

Situ Gunung Nature Tourism Park: Applying the Ecotourism Principle of The International Ecotourism Society (TIES)

Ramiz Ansharil Haq^{1*}, Triana Manalu², Ahmad Habibi³

^{1,2,3}Polytechnic of Tourism NHI Bandung, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: ramiz@poltekpar-nhi.ac.id

Abstract: This study analyses the application of eight ecotourism principles set forth by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) in Situ Gunung Ecotourism, Sukabumi, West Java, Indonesia. The study adopts a qualitative methodology incorporating Focus Group Discussions with destination managers, tour guides, and security staff. The research assesses the conformity of Situ Gunung's Ecotourism activities with the concepts of TIES. Research demonstrates that Situ Gunung successfully alleviates environmental repercussions by measures including visitation restrictions, bans on animal feeding, and sustainable infrastructure development. Environmental and cultural education is advanced through community involvement, signage, and traditional performances such as Degungan and Kecapi Suling music at the Amphitheater. The suspension bridge and additional attractions are sustainably maintained through regular safety assessments. Community empowerment is manifested through local engagement in tourism activities, cultural conservation, and infrastructure administration. The study concludes that Situ Gunung effectively incorporates TIES concepts, harmonizing tourism development with environmental and cultural sustainability. The report advocates for the enhancement of cultural preservation programs and the implementation of transparent revenue management to bolster the long-term sustainability of ecotourism. Situ Gunung exemplifies sustainable ecotourism, illustrating the utilization of natural and cultural resources for community empowerment and environmental preservation.

Keywords: community empowerment, cultural preservation, ecotourism, environmental conservation, TIES principles

History Article: Submitted 17 June 2025 | Revised 21 July 2025 | Accepted 31 August 2025

How to Cite: Haq, R. A., Manalu, T., & Habibi, A. (2025). Situ Gunung nature tourism park: Applying the ecotourism principle of the international ecotourism society (TIES). *International Journal of Green Tourism Research and Applications*, 7(2), 144-155. DOI: 10.31940/ijogtra.v7i2.144-155.

Introduction

Tourism was formerly defined as an individual's journey of no less than 80 kilometers from their place of residence to a destination (Joppe, 2019). As scientific progress continues, the journey is segmented into many components according to the tourists' objectives, encompassing shopping (Kemperman et al., 2009), food (Kim et al., 2011), and culture (Brown, 1999). It seeks to ascertain the requirements of service providers and tourists to guarantee adequate facilities that align with supply and demand. Fleischer (2010) defines ecotourism as a type of tourism that emphasizes environmental conservation and the sociocultural development of local people. Ecotourism encompasses educational components and extends beyond mere nature conservation. Nonetheless, due to its similarities with other tourism modalities, particularly in utilizing infrastructure, ecotourism is often perceived as a facade for the exploitation of the environment (Dowling, 1998).

The concept of ecotourism evolves with each generation, reflecting the changing interpretation of its significance (Cobbinah, 2015). This reflects a more sophisticated perspective on the relationship among tourism, environmental conservation, and

community welfare; ecotourism in the 1980s emphasized education and ecological sustainability. Ecotourism was defined as a form of travel centered on the exploration of the natural environment with minimal adverse ecological impact. The primary objectives are experiences in nature and environmental education. Moreover, ecotourism prioritized sustainability during the 1990s. The concept of sustainability began to garner increased prominence during this decade. Ecotourism, as mandated by the government, is responsible travel to natural areas aimed at environmental protection, educational promotion, and the enhancement of local communities' well-being to foster equality. In 1990, the International Ecotourism Society (TIES) characterized ecotourism as ethical travel to pristine locations that foster environmental conservation, enhance local community welfare, and provide educational opportunities. In the 2000s, "ecotourism" was expanded to include social, cultural, and economic aspects. Ecotourism associated with community-based tourism can enhance local livelihoods, minimise economic leakage, and foster social development (Mtapuri et al., 2022; Zielinski et al., 2021). The advantages are optimised when locals possess ownership and authority over the tourism resources at the destination (Strydom et al., 2019).

