

AN INVESTIGATION OF MARINE TOURISM AT TUREDAWOLA BEACH

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ABSTRACT

Marine tourism is a strategic sector in coastal development, yet its management is often not optimal. This study aims to analyze the development and promotion of marine tourism at Turedawola Beach, North Nias Regency, and to identify the gap between sustainable marine tourism theory and actual field conditions. This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings indicate that marine tourism activities at Turedawola Beach remain limited to surfing and basic beach recreation, despite the area's strong natural potential, particularly its internationally recognized surfing waves. The main challenges identified include limited tourism facilities, low human resource capacity, minimal structured community involvement, and tourism promotion that has not been effectively managed through digital platforms. These findings reveal a clear gap between the concept of sustainable marine tourism and existing management practices. Therefore, collaboration among the government, local communities, and the private sector is essential to improve management, promotion, and the sustainability of marine tourism at Turedawola Beach.

Keyword: marine tourism, sustainable tourism, tourism development

ABSTRAK

Pariwisata bahari merupakan sektor strategis dalam pembangunan wilayah pesisir, namun pengelolaannya sering kali belum optimal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengembangan dan promosi pariwisata bahari di Pantai Turedawola, Kabupaten Nias Utara, serta mengidentifikasi kesenjangan antara teori pariwisata bahari berkelanjutan dan kondisi aktual di lapangan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa aktivitas pariwisata bahari di Pantai Turedawola masih terbatas pada selancar dan rekreasi pantai, meskipun memiliki potensi alam yang kuat, khususnya ombak selancar bertaraf internasional. Kendala utama yang ditemukan meliputi keterbatasan fasilitas, rendahnya kapasitas sumber daya manusia, minimnya keterlibatan masyarakat secara terstruktur, serta promosi pariwisata yang belum terkelola secara digital. Temuan ini menunjukkan adanya kesenjangan antara konsep pariwisata bahari berkelanjutan dan praktik pengelolaan yang ada. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan kolaborasi antara pemerintah, masyarakat, dan pihak swasta

untuk meningkatkan pengelolaan, promosi, dan keberlanjutan pariwisata bahari di Pantai Turedawola.

Kata Kunci: pariwisata bahari, pariwisata berkelanjutan, pengembangan pariwisata

A. Introduction

Marine tourism has become a strategic sector in coastal regional development due to its ability to generate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and support environmental conservation when managed sustainably. Marine tourism utilizes coastal and marine resources such as beaches, waves, marine ecosystems, and coastal culture as its main attractions. According to Yulianda (2019) and Wong (2020), marine tourism should be developed based on sustainability principles that balance environmental preservation, economic benefits, and socio-cultural development of local communities.

Turedawola Beach, located in Nort Nias Regency, is one of the coastal areas with significant marine tourism potential. The beach is widely recognized for its high quality waves that attract both domestic and international surfers. In addition to surfing, Turedawola Beach also offers natural scenery, sunset views, and a

tranquil coastal atmosphere that appeal to tourists seeking relaxation and nature-based experiences. These characteristics position Turedawola Beach as a potential marine tourism destination with competitive advantages, particularly in surfing tourism.

Despite its strong natural potential, the development of marine tourism at Turedawola Beach remains suboptimal. Field data and previous studies indicate that tourism activities are still limited to surfing, casual visits, and photography, while other marine tourism activities such as snorkeling, diving, boat tours, and marine education have not yet been developed. Supporting facilities, including toilets, information boards, organized parking areas, and tourist information centers, are inadequate or unavailable. This condition reduces visitor comfort and limits the overall tourism experience.

Tourism promotion at Turedawola Beach is also relatively weak and unstructured. Most visitors

learn about the destination through word-of-mouth communication or personal social media posts rather than official digital platforms. There is no established destination branding, official website, or verified social media account representing Turedawola Beach. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), effective tourism promotion requires integrated marketing communication, strong destination branding, and consistent use of digital media to reach wider markets. The absence of these elements has contributed to the limited visibility of Turedawola Beach at the national and international levels.

