development and better management are essential to preserve its natural beauty and long-term appeal.

While much research has been done on tourism development strategies, especially those emphasizing sustainability and local potential, there remains a gap in studies that comprehensively apply the 3A framework (Attraction, Accessibility, and Amenity) in the context of small, remote island destinations such as Mahoro Island in Sitaro Regency, North Sulawesi. Several studies have addressed tourism development using various approaches. Anuar et al. (2013), for example, highlight the significance of coordinated tourism policies but focus on urban contexts like Kuala Lumpur, which differ vastly from isolated coastal or island settings. Ramadhani et al. (2021) explored village-based tourism in Puncak Sosok with an emphasis on digital marketing and community involvement, yet infrastructure issues were not sufficiently addressed.

Recent studies have increasingly adopted the 3A framework, offering valuable insights yet still leaving notable gaps. Ramadhan (2023) analyzed tourism strategies in Hutanagodang using SWOT analysis integrated with 3A, uncovering unused cultural assets and promotion challenges, but without addressing island-specific logistical barriers. Puspita et al. (2023) developed 3A components based on Sundanese cultural landscapes in a village setting, demonstrating the potential of localized cultural integration, though not in isolated or marine environments. Putri and Asmara (2022) assessed Karanganyar's tourism potential under the 3A model, showing rich attractions yet insufficient infrastructure development, primarily in mainland settings. Palupiningtyas et al. (2022) examined religious tourism in Semarang, focusing on site-specific attraction enhancement and amenity maintenance, with limited discussion on geographic remoteness. Prayoga et al. (2022) evaluated tourism in Denai Lama using 3A and SWOT approaches, pointing to promising agro-tourism icons, but still constrained by accessibility and uneven infrastructure.

Other relevant research such as Arintoko et al. (2020) emphasized community-based tourism in Borobudur but lacked adaptability discussions for geographically isolated regions. Zeraib et al. (2022) observed mismatches between tourism strategies and mountainous localities, underlining the crucial role of contextual sensitivity. Meanwhile, Rosardi et al. (2022) stressed the importance of human capital in sustainable tourism, but did not examine how this intersects with agro-maritime tourism or remote settings.

Given these limitations, this study aims to fill the research gap by exploring and formulating a tourism development strategy tailored to Mahoro Island in Sitaro Regency, North Sulawesi, with a focus on the 3A approach. The novelty of this research lies in its context-specific application of the 3A framework to a remote island destination, considering

unique local challenges and opportunities. By focusing on Mahoro Island's natural beauty, marine ecosystem, and accessibility issues, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive, sustainable tourism development strategy that not only enhances destination competitiveness but also fosters local community welfare and supports broader regional development.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach, which aims to understand phenomena in depth through the collection of narrative or descriptive data rather than numerical data (Sugiyono, 2017). This approach is appropriate because the researcher seeks to examine the tourism development strategy based on the actual conditions in the field and the perceptions of stakeholders. The research design is a case study, focusing on a specific location, namely Mahoro Island in Sitaro Regency, with the aim of deeply examining its tourism development strategy.

### **Research Sample**

The informants for this research were selected using purposive sampling, a technique in which participants are chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2007). This method ensures that the selected individuals can provide rich, in-depth, and relevant insights aligned with the study's goals. In this study, ten informants were selected using purposive sampling. This approach was used because the researcher sought individuals with knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the tourism development of Mahoro Island, located in the Siau Tagulandang Biaro (Sitaro) Regency, North Sulawesi Province. The informants were chosen based on the following criteria:

- a) Local government representatives, particularly from agencies responsible for tourism and regional development;
- b) Local business actors involved in tourism services such as transportation, homestays, and culinary enterprises;
- c) Community leaders and traditional figures with deep understanding of the socio-cultural context and local potential of Mahoro Island;
- d) Tour guides or tourism community members actively engaged in environmental conservation and tourism promotion efforts.

### **Data Collection Tools and Procedure**

The data collection process was conducted in three stages: observation, interviews, and documentation.