Table 1. Evolution of the Ecotourism Concept

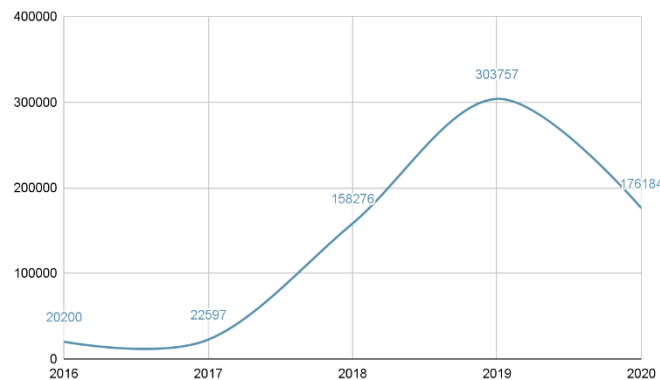
Year	Concept
1980s	Focused on ecological education and low-impact nature experiences, ecotourism was defined as travel to natural areas that conserve ecosystems while educating visitors.
1990s	The rise of sustainability discourse expanded ecotourism's mandate. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES, 1990) formalized it as "ethical travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains local well-being, and involves education." Governments began integrating ecotourism into policies to balance conservation, community empowerment, and economic growth.
2000s-present	Ecotourism incorporates social, cultural, and economic dimensions, emphasizing community-based tourism (Mtapuri et al., 2022). Key principles now include Indigenous rights, low-impact infrastructure, and equitable benefit-sharing (TIES, 2015). Studies highlight that success depends on local ownership of tourism resources (Strydom et al., 2019).

Source: Researcher's finding (2025)

The concepts of ecotourism, essential for guidelines in ecotourism management, are the most significant aspect. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) advocates for a principle of ecotourism. The non-profit organization TIES is dedicated to promoting ecotourism globally. Six foundational principles characterized ecotourism at the establishment of TIES in 1990: minimize impact, foster respect and awareness of the environment and culture, generate positive experiences for both hosts and guests, ensure direct financial support for conservation, deliver economic benefits, empower local communities, and enhance awareness of the political, environmental, and social contexts of host nations (Cobbinah, 2015). Nonetheless, the following concepts have been incorporated: recognize the rights and spiritual beliefs of the Indigenous Peoples within the community, design, construct, and operate low-impact facilities, and engage in collaboration to empower them (TIES, 2015).

Situ Gunung ecotourism is located in Sukabumi Regency, West Java Province. The prominent feature is the 240-meter suspension bridge tour, the longest suspension bridge in Asia (Resort PTN Situ Gunung, 2019), and one of the most significant attractions. It is administered by PT Fontis Aquam Vivam. The establishment of this

attraction is characterized by a notable rise in visitor attendance, as illustrated in the subsequent graph:



(Source: Amellia & Adi Jaya, 2021)

Figure 1. Graphic of the Number of Visitors to Situ Gunung

Situ Gunung Ecotourism is situated within a national park in Indonesia and is similarly tasked with the protection and conservation of the region's natural resources. Advancing local economic empowerment necessitates extensive community engagement. The research examines the use of eight TIES ecotourism concepts in the natural site of Situ Gunung, Sukabumi.

Methodology

The research employed a qualitative approach to investigate the principles of ecotourism development implementation in the Situ Gunung protected area (Creswell, 2003). The research depended on the accessibility of primary and secondary data to investigate topics pertinent to the research aims. A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving destination management represented by PT Fontis Aquam Vivam's managers, Usep Suherlan, and tour guides. The focus group discussion lasted roughly 45 minutes and comprised two management personnel, three security officers, and five tour guides. The respondents were considered proficient based on their roles as destination management leaders and field managers. The interviews concentrated on the execution of TIES indicators and sustainable tourism practices at the destination.

