

# Application of Participatory Rural Appraisal Technique In The Development of Sustainable And Disability-Friendly Tourism Destinations (Study Case In Sumber Maron Tourism, Karangsono Village, Pagelaran)

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## Abstract

Rural tourism is a widely adopted form of sustainable tourism development, as it has proven effective in addressing contemporary demands. This is evident from efforts to enhance economic well-being, foster community-based tourism potential, and demonstrate active community involvement in regional tourism advancement. This paper aims to showcase the achievements of the Karangsono Rural Tourism Village community and the Sumber Maron tourism managers, drawing from research and community engagement in the implementation of sustainable tourism development. The study focuses on improving and integrating the three core pillars of sustainable tourism: environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and economic sustainability, to provide economic benefits and support community well-being. The research was conducted in the Karangsono Rural Tourism Village, Pagelaran District, Malang Regency, utilizing the Participatory Rural Appraisal model or technique, along with in-depth interviews with village residents, government, and tourism managers. The findings indicate that the Sumber Maron Tourism Managers have embraced the concept and objectives of sustainable tourism by developing innovations and leveraging tourism potential through the application of sustainable tourism development in rural areas. This success is demonstrated by increased awareness and commitment to supporting the principles and pillars of sustainable tourism.

**Keywords:** Participatory Rural Appraisal, Rural Tourism, Sustainable Development, Sumber Maron, Community Service.

## Abstrak

Pariwisata pedesaan adalah bentuk pengembangan pariwisata berkelanjutan yang banyak diadopsi, karena terbukti efektif dalam memenuhi permintaan kontemporer. Hal ini terlihat dari upaya untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan ekonomi, mengembangkan potensi pariwisata berbasis komunitas, dan menunjukkan keterlibatan aktif masyarakat dalam kemajuan pariwisata daerah. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menampilkan pencapaian komunitas Desa Wisata Karangsono dan pengelola wisata Sumber Maron, yang diambil dari penelitian dan keterlibatan komunitas dalam pelaksanaan pengembangan pariwisata berkelanjutan. Studi ini berfokus pada peningkatan dan integrasi tiga pilar utama pariwisata berkelanjutan: keberlanjutan lingkungan, inklusi sosial, dan keberlanjutan ekonomi, untuk memberikan manfaat ekonomi dan mendukung kesejahteraan masyarakat. Penelitian ini dilakukan di Desa Wisata Karangsono, Kecamatan Pagelaran, Kabupaten Malang, dengan menggunakan model atau teknik Participatory Rural Appraisal, serta wawancara mendalam dengan penduduk desa, pemerintah, dan pengelola wisata. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Pengelola Wisata Sumber Maron telah mengadopsi konsep dan tujuan pariwisata berkelanjutan dengan mengembangkan inovasi dan memanfaatkan potensi pariwisata melalui penerapan pengembangan pariwisata berkelanjutan di daerah pedesaan. Keberhasilan ini

ditunjukkan oleh meningkatnya kesadaran dan komitmen untuk mendukung prinsip dan pilar pariwisata berkelanjutan.

**Kata kunci:** Penilaian Partisipatif Pedesaan, Pariwisata Pedesaan, Pembangunan Berkelanjutan, Sumber Maron, Pengabdian Masyarakat.

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the most dynamic and rapidly growing economic sectors globally, contributing significantly to worldwide economic growth. However, with its unchecked expansion, various pressing challenges have emerged, including negative environmental impacts, social inequalities, and limited accessibility for vulnerable groups, particularly individuals with disabilities (Lukoseviciute, Henriques et al., 2024). These issues require urgent attention to ensure sustainable tourism development. In facing the emerging challenges, the concept of sustainable tourism has been introduced as an approach that strategically balances economic, social, and environmental aspects in managing tourism activities (whether it be natural, artificial, or rural tourism). This concept is a comprehensive answer to ensure sustainable and inclusive tourism growth. According to Hadiwijoyo, rural tourism (2012), Rural tourism is a form of tourism that involves visiting a rural settlement with environmental features and facilities that meet the demands of tourists in terms of enjoying, recognizing, and appreciating the unique characteristics of the village, including its attractions, as well as the needs of the local community's lifestyle and activities (Ira & Muhamad, 2020).

