

DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM DESTINATIONS BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM AND GREEN ECONOMY IN THE POST- PANDEMIC ERA: A CASE STUDY OF A TOURIST VILLAGE IN THE THOUSAND ISLANDS, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted global tourism, exposing the profound vulnerability of small island destinations like Indonesia's Thousand Islands (Kepulauan Seribu), whose economies are highly dependent on visitors. This crisis, however, presents a critical opportunity to reimagine tourism through resilient and sustainable recovery models. This study explores the integration of local wisdom and green economy principles as a strategic framework for developing tourist villages in the post-pandemic era. Employing a qualitative case study approach, the research was conducted in a selected village in the Thousand Islands, utilizing in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The findings reveal significant potential in harnessing local wisdom, such as traditional marine management practices like *sasi laut*, community cooperation (*gotong royong*), and vernacular architecture, to create authentic tourist experiences. Concurrently, opportunities for green economy practices were identified, including improved waste management systems, adopting renewable energy like solar power, and promoting sustainable local sourcing. However, the study also identifies key challenges, including limited infrastructure, a lack of initial capital, and low community awareness. The research concludes that a synergistic model combining local wisdom with a green economy can foster a competitive, authentic, and sustainable tourism destination. This approach not only aids in post-pandemic recovery but also ensures long-term resilience. The study offers practical recommendations for policymakers, local communities, and tourism operators to collaboratively build a tourism sector that values cultural heritage, environmental integrity, and economic inclusion.

Keywords: Local Wisdom, Green Economy, Sustainable Tourism, Post-Pandemic Tourism, Community-Based Tourism, Thousand Islands, Tourist Village

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly disrupted global tourism, leading to unprecedented declines in international travel, visitor arrivals, and tourism revenue. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2022), international tourist arrivals dropped by nearly 73% in 2020 compared to pre-pandemic levels, marking the worst crisis in the history of modern tourism. The impacts were particularly severe in

countries heavily dependent on tourism, including Indonesia, where the tourism sector contributed approximately 5.9% to national GDP prior to the pandemic (BPS, 2020). Travel restrictions, border closures, and health concerns triggered massive job losses across hospitality and service sectors, threatening millions of livelihoods, especially in rural and island communities (Kusumaningrum & Wachyuni, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism Destination Development Concepts

Tourism destination development has evolved significantly over the past decades, reflecting broader social, economic, and environmental transformations. Initially, the dominant paradigm was mass tourism, characterized by large-scale, standardized, and profit-driven travel experiences with little regard for environmental or social consequences (Cohen, 1972; Britton, 1982). This model prioritized rapid infrastructure growth, international marketing, and high visitor volumes as indicators of success. However, by the late 1980s and 1990s, scholars began to recognize the unsustainability of mass tourism due to its negative externalities—such as overdevelopment, resource depletion, and socio-cultural disruption (Butler, 1999; Dredge & Jenkins, 2011). In response, the concept of sustainable tourism development emerged, emphasizing the need to balance economic growth with environmental protection and social well-being (WCED, 1987; Bramwell & Lane, 1993). Sustainable tourism seeks to ensure that tourism activities meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It promotes long-term destination resilience, responsible resource use, and equitable community participation (Sharpley, 2020).

Building on this sustainability agenda, community-based tourism (CBT) has gained traction as a participatory approach that places local communities at the center of destination planning and management (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018). CBT prioritizes local ownership, empowerment, and the redistribution of tourism benefits to improve community welfare while preserving cultural and environmental integrity (Zapata et al., 2011). This approach contrasts with top-down tourism planning by encouraging bottom-up decision-making and the use of local knowledge in tourism development (Tolkach & King, 2015). In the post-pandemic context, scholars have argued for the integration of sustainability, resilience, and community participation as the foundation for destination recovery and transformation (Hall et al., 2020; Bhuiyan & Darda, M.A., 2022). As tourism systems face new vulnerabilities related to health crises, climate change, and socio-economic uncertainty, destination development must now incorporate adaptability, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity. The shift from mass tourism to sustainable and community-based tourism thus represents not merely an economic adjustment but a fundamental paradigm shift toward a more regenerative and value-driven form of tourism development (Dredge & Jamal, 2015).