Researchers analysed eight ecotourism indicators identified by TIES. Subsequently, they correlated these indicators with the conditions at the mountainous location. The eight indicators are Minimizing Physical, Social, Behavioral, and Psychological Impacts, Building environmental and cultural awareness and respect, Providing Positive Experiences for Both Visitors and Hosts, Providing Direct Financial Benefits for Conservation, Generating Financial Benefits for Both Local People and Private Industry, Delivering Memorable Interpretative Experiences to Visitors that Help Raise Sensitivity to Environmental and Social Climates, Designing, Constructing, and Operating Low-Impact Facilities, and Recognizing the Rights and Spiritual Beliefs of the Indigenous people in the Community and Work in Partnership with Them to Create Empowerment.

The discourse is on the conditions, visitation frequency, capacity, attractions and recreational activities, tourist rates, cultural aspects, community engagement, conservation initiatives, and the distinctiveness of flora and wildlife in Situ Gunung. Researchers subsequently performed direct observations of the Situ Gunung Ecotourism area. The observations concentrated on diverse attractions within the tourist destination, activities undertaken by tourists, community involvement, and the established

management strategy. Moreover, the literature review from pertinent sources, including scientific journals, news, and government publications, supplements the data field. The collection procedures authenticate the data using triangulation to guarantee consistency and precision.

Results and discussions

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the TIES concept in Situ Gunung nature tourism can be articulated as follows:

Minimizing Physical, Social, Behavioral, and Psychological Impacts

The eight principles deemed the "latest principles" in ecotourism are fundamentally based on the issues stemming from the adverse effects of tourism activity. Consequently, ecotourism arose to mitigate the adverse effects of tourism while enhancing its beneficial aspects. The core of ecotourism, which aims to mitigate adverse effects and amplify beneficial results in tourism, is intrinsically consistent with the tenets of utilitarian ethics (Sugiarto, 2023). Ecotourism should focus on reducing adverse effects on both cultural and environmental aspects to the greatest extent possible. Consequently, the notion of ecotourism at a site necessitates meticulous planning and design. The new initiative, designed for tourists, aims to facilitate a more authentic engagement with nature while preserving the aesthetic and sustainability of the surrounding ecotourism environment.

Otherwise, numerous regulations enacted at Situ Gunung exemplify this methodology. Visitors are advised against approaching or disturbing wildlife to ensure the safety of both humans and animals. This rule is created to guarantee that animals exist devoid of stress or hazards stemming from human presence. The wildlife of Situ Gunung will be conserved in this manner. Moreover, tourists are forbidden from feeding the animals in the Situ Gunung ecotourism region to avert the transfer of diseases between humans and animals. The management has implemented measures to limit visitor numbers to prevent overtourism, which could severely damage and threaten the preservation of the surrounding natural ecosystem.

Situ Gunung Ecotourism close to the primary idea of mitigating physical, social, behavioral, and psychological consequences. This is achieved by the implementation of environmentally conscious development and legislation designed to avert significant environmental harm, thereby safeguarding both the natural landscape and the species within the ecotourism region. In the future, the administration of Situ Gunung may implement additional initiatives to enhance the preservation of nature's sustainability.

Building Environmental and Cultural Awareness and Respect

With the growing significance of environmental consciousness, eco-tourism has surfaced as a viable option for individuals seeking to discover the planet's natural marvels while minimizing their carbon footprint. The transition to sustainable tourism is not merely a transient trend, but a lifestyle that aims to harmonize with the ecosystems we explore. Nonetheless, promoting awareness of ecotourism has certain problems. A significant problem is the deficiency of accessible information, especially in remote regions. Moreover, local populations may lack a comprehensive understanding of ecotourism and its potential advantages. A further problem is guaranteeing that ecotourism operations are genuinely sustainable and do not adversely impact the environment. Enhancing environmental consciousness among tourists and local populations is essential for the advancement of ecotourism. As individuals have a heightened awareness of the surrounding natural beauty and the significance of environmental conservation, they are more inclined to participate in responsible tourist

practices. Environmental education and awareness are essential elements in the advancement of ecotourism. Tourists must be educated on the significance of environmental conservation, the safeguarding of flora and fauna, and the adoption of eco-friendly behaviors. This method can motivate visitors to act as responsible tourists and aid in the conservation of the natural beauty of the locations they explore (Angela, 2023).