In the context of sustainable tourism, the issue of inclusivity becomes crucial, especially when discussing accessibility for people with disabilities. Although various international regulations and standards have been established to improve accessibility, their implementation is often constrained by a lack of understanding and active participation from the local community, particularly in rural areas (Domínguez Vila and Darcy, 2025, Kim and Adu-Ampong, 2025). These areas, which often serve as the primary destinations for nature and cultural tourism, still face gaps in providing facilities and services that are disability-friendly.

Sustainable tourism is a multifaceted concept that encompasses three core pillars: environmental preservation, social inclusivity, and economic viability. This approach aims to ensure that tourism activities not only generate economic benefits but also safeguard the natural and cultural environment, and promote the well-being of local communities. In the global context, the emphasis on social inclusion, particularly for vulnerable groups such as individuals with disabilities, has become increasingly paramount (Bellucci, Biggeri et al., 2023). While significant progress has been made in enhancing accessibility for people with disabilities across various sectors, the tourism industry, especially in rural areas, often continues to face major challenges in this regard (Burnett and Baker, 2001, Carneiro, Alves et al., 2021). These challenges are frequently rooted in a lack of awareness, understanding, and active participation from local communities in planning and implementing inclusive tourism initiatives (Darcy, McKercher et al., 2020).

On the other hand, rural areas have great potential for tourism development due to their unique culture, natural beauty, and well-preserved traditions. However, limited infrastructure and resources often become obstacles in creating inclusive and sustainable tourism destinations. The conventional approach to tourism planning tends to be top-down, where decisions are made without active participation from the local community, including people with disabilities. This can result in a lack of understanding of the specific needs of these groups and, ultimately, create a tourism environment that is not welcoming and inclusive.

This paper uses the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique, which is a method designed to empower local communities in the decision-making process through direct participation. PRA allows for a more accurate identification of needs, potentials, and existing barriers, as it involves those who are directly impacted by the decisions made. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) emerges as a powerful methodology that can effectively address these challenges by actively engaging local communities in the planning and development of sustainable and inclusive tourism destinations ([Saliman et al., 2021](#)). In the context of sustainable tourism, the application of PRA can be a highly effective tool to ensure that the needs and perspectives of people with disabilities are accommodated in the planning and development of tourism destinations. This technique not only helps in formulating environmentally-friendly tourism strategies, but also promotes the creation of innovations that make tourism destinations more inclusive and accessible to all.

In the context of developing sustainable and disability-friendly tourism, PRA can be a highly effective tool. This technique enables the identification of the specific needs of people with disabilities, the barriers they face, and the potential that can be developed to create inclusive and sustainable tourism destinations. For example, through PRA, local communities can identify tourist routes that require improved accessibility, public facilities that need to be adapted, and specialized services that need to be provided to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

This research aims to explore the application of PRA in developing sustainable and disability-friendly tourism in various rural destinations. By analyzing various case studies, this research will evaluate the effectiveness of PRA in promoting innovation and inclusivity, as well as identify the challenges faced in its implementation. The results of this research are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, destination managers, and all stakeholders in an effort to create a more equitable, friendly, and sustainable tourism.

In this case, the writing is the result of research and community service carried out during the implementation of the Community Service program in Karangsono Village, Kepanjen District, Malang Regency. Karangsono Village has one of the well-known tourist destinations and village potentials, namely the Sumber Maron Educational Tourism. Related to this, Karangsono Village has also become a Tourism Village. However, there is still a need for innovation and development by applying the concept of sustainable tourism by integrating the three main pillars, including environmental