- a) **Observation:** Direct observation was carried out on Mahoro Island to assess the physical condition, tourism facilities, and activities. This observation provided factual and objective data regarding the environment, infrastructure, and the behavior of tourists and tourism business actors on the island.
- b) **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather information on the tourism conditions, challenges, and development strategies from the informants. The interviews aimed to explore the perspectives and experiences of the stakeholders regarding tourism development on the island.
- c) **Documentation:** Relevant documents such as annual reports from the tourism office, tourist visitation statistics, and tourism policies were collected and analyzed. These documents served as authentic evidence complementing the interview and observation data.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis in this research was performed using qualitative descriptive techniques, following the steps of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. According to Miles (1994), qualitative data analysis is an interactive process that continues until data saturation is reached. The analysis involves the following key components:

- a) **Data Reduction:** This process involves selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data from field notes or interview transcripts. The goal of data reduction in this research is to filter and focus on the data relevant to the tourism development strategy on Mahoro Island.
- b) **Data Presentation:** The reduced data is presented in an organized form, such as tables, graphs, or diagrams, to facilitate further analysis. This stage helps in visualizing the data, enabling the researcher to identify patterns and relationships.
- c) **Conclusion Drawing:** The conclusions are drawn by analyzing the presented data to find meanings, make interpretations, and derive strategic insights. This involves assessing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats based on the available data and validating the conclusions through data triangulation or clarification from informants when necessary.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data used for this research was taken from in-depth interviews with 10 informants who were selected purposively. The informants consist of various backgrounds that are considered to have direct or indirect links to the tourism sector, both from government elements, business actors, community leaders, to local tourism actors.

### Attractions

Attractions are one of the main components in the development of tourist destinations. In the context of Mahoro Island, attractions include all potential attractions that are able to attract tourists to come and enjoy the tourist experience offered. These attractions can be natural in nature such as the beauty of the beach, the clarity of sea water, and underwater wealth, or artificial or cultural in nature such as tourist activities, art performances, and local wisdom of the local community.

Mahoro Island is known as one of the small islands that has the charm of stunning natural beauty. The exotic landscape with blue sea views, white sand, and abundant marine life makes Mahoro a potential destination to be developed as a marine tourism center. The authenticity and naturalness of the environment on this island is an added value that is not shared by many other destinations. However, to make Mahoro Island's attractions a major force in tourism development, it is necessary to map its potential and address its constraints. This includes aspects of promotion, visitor management, environmental conservation, and the development of integrated tour packages.

The results of an interview conducted by the researcher with Inf02, who is the Head of the Sitaro Regency Tourism Office, regarding the potential of attractions on Mahoro Island, said that:

*"Mahoro Island is a potential marine tourism asset. Its natural beauty is outstanding, with white sand beaches, clear sea water and unspoiled coral reefs. In terms of attractiveness, Mahoro is already a favorite among adventurous tourists. But unfortunately, this potential has not been optimized to the fullest due to limitations in promotion and the absence of professional management of attractions. We at the agency have actually begun to develop a development plan, but we are still hampered by budget and collaboration across sectors that are not yet solid."*

The same thing was conveyed by informants Inf09 and Inf10 who are communities on Mahoro Island, saying that:

*"The beauty of Mahoro is no secret to those of us who live here. But until now, community involvement in the management of the attraction has been minimal. Our community actually has the spirit to participate,*



*but there has been no training or real support from the government or outside parties. If there is an empowerment program that involves us, I'm sure tourist attractions can develop faster and more sustainably."*

The results of interviews with informant Inf08, who is both a community member and a tourism activist, said that:

*"Mahoro can be a world-class ecotourism destination if managed wisely. Attraction development should not only pursue the number of visits, but must pay attention to educational and conservation aspects. For example, by creating tour packages based on coral reef conservation or educational tours about marine ecosystems. This will also increase the local community's awareness of the importance of protecting the environment."*

Based on the results of interviews related to the potential attractions on Mahoro Island, it was found that Mahoro Island has high natural attraction advantages, but has not been developed optimally. It is necessary to strengthen promotion, actively involve the community, and develop a tourism concept that is not only exploitative, but also educative and sustainable.

### **Accessibility**

Accessibility is a determining factor in the successful development of tourist destinations. Accessibility does not only refer to the availability of transportation to tourist sites, but also concerns the condition of road infrastructure, the availability of sea or air transportation modes, affordability, and travel time needed by tourists to reach destinations.

Mahoro Island as a marine tourism destination has its own challenges in terms of accessibility. To reach the island, tourists must travel through several modes of transportation, from land to sea, not all of which are routinely available. Limited boat schedules, weather conditions, and the lack of port infrastructure around the island are significant obstacles in encouraging tourist visits.