In Situ Gunung, local populations actively engage in ecotourism initiatives, acknowledging the significance of conserving the natural environment to maintain its integrity. Furthermore, they recognize that environmental protection might attract tourists, thereby generating revenue for them. The community is essential in instructing tourists on the significance of environmental conservation. For instance, they caution visitors against littering, discourage the excessive collection of flora that may lead to their damage, and advise against shooting or harming wildlife within the ecotourism zone. It is usual to encounter signs that advise people against littering or carelessly feeding animals. These signs are integral to the continuous initiatives aimed at educating tourists and promoting responsible conduct to safeguard the environment and wildlife in ecotourism regions.

Environmental conservation is acknowledged as an essential component of ecotourism; yet, it must not compromise cultural preservation. Nature and culture must be concurrently preserved, as they are interrelated components that enhance the identity and sustainability of a location. Ecotourism promotes environmentally and socially responsible exploration of destinations, ensuring that the experience transcends appreciation of natural beauty. It empowers local people, safeguards cultural traditions, and fosters sustainable village tourism development. Ecotourism acknowledges the significance of traditional cultural practices in safeguarding the legacy and identity of local people. By honoring and safeguarding these practices, ecotourism promotes cultural sustainability and preserves the cultural wealth of local communities for future generations. Ultimately, this enhances the tourist experience while enabling local communities to safeguard their unique heritage.

Utami and Mardiana (2017) asserted that ecotourism must be founded on consultation and consensus with local populations, while being attuned to and respectful of the social, cultural, and religious values maintained by the neighboring communities of tiny island regions. Barna et al. (2011) contended that ecotourism is not a panacea; it necessitates collaboration among governments, indigenous people, and management, emphasizing the importance of comprehending the cultural ramifications in the establishment of protected areas. The participation of indigenous and local populations is essential in ecotourism development to alleviate adverse effects on their culture. By including them in decision-making about the number of tourists, location, timing of visits, and types of activities, local communities may regulate the cultural transformations that take place. This guarantees that they not only reap the economic advantages of ecotourism but also maintain authority over their cultural legacy. A notable instance of local community engagement is shown at Situ Gunung, where inhabitants actively participate in cultural preservation and the advancement of ecotourism. A designated location known as the Amphitheatre features a wooden stage that functions as a hub for traditional arts performances, including Degungan, Karinding, and Kecapi Suling. Tourists not only appreciate the performances but also engage directly with local artists affiliated with the Kadudampit Arts Council. Thus, ecotourism serves as both a revenue stream and a mechanism for cultural preservation.



(Source: Personal Documentation, 2025)

Figure 2. Traditional music performance at Situ Gunung

The Amphitheatre in Situ Gunung functions not only as an entertainment venue but also as an educational area, imparting Sundanese traditional values to guests. This method promotes tourists' comprehension and reverence for the environment and local customs. Tourists benefit, and the local community and authorities are increasingly cognisant of the necessity to preserve a balance between tourism and cultural preservation. Consequently, ecotourism in Situ Gunung has effectively established a balance between economic objectives and cultural conservation. Sustainable ecotourism must engage local populations to facilitate cultural transformation while reaping its advantages. Situ Gunung exemplifies the synergy of tourism management, artists, and governmental entities in fostering ecotourism that is environmentally sustainable and culturally respectful. The primary premise maintained is the respect for the rights of indigenous groups while fostering understanding of environmental conservation and cultural traditions.

Providing Positive Experiences for Both Visitors and Hosts

Positive experiences in the ecotourism setting are suggested to be recognized by tourists, management, tour operators, and local communities. The research by Neuhofer (2024) emphasizes good experiences as a long-term effect that leads to individual development directly associated with the third Sustainability aim (EDG's 3), specifically Health and Wealth. Simultaneously, hosts derive good experiences from enhanced knowledge and information, reciprocal cultural respect, and improved local welfare (Alizadeh & Filep, 2023). Personal transformation enhances travelers' intrapersonal satisfaction through happiness or the development of a robust character, significantly contributing to tourism activities and destination promotion (Uysal et al., 2012). Situ Gunung provides an adventurous experience in nature at locations including the Suspension Bridge, Curug-Sawer Waterfall, Lembah-Purba Waterfall, Basket-Sultan, Floating Lodge Lake Situ Gunung, and Flying Fox, along with art performances and local community Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) activities.