Furthermore, community involvement in tourism development remains informal and unorganized. Although some local residents participate by operating small food stalls or providing parking services, they have not been fully empowered through structured training, tourism management systems, or collaborative partnerships with government and private stakeholders. This situation indicates a gap between marine tourism development theory which emphasizes community based and participatory approaches and the

actual conditions at Turedawola Beach.

This research wants to find out that 1. How is maritime tourism developed and promoted at Turedawola Beach? And 2. What are the gaps between maritime tourism theory and the actual conditions at Turedawola Beach? This study aims to analyze the development and promotion of marine tourism at turedawola beach, identify gaps between theory and practice, and provide recommendations for sustainable tourism development.

a. Concept of Marine Tourism

Marine tourism refers to tourism activities that utilize marine and coastal resources as the main attractions, including beaches, oceans, waves, and marine ecosystems. According to Yulianda (2019), marine tourism encompasses recreational activities such as swimming, snorkeling, diving, fishing, and surfing, which are developed with attention to environmental conservation and carrying capacity. Marine tourism is not only oriented toward recreation but also integrates economic development and environmental sustainability.

Wong (2020) emphasizes that marine tourism has a unique characteristic because it combines natural marine beauty, coastal culture, and social interactions of local communities who live in coastal areas. Therefore, marine tourism development must be based on the principles of sustainable tourism, which balance three main pillars: environmental sustainability, economic benefits, and socio-cultural preservation. Sustainable marine tourism ensures that tourism activities do not degrade marine ecosystems while still providing long-term benefits to local communities.

b. Types and Characteristics of Marine Tourism

Based on Hadinoto (2018) and the Regulation of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia No. 93 of 2020 concerning Marine Tourism Villages, marine tourism can be classified into several types.

The first type is water-based activity tourism, which includes surfing, snorkeling, diving, boating, and fishing. This type relies heavily on natural marine conditions such as

wave quality, water clarity, and safety. Surfing tourism, in particular, requires specific wave characteristics and has strong appeal to international tourists.

The second type is marine ecotourism, which focuses on conservation and education while involving local communities as guides or managers. According to the book *Marine Tourism: Cultural Diversity and Sustainable Development* (2021), marine ecotourism aims to raise environmental awareness while limiting negative impacts on marine ecosystems.

The third type is coastal cultural tourism, which highlights local traditions, marine festivals, culinary heritage, and cultural rituals of coastal communities. This form of tourism strengthens local identity and enhances tourists' cultural experiences.

The main characteristics of marine tourism include dependence on weather and seasonal conditions, reliance on marine ecosystem quality, and the need for adequate facilities and safety standards (Telaumbanua, 2023). These characteristics distinguish marine tourism from other

forms of tourism such as mountain or urban tourism.

c. Marine Tourism Promotion

Tourism promotion plays a crucial role in introducing destinations and attracting visitors. Kotler and Keller (2016) define promotion as a marketing communication process aimed at delivering information, persuading potential consumers, and encouraging visitation decisions. In tourism, promotion is not limited to advertising but also includes public relations, events, digital marketing, and destination branding.

In the context of marine tourism, Telaumbanua (2024) explains that effective promotion should utilize digital media such as social media, websites, and visual content to reach wider audiences. Digital promotion allows destinations to showcase marine attractions, activities, and experiences more efficiently compared to traditional promotion methods.

Destination branding is also a critical element in tourism promotion. A strong and consistent brand helps differentiate a destination from

competitors and creates a memorable image in tourists' minds. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), branding should reflect the unique attributes and core values of a destination, such as natural beauty, adventure, or cultural uniqueness.

d. Community Involvement in Marine Tourism Development

Community involvement is a fundamental component of sustainable marine tourism development. Local communities play a vital role as service providers, cultural bearers, and environmental guardians. According to Yulianda (2019), tourism development that excludes local communities often leads to social conflict and unsustainable practices.