The results of interviews conducted with informants Inf03 and Inf04, who are respectively the Head of Government of the Sitaro Islands Regency Secretariat and the Head of the MPPTSP Office of the Sitaro Islands Regency, regarding the potential accessibility of Mahoro Island, said that:

*"Currently, access to Mahoro Island is inadequate. There are no regular sea transportation lines available, so tourists have to rent boats independently from small ports in Siau. This is obviously difficult, especially for first-time travelers. Our hope for the future is that there will be support from the provincial or central government to open regular sea transportation routes."*



When confirmed with informant Inf08, who is a community member as well as a boat owner regarding accessibility and community assistance in terms of transportation, said that:

*“We, the community, are ready to help tourists who want to go to Mahoro, and we have a boat that can be used. But because it depends on the weather and there is no proper dock in Mahoro, we have to be extra careful. It's not uncommon for tourists to be disappointed when their trip is canceled due to waves. If there is a pier and a fixed schedule, it will certainly be easier for all parties.”*

When confirmed to Inf09, an informant from the community who has a relationship with tourists who often visit Mahoro Island, said that:

*“There are guests, my friends and even my son who come to visit Puan Mahor, where they as tourists tell me they want to explore the exotic areas of Mahoro Island. But access to them is very difficult. Information about transportation is very limited. I had to ask many people first to know how to get to Mahoro. This can be a barrier for general tourists who are not used to the terrain of remote areas.”*

Based on the results of interviews related to potential accessibility on Mahoro Island, it was found that accessibility is a major challenge in developing Mahoro Island tourism. The absence of regular transportation, unavailable dock facilities, and lack of transportation information are the main obstacles. Improvements to the transportation system, provision of infrastructure facilities, and clear information dissemination are needed to support the smooth running of tourist visits.

### **Amenity**

Amenity is one of the important components in creating comfort and satisfaction for tourists. Amenity includes various supporting facilities provided in tourist destinations, such as accommodation (hotels, homestays), restaurants, sanitation facilities, tourist information centers, to communication and security facilities. The availability and quality of amenity greatly determines the level of comfort of tourists and is a determining factor in whether they will return to visit or recommend the destination to others.

On Mahoro Island, although the natural attraction is very prominent, the availability of amenity is still very limited. As a small island that has not been touched by much tourist infrastructure development, Mahoro does not have permanent accommodation facilities, restaurants, or other adequate supporting facilities. This is a challenge in tourism development as tourists tend to need basic facilities to support their activities while in the tourist sites.

The results of an interview with Inf05, who is a local tourism manager on Mahoro Island, when asked about the tourism potential of Mahoro Island based on the Amenity indicator, said that:

*“Currently, Mahoro Island does not have any lodging facilities, public toilets or places to eat. Tourists who come usually only stop by briefly, then return to Siau. This is unfortunate because they cannot enjoy Mahoro to the fullest. I am sure that if there are lodgings and basic facilities, tourist visits will increase and their length of stay can be longer.”*

The same thing was also conveyed by informant Inf07, when interviewed, who said that:

*“Amenity is an important part of the travel experience. Without clean toilets, shelter, food and accommodation, the comfort of tourists will be compromised. Moreover, Mahoro is located apart from the city. So, these basic needs should be prioritized first before developing further attractions.”*

As a community member, informant Inf10, when interviewed in relation to amenity, said that:

*“As a community, we are very open and ready to provide facilities if there is assistance or cooperation. But we need training and assistance, because the community here has no experience managing tourist facilities. We hope there is synergy with the agency or other supporting institutions.”*

Based on the results of interviews related to amenity on Mahoro Island, it was found that Mahoro Island still lacks basic tourist facilities. The absence of amenity makes tourists only make short visits. The community has the spirit to help, but needs assistance and help. The development of amenity facilities such as toilets, shelters, and lodging is an important priority in the development of tourism on Mahoro Island.

### **Mahoro Island Tourism Development Strategy in Siau Tagulandang Biaro District, North Sulawesi Province**

In the context of sustainable tourism development, Mahoro Island has several advantages, such as unspoiled natural beauty, low pollution levels, and a strategic position not too far from the district center. However, tourism development cannot only rely on natural advantages, but must also pay attention to the existence of supporting infrastructure, ease of access, and the readiness of human resources in managing and marketing tourism potential.