sustainability, social inclusion, and economic sustainability, so that the development and concept of sustainable tourism can be realized.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This community service program was implemented using the Participatory Rural Appraisal method, with the implementation of Action Research, which is a community service and research activity carried out starting from planning the instruments, collecting data and information, processing, and analyzing data carried out together with the community and related stakeholders who are not portrayed as objects but as subjects who can influence and provide insights in the formulation and analysis. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is a set of approaches and techniques that enable local communities to share, enhance, and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act ([Haryanto et al., 2023](#)). This approach provides a platform for local residents, including those with disabilities, to voice their perspectives, contribute their knowledge, and actively participate in decision-making processes related to tourism development. This research was carried out concurrently with the Community Service program with the locus in Karangsudo Village, Peglaran District, Malang Regency. This activity was carried out from July to August 2024.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Tourism is an integral part of national development that is carried out systematically, planned, integrated, sustainable, and responsible while still providing protection for religious values, cultural values living in the community, environmental sustainability and quality, as well as national interests. This is the basis for the formation of Law Number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism. Sustainability, especially sustainability towards environmental preservation and quality, is one of the important things in tourism development (Widiati & Permatasari, 2022). As a tourist village in Malang Regency, Karangsudo is renowned for its primary attraction, the Sumber Maron. It is imperative for the village to comprehend the concepts and requirements of a tourist destination. Sustainability and accessibility for individuals with disabilities are essential considerations. However, it appears that these aspects have not been fully understood and implemented in Karangsudo. The concept of sustainable tourism is crucial for the village to maintain the sustainability of the natural environment. Sustainable tourism is a rapidly developing field, encompassing increased accommodation capacity, local population, and environmental integration, where tourism development and new investments should not have a negative impact but rather harmonize with the environment (Darcy, Bruce et al., 2010, Darcy and Dickson, 2009).

Sustainable tourism must optimally utilize environmental resources, which are key elements in tourism development, maintain important ecological processes, conserve natural resources and biodiversity, respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, preserve their cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance (Blichfeldt and and Nicolaisen, 2011). Additionally, sustainable tourism must ensure long-term viable economic operations, providing socioeconomic benefits to all stakeholders, including stable jobs, income-earning opportunities, and social services to host communities, while contributing to poverty alleviation and minimizing negative impacts (Cloquet et al., 2018). Sustainable tourism development is an idea that is quite well-known in tourism development. Sustainable tourism is tourism that takes into account the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts in the present and the future (Widiati & Permatasari, 2022).

Based on the results of the survey and discussion with the managers and the Karangsuiko Village Government, there have been no concrete steps taken by the local community to implement the concept of sustainable and disability-friendly tourism. Therefore, the Community Service team held a series of socialization activities related to the concept of sustainable and disability-friendly tourism. This series of programs and activities began with the ESM socialization held at the Karangsuiko Village Pendopo on July 29, 2024. By collaborating with the Indonesian Tourism Ambassador and tourism lecturing practitioners as presenters. This activity aims to introduce the schemes and concepts of sustainable and disability-friendly tourism to the managers of the Sumber Maron natural tourism, the Karangsuiko Village Government, and the surrounding community. In addition to being a means of introducing the program, the socialization carried out can increase the understanding and new insights of the members of the Sumber Maron natural tourism managers, the Karangsuiko Village Government, and the surrounding community as capacity building for members.



Image 1. ESM Socialization held at the Karangsuiko Village Pendopo



Image 2. Capacity Building and FGD with Karangsudo Village Government Worker

## **RESULTS AND LEARNING**

The socialization of ESM has yielded several results that are a form of contribution and dedication from the Community Service Team. After the ESM socialization, the Community Service Team, the managers, and the Indonesian Tourism Ambassador continued with the exploration of the potential and tourist attractions of the Sumber Maron in order to understand and find out what needs to be improved as a tourist village with the concept of sustainable and disability-friendly tourism. Article 1 paragraph 5 of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism states that tourist attractions are everything that has uniqueness, beauty, and value in the form of the diversity of natural, cultural, and man-made resources that are the target or destination of tourist visits (Widiati & Permatasari, 2022).

As previously explained, Karangsudo Village is known for its natural tourism, namely the Sumber Maron, so it is very important for the managers and the community to be able to understand the concept of sustainable tourism itself. Together with the managers of the Sumber Maron natural tourism, the Community Service Team held a tree planting program and also revitalized the park area as an effort to introduce the concept of sustainable tourism to the surrounding community. This aims to maintain the ecosystem and environmental sustainability around the tourist area so that in the next few years, it is hoped that the environmental and natural sustainability will be maintained. Not only that, the Community Service Team also collaborates with the managers of the Sumber Maron natural tourism in maintaining the cleanliness of the Sumber Maron spring by regularly collecting inorganic waste inside and outside the natural spring pool of the Sumber Maron. However, to succeed in the concept of sustainable tourism, there needs to be many hands and components that contribute to protecting and preserving the environment.