The book *Marine Tourism: Cultural Diversity and Sustainable Development* (2021) highlights that community-based tourism empowers local residents through employment opportunities, small businesses, and capacity-building programs. Involving communities in tourism planning and management increases their sense of ownership and responsibility toward environmental conservation.

Telaumbanua (2023) further emphasizes that collaboration between government, communities, and private stakeholders is essential to ensure effective tourism management and promotion. Without structured collaboration, tourism development tends to be fragmented and inefficient.

e. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis in Marine Tourism Development

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to identify internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats of a tourism destination. According to Telaumbanua (2024), SWOT analysis helps policymakers and tourism managers design development strategies that are aligned with real conditions.

In marine tourism development, strengths may include natural attractions such as high-quality waves and scenic landscapes, while weaknesses often relate to inadequate facilities, limited promotion, and lack of skilled human resources. Opportunities may arise from growing tourism trends and

government support, whereas threats may include competition with other destinations and environmental degradation.

Applying SWOT analysis enables destinations to maximize their strengths and opportunities while minimizing weaknesses and threats, leading to more sustainable and competitive tourism development.

f. Marine Tourism Development at Turedawola Beach

Previous studies by Telaumbanua (2023; 2024) indicate that Turedawola Beach has strong potential as a marine tourism destination, particularly for surfing tourism due to its internationally recognized waves. However, promotion and facility development remain limited. Tourism promotion is mostly conducted through word-of-mouth and unstructured social media posts, while official digital platforms and branding are absent.

Facilities such as toilets, information boards, and organized parking areas are inadequate, and community involvement is still informal. This situation reflects a gap between

theoretical concepts of sustainable marine tourism development and the actual conditions at Turedawola Beach. Therefore, further qualitative investigation is required to understand this gap and formulate appropriate.

B. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research approach to understand the development of maritime tourism on Turedawola Beach, North Nias Regency. A qualitative approach was chosen to obtain in-depth information about tourism activities, community involvement, facilities, promotion, and challenges faced in developing maritime tourism based on actual conditions in the field.

a. Research location

This research was conducted at Turedawola Beach, located in North Nias Regency, which is known for its coastal natural potential, especially surfing waves and beautiful natural scenery. This location was chosen because it has high tourism potential but limited tourism infrastructure and management.

b. Data Collection Techniques

Data was collected by using several instruments such as interviews, observation, documentation.

c. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive analysis model, consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and last is drawing conclusion.

C.Result and Discussion

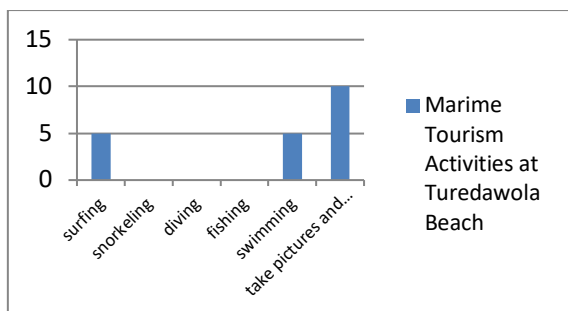
a. Research Results

This chapter presents the results of research obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation regarding the development of maritime tourism on Turedawola Beach, North Nias Regency. These findings are based on the responses of local community members and tourism stakeholders as listed in the interview table.

The interview results show that the most common marime tourism activities at Turedawola Beach are surfing, relaxing on the beach, taking photos, and enjoying the sunset.

Surfing is identified as the dominant activity due to the strong and consistent waves, which attract both local and international surfers. In addition, many visitors come to enjoy the natural scenery and coastal atmosphere, making photography and recreational activities popular among tourists.

These findings indicate that maritime tourism activities at Turedawola Beach are still limited to nature-based activities and do not require intensive facilities. More sophisticated maritime tourism activities such as snorkeling, diving, and boat tours are not yet available.