Indicators of tourism development, which are based on aspects of attractions, accessibility and amenity show that:

a) Attractions

Attraction is a fundamental factor in attracting tourists to visit a destination. In the context of Mahoro Island, the main attraction offered is the natural beauty of the island, which includes white sandy beaches, clear sea water, preserved coral reefs, and rich underwater biodiversity such as ornamental fish, starfish, and various other types of marine biota. In addition, the island's calm atmosphere and freedom from crowds is an added value for tourists who seek tranquility and an exclusive tourism experience.

From the results of interviews with informants, it was found that Mahoro Island has a strong attraction but has not been fully recognized by the wider community, both at home and abroad. The lack of promotion and the absence of a strong tourism branding means that Mahoro's existence is still limited to local or regional tourist visits. In fact, in terms of natural attractiveness, Mahoro Island has the potential to be on par with famous destinations such as Bunaken, even in some ways it can be said to be more exclusive because it is still rarely visited.

Existing attractions have also not been developed in the form of structured tour packages. Activities such as snorkeling, diving, or simply enjoying the sunset have not been packaged in attractive tourism promotions. There are no information boards or interpretation trails that can educate visitors about the uniqueness of nature and the importance of protecting the environment.

In addition to natural attractions, Mahoro Island and its surrounding area also have cultural potential such as the traditions of coastal communities, local culinary, and crafts that can be developed as additional attractions. However, there is no systematic approach to developing these cultural attractions.

Therefore, Mahoro's tourist attraction development strategy should be directed at two main approaches: (1) preservation and strengthening of natural attractions, so that they are maintained and not damaged by over-exploitation; and (2) development of artificial and cultural attractions that involve local communities in an effort to create added value and enrich the tourist experience.

b) Accessibility

Accessibility is a very decisive aspect for the continuity and sustainability of tourist destinations. Difficult access will have a direct impact on the number of tourist visits. Mahoro

Island, as part of a group of islands in Sitaro Regency, has significant obstacles in this regard. To reach Mahoro, tourists generally have to travel by sea from Ulu Siau Harbor using a small boat or speedboat, with a travel time of around 30 to 45 minutes depending on weather conditions.

Interviews with informants revealed that the absence of a fixed schedule or public transportation service to Mahoro Island is a major obstacle. Tourists must rent a boat specifically, which of course requires additional costs and arrangements that are not simple. This is an obstacle for tourists who are not familiar with the terrain and travel procedures in the islands.

In addition, supporting infrastructure such as proper jetties, signposts and transportation information systems are still very limited. During bad weather, access to Mahoro becomes impossible, which affects the consistency of tourism management. The lack of coordination between relevant agencies also hinders the development of integrated access routes.

Strategies to improve accessibility to Mahoro Island should be undertaken through a collaborative approach between agencies, including local government, local transportation operators and tourism businesses. Investment in the construction of safe and environmentally friendly small jetties, provision of scheduled sea transportation fleets, and promotion of affordable travel routes are needed. In addition, the digitization of information regarding access to Mahoro through social media, official regional tourism websites, and travel agents also needs to be improved so that potential tourists get clear information before visiting.

c) Amenities

Amenity is all facilities and services that can support the comfort of tourists while in the destination. On Mahoro Island, the amenity aspect is still the most glaring weak point. Interview results show that there is no formal accommodation available on the island. Tourists who come can only make a short visit (one day trip), because there is no representative place to stay overnight. In addition to lodging, other supporting facilities such as public toilets, eating places, shelter areas, or tourist information centers are also not yet adequately available. Even the need for clean water and electricity is still very limited, considering that the island is not permanently inhabited. This condition is certainly a big challenge to attract tourists who expect comfort in traveling. In fact, amenity is an important factor in extending the length of stay of tourists, which has a direct impact on increasing the

income of the community and local government. Without adequate amenity, Mahoro Island will only be a transit destination that does not provide long-term economic impact.

The amenity development strategy can be done with a community-based tourism approach. For example, the construction of homestays on nearby islands, the provision of local food stalls, or the rental of snorkelling equipment by the community can be the beginning of simple but effective amenity development. Local governments and private investors also need to be facilitated to build basic facilities such as toilets, tourist tents, gazebos, and information centers that are portable and environmentally friendly.