Local Wisdom in Tourism

Local wisdom, or *kearifan lokal*, refers to the collective knowledge, beliefs, and practices developed by a community over generations to sustain harmony between humans, nature, and the spiritual world (Geertz, 1973; Octaviani et al, 2024). It embodies cultural values, customary laws (*adat*), traditional ecological knowledge, and local governance systems that guide how communities interact with their environment (Juliana et al, 2025). In the context of tourism, local wisdom serves as both a cultural asset and a framework for sustainability,

influencing how destinations are planned, managed, and experienced (Cole, 2007). The forms of local wisdom relevant to tourism include customary practices (e.g., rituals, ceremonies, taboos), traditional environmental management systems (such as *awig-awig* in Bali or *sasi* in Maluku), and communal decision-making structures (e.g., village councils or *banjar*). These systems reflect deep ecological awareness and social cohesion that align with modern sustainability principles (Gianisa, 2018). When integrated into tourism management, they can promote conservation ethics, cultural preservation, and local empowerment (Badaruddin et al, 2026).

Numerous case studies illustrate the successful incorporation of local wisdom into tourism development in Indonesia and beyond. For instance, the Tri Hita Karana philosophy in Bali emphasizes the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God, forming the foundation of the island's cultural tourism and eco-friendly practices (Octaviani et al, 2024). Similarly, the *sasi* tradition in the Maluku Islands restricts the harvesting of marine resources during specific periods to allow for ecological regeneration – an indigenous form of sustainable resource management that aligns closely with marine-based tourism development (Gianisa, 2018). In Yogyakarta, cultural heritage villages integrate traditional crafts, community performances, and local governance to create immersive and educational tourism experiences (Juliana et al, 2025). Local wisdom also strengthens community resilience and destination identity. By embedding tourism within local cultural frameworks, destinations are better equipped to withstand external shocks—such as pandemics or environmental changes—while maintaining authenticity and social cohesion (Prayag, 2020). Thus, the recognition and integration of local wisdom in tourism planning not only enhance destination distinctiveness but also provide an ethical and sustainable foundation for long-term development (Cole, 2012; Bhuiyan & Darda, M.A., 2022).

Green Economy and Sustainable Development

The green economy has emerged as a central paradigm for achieving sustainable development in tourism. It seeks to harmonize economic growth with environmental protection and social inclusivity, emphasizing the efficient use of resources, reduced carbon emissions, and equitable benefits for local communities (UNEP, 2011). Unlike traditional economic models that prioritize short-term profit, the green economy approach promotes resource efficiency, low-carbon tourism, circular economic systems, and inclusive growth (Gössling & Hall, 2019). Resource efficiency refers to optimizing the use of energy, water, and materials to minimize waste and pollution while enhancing the productivity of tourism enterprises (UNWTO, 2018). For example, eco-resorts adopting renewable energy technologies and sustainable architecture reduce operational costs and environmental footprints simultaneously (Budke et al, 2025). Low-carbon tourism focuses on mitigating greenhouse gas emissions across the tourism value chain—transportation, accommodation, and food services—by adopting cleaner technologies and encouraging behavioral change among tourists (Becken, 2017). Circular economy principles, such as recycling, reusing, and redesigning tourism products, further support waste reduction and local value retention (Grujić et al., 2026).

Inclusivity is another cornerstone of the green economy, emphasizing social equity and the participation of local communities, particularly in rural and island destinations (Bramwell & Lane, 2013). Inclusive green tourism models aim to empower marginalized groups by providing skills training, microfinance access, and opportunities for

entrepreneurship within sustainable value chains (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018). For small island destinations, the relevance of the green economy is particularly pronounced due to their ecological fragility, limited natural resources, and dependency on tourism (Kelman, 2018). These islands face mounting pressures from climate change, sea-level rise, and over-tourism, making the integration of green principles essential for long-term resilience (Hall, 2019). The adoption of renewable energy systems (e.g., solar and wind power), sustainable waste management, and community-led eco-innovation can help reduce dependency on external inputs while strengthening self-sufficiency (UNEP, 2011; Bhuiyan & Darda, M.A., 2022). By combining ecological stewardship with socio-economic empowerment, the green economy framework offers a viable pathway for the transformation of tourism systems in small islands such as the Thousand Islands. It aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 13 (Climate Action), thus providing a holistic model for sustainable destination development.

Post-Pandemic Tourism Transformation

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a paradigm shift in global tourism, reshaping tourist behavior, industry practices, and policy priorities. Tourists are now more conscious of health, authenticity, and environmental sustainability, seeking experiences that are meaningful, safe, and connected to nature (Zenker & Kock, 2020). This shift marks a transition from consumption-driven tourism toward reflective, purpose-oriented travel behaviors (Brouder et al., 2020). Health and hygiene have become core determinants of destination choice, prompting destinations to adopt new safety standards and certifications (Sigala, 2020). Simultaneously, tourists increasingly value authenticity, preferring destinations that showcase local culture, traditional lifestyles, and genuine community engagement (Cohen, 2021). Environmental awareness has also deepened, with travelers expressing greater interest in eco-friendly accommodations, nature-based activities, and ethical consumption (Romagosa, 2020). This trend supports the advancement of slow tourism, ecotourism, and regenerative tourism models that emphasize quality over quantity and prioritize positive impacts on host communities (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020).