Grafik 1 Marine Tourism Activities at Turedawola Beach

Based on respondents, perceptions, the tourism potential of Turedawola Beach is considered very attractive, especially for surfing

activities. High waves and natural coastal landscapes are considered the main attractions of this area. Most respondents stated that visitors often come not only for surfing, but also for sightseeing, photography, and enjoying the sunset.

This shows that Turedawola Beach has strong natural appeal, which can be further developed as a competitive maritime tourism destination if supported by adequate facilities and management.

The interview results show that the participation of the local community in tourism activities is still limited. Although some residents provide small services such as food stalls and parking areas, tourism management has not been formally regulated. Most respondents stated that community participation in tourism development is still minimal, and there are no structured local tourism groups to manage the destination.

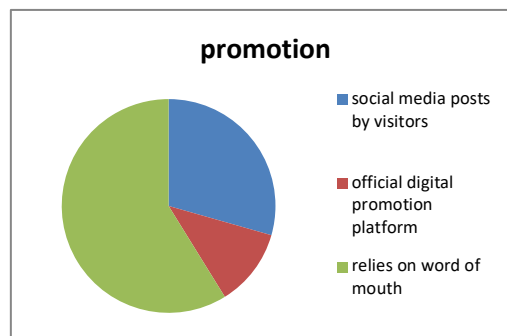
However, respondents expressed a strong willingness to become more actively involved in tourism management if provided with training and guidance. This indicates

the community's positive attitude towards tourism development.

Respondents identified several obstacles that hinder the development of maritime tourism on Turedawola Beach. The main obstacles include a lack of tourism facilities, inadequate human resources such as trained guides, and limited infrastructure. These limitations are the main reasons why activities such as snorkeling, diving, and boat tourism have not been developed.

In addition, the absence of adequate facilities such as toilets, information boards, and designated parking areas reduces visitor comfort and limits their length of stay.

The interviews revealed that tourism promotion at Turedawola Beach is still minimal and relies on word of mouth and personal social media posts by visitors. There is no official digital promotion platform, such as a website or social media account, managed by the tourism authority or local community.



Grafik 2 Tourism Promotion and Government Support

b. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that Turedawola Beach has significant maritime tourism potential, especially for surfing and nature-based tourism. However, the findings show a gap between existing tourism potential and actual tourism development. According to maritime tourism development theory, successful maritime tourism requires adequate facilities, effective promotion, and active community involvement.

The limited community participation observed in this study is consistent with the lack of training and institutional support. Previous studies emphasize that local community involvement is a key factor in sustainable tourism development, as it increases economic benefits and

ensures long-term destination management.

Furthermore, the absence of structured digital promotion contradicts modern tourism marketing strategies that highlight the importance of online platforms in attracting tourists. Without official promotion, Turedawola Beach is heavily reliant on informal promotion, which limits its market reach.

In terms of infrastructure, the lack of basic facilities remains a major challenge. This explains why maritime tourism activities on Turedawola Beach are still limited and not yet diverse. Therefore, collaboration between the government, local communities, and private stakeholders is essential to overcome these challenges and optimize the development of maritime tourism on Turedawola Beach.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, Turedawola Beach has strong potential for maritime tourism development, particularly for surfing and nature-based tourism, supported by powerful waves, scenic coastal landscapes, and attractive sunsets.

These features position the beach as a promising tourism destination in North Nias Regency. However, current tourism development remains limited, with activities largely restricted to surfing, beach recreation, and photography. More diversified maritime tourism activities, such as snorkeling, diving, and boat tourism, have not yet been developed due to inadequate facilities, limited human resources, and insufficient infrastructure. Community involvement in tourism management is still minimal and informal, although local residents show positive attitudes and willingness to participate if supported by proper training. Tourism promotion relies mainly on word of mouth and personal social media, as no official digital platform exists. Therefore, stronger government and private sector support is needed to improve infrastructure, develop human resources, and enhance tourism promotion.

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