Amenity development must prioritize the principle of sustainability, so as not to damage the natural ecosystem of the island which is the main attraction. The use of renewable energy, community-based waste management, and the involvement of local communities in the management of tourist facilities will be key in building environmentally friendly and sustainable amenity.

### **Factors Supporting and Hindering Tourism Development on Mahoro Island in Sitaro Regency**

Mahoro Island is a marine tourism destination located in Siau Tagulandang Biaro (also known as Sitaro) Regency, North Sulawesi Province. The island has become widely known for its stunning natural beauty, especially by tourists looking for a different experience in the archipelago. Mahoro Island offers a very strong natural appeal: The fine white sand, the clear blue sea, the rich underwater life, and the natural and serene atmosphere make this island a hidden paradise in the northern tip of Sulawesi. The tourism potential of Mahoro Island is not only limited to natural beauty, but also involves various aspects that can be developed into a leading tourist attraction.

However, along with the increasing interest in this destination, various challenges arise in its management and development. Like many other new tourist destinations in Indonesia, Mahoro Island faces a paradoxical situation: on the one hand it is rich in potential, but on the other hand it still lacks a lot in terms of infrastructure, accessibility, and tourist support facilities. This shows that the success of tourism development is not solely determined by the potential of natural attractions, but also by the readiness of other supporting factors, both in terms of institutions, planning, and local community involvement.

Factors that encourage the development of tourism in an area are strongly influenced by the synergy between the 3A elements, namely attractions, accessibility, and amenities. These three aspects serve as the main foundation in building a solid and sustainable tourism

ecosystem. On Mahoro Island, these three aspects have their own characteristics and challenges that should be examined in more depth. In addition, external factors such as digital promotion, local government policies, and changes in tourist behavior patterns also influence the dynamics of tourism development in this area.

On the supporting factor side, Mahoro Island has extraordinary and unspoiled natural tourism assets. The landscape is relatively untouched by massive development, so it holds an exclusive appeal for tourists who like a calm atmosphere and away from the crowds. Mahoro's unique nature provides a great opportunity to be developed as an ecotourism destination or community-based conservation tourism. In addition, local communities around the island, especially those living on Siau Island, generally have an open attitude towards tourism. They realize that this sector can be a promising source of additional income and employment opportunities. The involvement of local communities as direct actors in tourism management will be an important social capital in building community-based tourism.

On the other hand, the existence of social media promotion is also a factor that accelerates the spread of information about Mahoro Island. Many tourists, photographers and content creators share the beauty of the island through platforms such as Instagram, YouTube and TikTok. This creates a very powerful organic promotion effect, even without direct intervention from government agencies or private parties. Tourists are attracted to explore islands that appear stunning on social media, and this is one of the strengths of the digital age in boosting tourism interest.

However, despite this potential and strength, Mahoro Island also faces serious obstacles. One of the main challenges is the lack of basic infrastructure in the tourist area. The island does not yet have supporting facilities such as permanent docks, public toilets, shelters, or security posts. The absence of these facilities creates inconvenience for tourists, especially for those who want to linger to enjoy the natural charm of the island. In addition, access to Mahoro Island is still very limited. Tourists must use motorboats from Siau Island or the nearest port, the availability of which is highly dependent on the weather and the unavailability of regular transportation.

This condition is exacerbated by the absence of an integrated tourism development plan from the local government. To date, there is no blueprint or masterplan that specifically regulates the development of Mahoro Island as a leading tourist destination. As a result, promotional and investment efforts are still sporadic and not integrated. In some cases, there

are even concerns about over-tourism or exploitation of nature if development is not carried out with the principle of sustainability. Another inhibiting factor is the lack of basic accommodation and amenity facilities, so tourists must return to Siau Island to spend the night or fulfill other basic needs.