In addition, the community's understanding of the concept and implementation of sustainable tourism is also a result of the program held, because later the community will also take a big role and be heavily involved in the implementation of the concept of

sustainable tourism. Therefore, in order to support the success of the concept of sustainable tourism and maintain tourism so that it can be enjoyed continuously, raising awareness and providing an understanding of the concept of sustainable tourism is very important. Local communities must also be involved in the evaluation and monitoring process in the development of sustainable tourism. This is important because they are the ones who are close to the destination every day. So, they also know about all the achievements and shortcomings during the running of tourism activities. Their observations also need to be matched with the data that has been collected. Proper problem identification will also result in the right solution and can develop new strategies to continue developing a tourism destination (Satrio Wibowo & Arviana Belia, 2023).

## **SUGGESTION**

Sustainable tourism has emerged as a key concept in the global travel industry, offering solutions to address the negative impacts of mass tourism while still maintaining significant economic and social benefits. This article has explored various aspects of sustainable tourism, including its guiding principles, best practices, challenges faced, and future prospects. We have seen that sustainable tourism is not just about environmental preservation, but also about respecting local cultures, supporting local economies, and enhancing the tourist experience. Practices such as ecotourism, community-based tourism, and the use of green technology have shown great potential in achieving sustainability goals. However, challenges such as over-tourism, climate change, and resistance to change still need to be addressed. Collaboration between governments, the tourism industry, local communities, and tourists themselves is crucial to overcoming these challenges and realizing the vision of truly sustainable tourism.

Looking ahead, sustainable tourism has the potential not only to reduce the negative impacts of this industry, but also to become a catalyst for positive global change. With increasing consumer awareness and industry commitment to sustainable practices, the future of tourism appears brighter and more responsible. From this, it can be concluded that obtaining the title of a tourist village is not just about getting the title, but also about understanding the concepts of the tourist village itself. One of them is the concept of sustainable tourism. As a tourist village, the existing natural tourism potential should be able to be enjoyed in a sustainable and continuous manner. Therefore, it is necessary to have an understanding and also the application of the concept of sustainable tourism in order to continue developing the existing tourism potential while still prioritizing the preservation of the surrounding environment so that in the process of developing tourism, it does not damage or reduce the essence of

nature. By not reducing, polluting and damaging the environment around the tourist area. The application of this concept cannot be handled by a single party, but requires support from several parties. The concept of sustainable tourism is a multi-stakeholder program. Where it will involve many elements of the community. The existence of good cooperation and understanding will boost the tourism potential with the application of sustainable tourism itself.

Based on the analysis carried out in this article, here are some suggestions for advancing sustainable tourism. 1. Policy Strengthening: Governments at all levels must develop and enforce policies that support sustainable tourism practices. This can include incentives for businesses that implement environmentally friendly practices and sanctions for violations. 2. Education and Awareness: Extensive educational programs are needed to increase understanding of sustainable tourism among tourists, industry players, and local communities. 3. Technological Innovation: Investment in green technology and digital solutions can help reduce the carbon footprint of the tourism industry and improve operational efficiency. 4. Empowerment of Local Communities: Involving and empowering local communities in the development and management of tourism can ensure a fairer distribution of benefits and better cultural preservation. 5. Certification and Standards: Developing and promoting a strong certification system for sustainable tourism can help consumers make more responsible choices. 6. Research and Monitoring: Investment in ongoing research and effective monitoring systems is needed to measure the impact of tourism and the effectiveness of sustainability initiatives. 7. Cross-Sector Partnerships: Encouraging partnerships between the public, private, and non-governmental sectors to address the complex challenges in sustainable tourism. 8. Destination Diversification: Encouraging the development of new and less known destinations to reduce the pressure on already overcrowded tourism hotspots. By implementing these suggestions, the tourism industry can move closer to a truly sustainable model that benefits all stakeholders while preserving our precious natural and cultural resources for future generations.

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