The execution of individual change is conducted with the principal keys (Neuhofer, 2024), specifically transformational and scalable design, training for tour guides, community-provided facilities and guides, and design utilizing digital technologies. The

pre-visit experience at Situ Gunung Nature Tourism Park is marked by the accessibility of information, communication, and transactions facilitated by technology via digital platforms (Hasna et al., 2022). Muqsith et al (2023) asserted that the good influence experienced by tourists arises from the availability of sufficient cleanliness and safety measures, which enhance tourist satisfaction, alongside knowledgeable tour guides who enrich the experience of the place. Ecotourism exploration is enhanced by innovative attraction technologies that preserve the preservation of environment and its tourism potential (Icha Agustina & Sambas Basuni, 2021).

Situ Gunung Nature Tourism Park offers beneficial experiences for local populations in promoting tourism activities. The advantages of enhancing knowledge and information are evidenced by the significant demand for research and training at the host. Mutual appreciation for culture is demonstrated through artistic performances and legislation governing tourism ethics. Enhanced well-being is attained through the empowering of human resources both within and beyond the managerial purview of destination managers (Sofiyudin et al., 2021). Nonetheless, certain residents perceive the detrimental impact of tourists' views and activities.

Situ Gunung Nature Tourism Park adheres to the principles of ecotourism to deliver beneficial experiences for both tourists and residents. The beneficial ecotourism experience is an intervention aimed at enhancing travel and promoting well-being. Furthermore, Saarinen and Wall-Reinius (2019) said that the symbiotic mutualism between tourists and hosts is guaranteed by their mutual harmonization and advantages.

Providing Direct Financial Benefits for Conservation

Mount Pangrango is a National Park managed by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK), governed by nature tourism legislation grounded in sustainable development principles, specifically Law No. 5 of 1990 concerning the Protection of Natural Resources and Forest Ecosystems and Law No. 9 of 1990 regarding Tourism, which prioritizes the conservation of forests and ecosystems. Situ Gunung Nature Tourism Park is an external area of Mount Pangrango administered by the Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park Center. The 222.31 hectares situated on the southern slope of Mount Gede are characterized by their natural abundance and exceptional biodiversity of flora, fauna, and ecosystems.

The management of the central government signifies money distributions that guarantee the viability of conservation efforts. The use of the designated development zone for the establishment of adventure tourism attractions creates locations that draw both domestic and foreign tourists seeking diverse recreational experiences (Hasna et al., 2022). The management of Situ Gunung has developed a sustainable framework that harmonizes ecosystem conservation with economic advantages. Since 2020, governmental resources have been designated for the rehabilitation of 15 hectares of degraded land and the establishment of patrol posts to mitigate criminal activities. A digital ticketing system that designates revenue for conservation exemplifies sustainable financing. Moreover, the region enhances community welfare by employing 65% of the local labor (guides, craftsmen) and promoting the development of over 40 micro, small, and medium enterprises in Curug Sawer.

Generating Financial Benefits for Both Local People and Private Industry

The essence of tourism development is unequivocally focused on augmenting revenue for local communities as well as the public and private sectors. The economic advantages for hosts are receiving heightened focus through emerging tourism development concepts; ecotourism, sustainable tourism, and community-based tourism

emphasize enhanced economic circulation within lower-class areas. In the context of ecotourism, the economic advantages for local populations are a fundamental principle that must be prioritized in development.

The establishment of Situ Gunung National Park under the ecotourism model enhances the region's function from a protected ecosystem to a recreational location. The role of the protected area enhances economic interactions among tourists, local residents, and ecotourism management. The evolution of protected areas into nature tourism captivates travelers from diverse backgrounds. The tourist count ranges from 50 to 200 on weekdays and from 1000 to 2000 on holidays. Significant tourist interest generates funding for ecotourism managers and financial resources to execute the environmental objectives.