If reviewed in more depth based on the three main indicators in the development of tourist destinations, namely attractions, accessibility, and amenity, the supporting and inhibiting factors can be explained as follows:

a) Attractions

Mahoro Island has very strong natural attractions, such as white sandy beaches, clear waters for snorkeling and diving activities, and scenery suitable for photography and nature exploration activities. The main supporting factor is the authenticity and uniqueness of the landscape. However, on the inhibiting side, there are no cultural attractions developed to complement nature tourism. In addition, there is no interpretative narrative or local storytelling that can enrich the tourist experience. The lack of information signs and the absence of official tour guides are also obstacles in maximizing the value of available attractions.

b) Accessibility

Geographically, Mahoro Island is not too far from the center of activity in Sitaro Regency, Siau Island. This is a supporting factor as it is relatively easy to reach logistically. However, the main obstacle is the absence of regular sea transportation to the island. All access depends on renting motorboats independently, which is not only expensive but also does not guarantee safety and comfort. In addition, there is no proper harbor or jetty infrastructure, making the process of getting on and off the boat quite difficult, especially during big waves.

c) Amenities

In terms of amenity, Mahoro Island is still very limited. There are no inns, food stalls, public toilets or emergency health facilities. This is a big barrier for tourists who want to stay longer. However, there are opportunities to develop community-based amenities, such as homestays on Siau Island, as well as local food and tour services. Community support in this development is a strong supporting factor if developed through proper training and mentoring.

Through the mapping of the factors above, it can be seen that the development of Mahoro Island tourism is highly dependent on the seriousness of related parties in designing



the right strategy. Synergy between the local government, local communities and the private sector is needed to overcome the existing obstacles. In addition, a sustainable development approach needs to be prioritized, so that the natural attractiveness of Mahoro Island is maintained for future generations.

Active community involvement, capacity building of local human resources, and investment in basic infrastructure are key to addressing these challenges. If the supporting factors can be maximized, and the main obstacles can be minimized through policies and concrete actions, then Mahoro Island has great potential to grow as a leading tourist destination that is not only visually appealing, but also has positive economic, social and environmental impacts for the community and the surrounding area.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Siau Tagulandang Biaro Islands Regency (Sitaro) has identified various supporting and inhibiting factors in the development of the tourism sector, particularly in Mahoro Island. The potential natural attractions on Mahoro Island, such as white sand beaches, coral reefs, and marine biodiversity, are very attractive to tourists, but their management needs to be further improved. Accessibility to the island is still a big challenge due to limited transportation and port facilities, which hampers the flow of tourist visits. In addition, amenity such as accommodation and restaurants are also still minimal, so it is necessary to build adequate facilities for the convenience of tourists. For this reason, several suggestions were made, such as improving the management of tourist attractions by involving local communities, building facilities that support ecotourism, and improving accessibility through the development of transportation infrastructure. In addition, cooperation between the government, business actors, and local communities is needed to ensure sustainable tourism development. With planned development, Mahoro Island has great potential to become a leading tourist destination that can provide economic benefits while preserving local nature and culture.

## **REFERENCES**

- Anuar, A. N. A., Ahmad, H., Jusoh, H., & Hussain, M. Y. (2013). Policy and tourism development strategy towards tourist friendly destination in Kuala Lumpur. *Asian Social Science*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v9n2p180>
- Arintoko, A., Ahmad, A. A., Gunawan, D. S., & Supadi, S. (2020). Community-based tourism village development strategies: A case of Borobudur tourism village area, Indonesia. *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 29(2). <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.29202-477>