The pandemic has further catalyzed the digital transformation of the tourism sector. Digitalization enables remote marketing, online bookings, virtual tours, and data-driven management of visitor flows (Gretzel et al., 2020). For local communities, especially in rural and island contexts, digital platforms have created new opportunities to promote local products, storytelling, and virtual cultural experiences (Gutierriz et al., 2025). However, unequal access to digital infrastructure remains a significant barrier, underscoring the need for capacity building and inclusive technology policies (Sigala, 2020). Another key post-pandemic development is the growing emphasis on resilience strategies at both community and destination levels (Prayag, 2020). Communities that relied on diverse income sources – such as agriculture, fisheries, and creative industries – demonstrated greater adaptive capacity during the crisis (Hall et al., 2020). Thus, fostering economic diversification, local empowerment, and environmental stewardship becomes essential for future destination recovery. In summary, the post-pandemic tourism transformation calls for a more resilient, inclusive, and sustainability-oriented model that integrates digital innovation, green economy practices, and local wisdom. For small island destinations like the Thousand Islands, these transformations provide both a challenge and an opportunity to redefine their tourism identity around community well-being, environmental integrity, and cultural authenticity.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach to explore how local wisdom and green economy principles interact in shaping the sustainable development of small island tourism destinations. The qualitative design is chosen to capture the depth of cultural meanings, community perceptions, and contextual dynamics that cannot be quantified through surveys (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The case study method allows for an in-depth investigation of one particular village in the Thousand Islands as a bounded system—an integrated social, cultural, and ecological entity (Yin, 2018). By employing this approach, the research aims to uncover how local actors interpret, negotiate, and implement sustainability and resilience strategies in the post-pandemic period. The study emphasizes naturalistic inquiry and inductive reasoning, enabling the emergence of theoretical insights grounded in field data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The case study will provide a holistic understanding of the interactions among local communities, government agencies, and tourism stakeholders, reflecting the complexity of destination governance in small island contexts (Stake, 2005). The design aligns with a constructivist paradigm, assuming that knowledge about sustainability and local wisdom is socially constructed through shared experiences, narratives, and practices (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data will be triangulated from multiple sources—interviews, observations, and documents—to enhance validity and reliability.

The research site is a tourist village located in the Thousand Islands (Kepulauan Seribu), Jakarta, Indonesia, selected through purposive sampling based on its representativeness as a small island community that depends heavily on tourism. The village—situated approximately 40 kilometers north of Jakarta's coast—comprises a cluster of small inhabited and uninhabited islands connected by ferry routes. It has a population of around 2,500 residents, with most households engaged in tourism-related activities such as homestay operations, boat rentals, snorkeling services, and culinary micro-enterprises (Dinas Pariwisata Kepulauan Seribu, 2023). Culturally, the village exhibits a hybrid identity combining Betawi, Bugis, and Sunda influences. Local customs emphasize communal solidarity (*gotong royong*), marine conservation, and traditional fishing ethics, which form the basis of its local wisdom. Religious and cultural rituals—such as the *nadran* sea offering ceremony—are performed annually to express gratitude to the sea and reinforce ecological respect among residents (Supiandi & Habibi, 2024). The island's unique socio-cultural setting, along with its fragile ecological systems (coral reefs and mangroves), makes it an ideal case for exploring the intersection between local wisdom and green economy strategies. Geographically, the village faces typical small-island challenges, including limited freshwater resources, dependence on boat transport, waste management difficulties, and vulnerability to climate-related impacts such as rising sea levels and coral bleaching (Bhuiyan & Darda, M.A., 2022). Despite these constraints, the community has shown adaptability by promoting low-impact tourism activities and establishing local environmental groups (*kelompok sadar wisata*).

Data collection employs multiple qualitative techniques to ensure comprehensive coverage and methodological triangulation (Patton, 2015):

1. Semi-Structure Interviews

In-depth interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders, including local leaders (village heads and *tokoh adat*), homestay owners, fishermen, tourists, and government

officials from the Jakarta Tourism Office. The interviews will explore perceptions of sustainability, interpretations of local wisdom, and the community's experiences in adapting to post-pandemic changes. The semi-structured format allows flexibility to probe emerging themes while maintaining consistency across participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

2. Field Observations

Direct field observations will focus on tourism facilities, daily community activities, conservation practices, and visitor interactions. Observations will document how local wisdom manifests in spatial arrangements (e.g., coastal zoning, waste management systems) and in social practices (e.g., hospitality norms, community rituals). Field notes and photographs will support contextual analysis and pattern identification (Spradley, 1980).