Simultaneously, our findings affirm that the advancement of Situ Gunung Ecotourism has directly generated employment for over 200 local individuals and created tourism-related business options, including accommodations, tour guide services, restaurants, and vehicle rentals. This correlates with the rise in community activities within the ecotourism sector. The findings from our focus group discussions indicate that a minimum of 625 households are directly engaged in ecotourism activities. Ecotourism development yields economic advantages through the relationships between tourists, management, and the community.

Delivering Memorable Interpretative Experiences to Visitors that Help Raise Sensitivity to Environmental and Social Climates

Besides highlighting economic advantages, ecotourism aims to offer tourists enriching experiences, promote environmental sustainability, and ensure the social sustainability of the community. Situ Gunung Ecotourism provides a captivating experience with sights including waterfalls, Basket-Sultan, Flying Fox, Situ Gunung Lake, as well as camping and glamping options. The meticulously kept surroundings and appealing tourist attraction designs offer an unforgettable experience and serve as a compelling reason to visit.

Simultaneously, ecotourism serves to enhance tourists' comprehension of the critical significance of conservation and environmental sustainability. Scenic natural environments and the chance to observe biodiversity are fundamental to ecotourism. Implementing ecotourism in Situ Gunung generates chances for environmental education, the introduction of flora and fauna, the role of protected areas, and conservation funding. Situ Gunung Ecotourism presents ecological diversity to visitors and educational opportunities to the community, including the introduction of plant species and fauna such as the Javanese Eagle, Javanese Gibbon, Leopard, and Langur.

Ecotourism, in terms of social impact, enables community welfare enhancement, cultural preservation, community empowerment, and the provision of experiences and knowledge for tourists. Situ Gunung Ecotourism features traditional music and dance as integral components of its attraction. The local community offers many tourism items and processed foods to satisfy tourist demands. Moreover, several empowerment initiatives, including tour guide training and ecotourism management, are conducted to ensure quality service. A variety of development initiatives aim to enhance the perception of ecotourism as environmentally sustainable, socially conscious, and offering significant experiences.

Designing, Constructing, and Operating Low-Impact Facilities

The administration of Situ Gunung established routine maintenance, which is inherently connected to facilities management. Three principal kinds exist: natural tourism, cultural tourism, and artificial tourism, with particular emphasis on the most frequented sites, particularly Situ Gunung Lake, Curug Sawer, and Lembah Purba Waterfall. Furthermore, artificial tourism features the Red Bridge, Sultan Basket, and Purba Bridge. The operational standards of these sites are consistently upheld and monitored to guarantee safety. The inspection process is meticulously carried out for each unique component of the attraction that tourists encounter, including wire ropes, wooden footholds, fasteners, and similar elements. Likewise, other natural attractions undergo continuous inspections to guarantee tourist safety and prevent ecological harm.

Table 2. Existing Facilities in Situ Gunung

No	Attraction	Attraction Type	Activity	Description
1	Suspension Bridge	Artificial Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking; • Animal Observation 	Purba Bridge can accommodate 90 passengers and is roughly 200 meters long. This bridge has an ironwood floor and is suspended. The Javan Gibbon is available for people to observe.
2	Sultan Basket	Artificial Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take in the scenery while riding a cable car that offers views of the river and tropical jungle. 	This attraction, which can accommodate four people per lane, is known as the Sultan Basket because of its shape, which is similar to a sultan's chair from the kingdom era. On the left and right, there are two crossing lanes.
3	Purba Valley Waterfall	Natural Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Savor water and environment; • Cross the river; • Take a bath or bathe in the river 	Both ordinary and extraordinary images, including pre-wedding ones, can be taken strategically at this location.
4	Situ Lake	Gunung Natural Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flying Fox • Camp Ground • Glamor Camping 	Visitors can unwind while taking in the splendor of Situ Gunung Lake.

No	Attraction	Attraction Type	Activity	Description
5	Sawer Waterfall	Natural Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Tubing • Culinary 	There are 40 food-serving stall booths at this 35-meter-tall waterfall.
6	Red Bridge	Artificial Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking • Animal Observation 	This bridge, which is 80 meters above the river, is the route home.