- Farista, G., Nurhamni, N., & A. Lamading, H. (2022). Strategi Pemerintah Dalam Mempertahankan Sektor Pariwisata Pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19 di Sulawesi Tengah. *Jurnal Syntax Imperatif : Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Pendidikan*, 3(5). <https://doi.org/10.36418/syntax-imperatif.v3i5.190>
- Hitchcock, M., King, V. T., & Parnwell, M. (2009). *Tourism in Southeast Asia: Challenges and New Directions*. NIAS.
- Kurniawan, A. R. (2020). Tantangan Pengembangan Pariwisata Berbasis Masyarakat Pada Era Digital Di Indonesia (Studi Kasus Pengembangan Pariwisata Berbasis Masyarakat Di Pangalengan). *Tornare*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.24198/tornare.v2i2.25418>
- Margaretha, R. (2024). Strategi Capacity Building dalam Pengelolaan Pariwisata Berkelanjutan di Indonesia. *Jurnal Ekonomi Bisnis, Manajemen Dan Akuntansi (JEBMA)*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.47709/jebma.v4i1.3588>
- Miles, M. B. A., & Huberman, M. (1994). Qualitative Data Analysis A Methods Sourcebook. In *Experiencing Citizenship: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Political Science*.
- Nurjana, I. N. (2022). Legal Policy Of Sustainable Tourism Development: Toward Community-Based Tourism In Indonesia. *Journal of Tourism Economics and Policy*, 2(3). <https://doi.org/10.38142/jtep.v2i3.404>
- Nuur, M. I. F. (2021). Arahana Pengembangan Kawasan Wisata Pantai Teluk Lombok Desa Sangkima Kecamatan Sangatta Selatan Melalui Konsep Community Based Tourism (CBT). *Ruang*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.14710/ruang.7.1.1-8>
- Palupiningtyas, D., Supriyadi, A., Yulianto, H., & Dewi Maria, A. (2022). Pengembangan Destinasi Wisata Masjid Kapal Safinatun Najah dengan Komponen Pariwisata 3A di Kota Semarang. *Media Wisata*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/10.36276/mws.v20i1.168>
- Patton, M. Q. (2007). Sampling, qualitative (purposeful). *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*.
- Prayoga, D. R., Dini, A. Z., Tarigan, L. A., Sari, P. A., Lubis, D. P., & Permana, S. (2022). Analysis Of Concept 3a In Tourism Development (Case Study: Dusun IV, Desa Denai Lama, Kab. Deli Serdang). *Jurnal Samudra Geografi*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.33059/jsg.v5i2.5545>
- Puspita, N., Kausar, D. R. K., & Firmansyah, R. (2023). Pengembangan Komponen Pariwisata 3A Berbasis Lansekap Budaya Sunda. *Jurnal Abdi Masyarakat*, 3(2). <https://doi.org/10.22334/jam.v3i2.55>
- Putri, O. G., & Asmara, D. (2022). Pengembangan Potensi Pariwisata di Karanganyar dari Kompenen 3A. *Gemawisata: Jurnal Ilmiah Parivisata*, 18(3).

<https://doi.org/10.56910/gemawisata.v18i3.242>

- Rahmafitria, F., Pearce, P. L., Oktadiana, H., & Putro, H. P. H. (2020). Tourism planning and planning theory: Historical roots and contemporary alignment. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2020.100703>
- Ramadhan, I. (2023). Strategi Pengembangan Desa Wisata Hutanagodang Dengan Pendekatan Analisis SWOT Komponen 3A Pariwisata. *Jurnal Ilmiah Hospitality Management*, 13(2). <https://doi.org/10.22334/jihm.v13i2.247>
- Ramadhani, Suswanta, & Shaddiq, S. (2021). E-Marketing of village tourism development strategy (Case study in the tourist village puncak sosok). *Journal of Robotics and Control (JRC)*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.18196/jrc.2255>
- Rosardi, R. G., Prajanti, S. D. W., Atmaja, H. T., Juhadi, & Yanti, D. (2022). Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy with AHP (Analytical Hierarchy Process) Method in Pagilaran Tea Plantation Agrotourism, Indonesia. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, 17(4). <https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.170429>
- Salahudin Saiman, S. G. L. (2022). Studi Pembangunan Infrastruktur Pariwisata. *Jurnal Kawistara*, 12(3). <https://doi.org/10.22146/kawistara.65838>
- Sari, S. N., & De Fretes, M. D. (2021). Pengembangan Pariwisata Dalam Upaya Pembangunan Ekonomi Masyarakat Di Pulau Pari Kepulauan Seribu. *Abiwara : Jurnal Vokasi Administrasi Bisnis*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.31334/abiwara.v1i2.1384>
- Setiawati, R., Hutabarat, P. M., Onarely, A. K., & Altamira, M. B. (2023). Model Pengembangan Pariwisata Pulau Komodo Sebagai Society-Based Sustainable Marine Tourism Village 5.0. *Mediakom : Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.35760/mkm.2023.v7i1.8863>
- Sugihamretha, I. D. G. (2020). Respon Kebijakan: Mitigasi Dampak Wabah Covid-19 Pada Sektor Pariwisata. *Jurnal Perencanaan Pembangunan: The Indonesian Journal of Development Planning*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.36574/jpp.v4i2.113>
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Weaver, D. B., & Lawton, L. (2010). *Tourism Management*. John Wiley & Sons Australia.
- Zeraib, S., Kouba, Y., & Berghout, B. (2022). The Influence of Tourism Development Strategies on the Attractiveness of Mountainous Destinations: A Case Study of the Aures Mountains in Algeria. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 14(20). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142013045>