Source: Research Findings (2025)

Recognizing the Rights and Spiritual Beliefs of the Indigenous People in the Community and Working in Partnership with Them to Create Empowerment

The Situ Gunung Suspension Bridge is expected to benefit the local community. Residents engage in several activities, such as constructing and maintaining the infrastructure of the extensive bridge. Locals sell food and handicrafts without incurring rent, hence reducing unemployment. The management encourages citizens to engage in activities while traversing and exiting the suspension bridge. For example, they assist with sanitation, parking, and the installation of safety apparatus.

Dede Asad, a destination manager and managing director of Situ Gunung Suspension Bridge since 2007, has focused on the tourist sector. Dede has become a prominent and reliable figure due to his passions (Situgunung Suspension Bridge, 2025). In 2012, Dede established a glamping site with two sites in Ciwidey, South Bandung. This was his inaugural endeavor, and it achieved success. In 2017, Dede was assigned the responsibility of developing a tourism destination at Sawarna Beach in Banten. In that same year, he contributed to the construction of the Situ Gunung suspension bridge, marking another significant achievement in tourism.

Cultural tourism, in contrast, showcases Sundanese traditional performances with musical instruments such as the lute and flute. Different categories of travelers may consider Situ Gunung Ecotourism an enticing destination, whether they seek outdoor adventures, wish to engage with the local culture, or just relax and enjoy the captivating tropical atmosphere. The multitude of captivating attractions accounts for this.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates how Situ Gunung Ecotourism successfully operationalizes TIES principles through an adaptive governance model that bridges conservation and sustainable development. The integration of Sundanese cultural programming with biodiversity protection offers a replicable template for Indonesia's national parks to prove that cultural preservation can enhance both ecological outcomes and economic benefits as a previously understudied synergy in developing country contexts.

For practitioners, Situ Gunung provides two key innovations. First, its digital ticketing system creates a transparent funding mechanism for conservation, addressing the common challenge of sustainable financing in protected areas. Second, the Amphitheatre's cultural programming demonstrates how traditional arts can serve as both tourist attractions and conservation education tools, increasing visitor engagement while preserving intangible heritage. These practical solutions respond to Barna et al.'s call for culturally-grounded approaches to ecotourism.

Moving forward, the study highlights the need for policy frameworks that formalize indigenous co-management - an area where Situ Gunung's experience could inform revisions to Indonesia's Tourism Law (No. 9/1990). The remaining challenge of economic leakage presents an opportunity to test local supply chain interventions, offering potential lessons for similar sites across Southeast Asia. This case ultimately redefines success metrics for protected area tourism, arguing for triple-bottom-line assessments that equally value ecological, cultural, and economic sustainability.

References

- Alizadeh, A., Filep, S. (2023). Positive psychology and tourism: Positive tourism. In: Uysal, M., Sirgy, M.J. (eds) *Handbook of Tourism and Quality-of-Life Research II. International Handbooks of Quality-of-Life*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-31513-8_2
- Amellia, T., & Adi Jaya, U. (2021). Pengaruh harga tiket dan atraksi wisata terhadap kepuasan wisatawan Situgunung Suspension Bridge Sukabumi. *Cakrawala Repositori IMWI*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.52851/cakrawala.v4i2.77>
- Angela, vivi F. (2023). Strategi Pengembangan Ekowisata dalam Mendukung Konservasi Alam Danau Tahai. *JIM: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Pendidikan Sejarah*, 8(3). <https://jim.usk.ac.id/sejarah/article/view/24980>
- Barna, C., Epure, M., & Vasilescu, R. (2011). Ecotourism: Conservation of the natural and cultural heritage. *Review of Applied Socio- Economic Research*, 1(1). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227349129_Ecotourism_-_conservation_of_the_natural_and_cultural_heritage
- Brown, T. J. (1999). Antecedents of culturally significant tourist behavior. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(3). [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(99\)00004-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(99)00004-3)
- Cobbinah, P. B. (2015). Contextualising the meaning of ecotourism. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2015.07.015>
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). Research design qualitative quantitative and mixed methods approaches. *Research Design Qualitative Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. <https://doi.org/10.3109/08941939.2012.723954>
- Dowling, R. K. (1998). Tourism and sustainability: Principles to practice. *Tourism Management*, 19(4). [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0261-5177\(98\)00024-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0261-5177(98)00024-7)
- Fleischer, D. I. (2010). Ecotourism: Principles and practices. *Tourism Management*, 31(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.07.004>
- Hasna, F. N., Nurfalah Annisa, Safana Aura Nadiva, & Brendha Qaulani Tsakila. (2022). Strategi komunikasi objek wisata Situ Gunung Suspensions Bridge di masa new normal. *Pariwisata Budaya: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Budaya*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.25078/pariwisata.v7i2.377>
- Icha Agustina, & Sambas Basuni. (2021). Supply optimization of objects and natural tourist attractions in Situ Gunung, Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park. *Media Konservasi*, 26(1). <https://doi.org/10.29244/medkon.26.1.36-43>
- Joppe, M. (2019). Justice and ethics in tourism. *Anatolia*, 30(3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2019.1628993>
- Kemperman, A. D. A. M., Borgers, A. W. J., & Timmermans, H. J. P. (2009). Tourist shopping behavior in a historic downtown area. *Tourism Management*, 30(2). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.06.002>
- Kim, Y. H., Kim, M. C., & Goh, B. K. (2011). An examination of food tourist's behavior: Using the modified theory of reasoned action. *Tourism Management*, 32(5). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2010.10.006>

- Mtapuri, O., Camilleri, M. A., & Dłuzewska, A. (2022). Advancing community-based tourism approaches for the sustainable development of destinations. *Sustainable Development*, 30(3). <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2257>
- Muqsih, Iqbal Abdul Mardiana, R., & Dharmawan, A. H. (2023). Analisis sustainable development goals pada kawasan ekowisata (Studi kasus: Situ Gunung Kabupaten Sukabumi). *Jurnal Ilmu Lingkungan*, 21(4). <https://repository.ipb.ac.id/handle/123456789/116316>
- Neuhofer, B. (2024). Positive tourism experiences for human transformation: a Horizon 2050 paper. *Tourism Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-12-2023-0888>
- Saarinén, J., & Wall-Reinius, S. (2019). Enclaves in tourism: producing and governing exclusive spaces for tourism. In *Tourism Geographies* (Vol. 21, Issue 5). <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2019.1668051>
- Situgunung Suspension Bridge. (2025). *Cerita kami*. <https://situgunungbridge.com/id/cerita-kami/>
- Sofiyudin, A., Rosadi, R., & Priatna, D. (2021). Carrying capacity analysis of nature tourism at Selabintana, Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park, West Java. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Environmental Studies*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.33751/injast.v2i2.3678>
- Strydom, A. J., Mangope, D., & Henama, U. S. (2019). Making community-based tourism sustainable: Evidence from the Free State province, South Africa. *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 24(1). <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.24101-338>
- Sugiarto, E. (2023). Ekowisata dalam perspektif etika Utilitarianisme Bentham. *Sanjiwani: Jurnal Filsafat*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.25078/sjf.v14i1.2211>
- TIES, T. I. T. S. (2015). *TIES announces ecotourism principles revision - the international ecotourism society*. The International Tourism Society, TIES. <https://ecotourism.org/news/ties-announces-ecotourism-principles-revision/>
- Utami, P. R., & Mardiana, R. (2017). The Relationship of community's participation with the sustainability of ecology, sosio-culture and economic in marine ecotourism. *Jurnal Sains Komunikasi dan Pengembangan Masyarakat*, 1(4), 509-522. doi: 10.29244/jskpm.1.4.509-522.
- Uysal, M., Perdue, R. R., & Joseph Sirgy, M. (2012). Handbook of tourism and quality-of-life research: Enhancing the lives of tourists and residents of host communities. In *Handbook of Tourism and Quality-of-Life Research: Enhancing the Lives of Tourists and Residents of Host Communities*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2288-0>
- Zielinski, S., Jeong, Y., & Milanés, C. B. (2021). Factors that influence community-based tourism (CBT) in developing and developed countries. *Tourism Geographies*, 23(5–6). <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2020.1786156>