3. Documentation and Secondary Data

Secondary data will be collected from official sources such as reports from the Thousand Islands Tourism Office, community tourism groups, environmental NGOs, and academic publications. Additional materials—such as local tourism brochures, social media content, and policy documents—will provide insights into how sustainability and green economy narratives are represented in local discourse (Bowen, 2009). Data triangulation across these sources enhances the credibility of the findings, while prolonged engagement in the field supports contextual validity. The combination of interviews, observations, and document review enables a multi-layered understanding of the evolving relationship between local wisdom and green economic initiatives within the community.

Data Analysis

Data collected from interviews, field observations, and document reviews were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method was chosen because it allows for the systematic identification, organization, and interpretation of recurring patterns within qualitative data. The process involved several stages: (1) familiarization with the data through transcription and repeated reading; (2) generation of initial codes to capture meaningful features; (3) grouping of codes into potential themes; (4) reviewing and refining themes; and (5) defining and naming the final themes. The coding process followed both deductive and inductive logic. Deductive codes were derived from the theoretical framework—particularly the constructs of *local wisdom*, *green economy*, and *post-pandemic adaptation*. Inductive codes emerged directly from the narratives of participants and field observations, enabling context-specific insights to surface organically (Nowell et al., 2017). Examples of emerging sub-themes included *community-based waste management*, *ritual practices reinforcing conservation*, and *digital marketing for eco-tourism recovery*.

Data analysis was facilitated using manual coding and memo writing, allowing the researcher to stay immersed in contextual details and cultural nuances (Saldaña, 2021). Relationships among themes were mapped to illustrate how local wisdom practices intersected with green economic initiatives and adaptive community behavior in the post-pandemic period. To ensure analytic rigor, the study employed data triangulation—

comparing and cross-validating findings from multiple sources (interviews, observations, and documents). This approach strengthens interpretive credibility and mitigates researcher bias (Patton, 2015). Narrative excerpts and field notes were used to support analytical claims, providing thick descriptions that link theory with empirical evidence (Geertz, 1973).

Validity and Reliability

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, several validation strategies recommended for qualitative research were employed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

1. Member Checking

After initial data interpretation, summaries and key themes were shared with selected participants—such as local leaders, homestay owners, and tourism officials—for feedback and verification. This process ensured that the findings accurately reflected participants' perspectives and contextual realities.

2. Prolonged Engagement and Persistent Observation

The researcher spent an extended period in the field to build rapport, observe community interactions, and understand local dynamics beyond superficial encounters. Prolonged engagement strengthened data authenticity and minimized the risk of misinterpretation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

3. Triangulation of Data Sources

Findings were cross-validated across interviews, observations, and documentary evidence to confirm consistency. This methodological triangulation enhanced both internal validity and contextual depth (Denzin, 2012).

4. Audit Trail and Reflexivity

Detailed records of data collection, coding decisions, and analytic memos were maintained to create an audit trail. Reflexive journaling was also used to document the researcher's positionality and potential biases during interpretation (Nowell et al., 2017).

5. Thick Description

Contextual and cultural details were richly described to allow readers to evaluate transferability of the findings to other small-island settings (Geertz, 1973).

These strategies collectively enhanced the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study—criteria commonly applied to qualitative research reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The integration of methodological rigor and reflexivity ensures that the interpretations remain faithful to participants' voices while grounded in theoretical and empirical consistency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Tourist Village

The selected research site, *Pulau Panggang Village* in the Thousand Islands Regency, represents one of the most active community-based tourism destinations near Jakarta. The island covers approximately 12 hectares and is home to around 5,200 residents, most of whom rely on small-scale fisheries, marine tourism, and homestay operations as their primary

sources of income (Thousand Islands Tourism Office, 2024). Tourism attractions include snorkeling and diving areas, mangrove tours, traditional seafood culinary experiences, and educational conservation programs led by youth groups. The island's proximity to the capital city allows for consistent domestic tourist arrivals, although seasonal fluctuations remain high – particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The community governance system operates through a dual structure: the *formal village administration (pemerintah kelurahan)* and *informal community organizations* such as youth groups (*karang taruna*), women's cooperatives, and *pokdarwis* (tourism awareness groups). These informal institutions play a critical role in mobilizing collective participation, coordinating guest management, and enforcing sustainable tourism codes of conduct. Traditional practices remain embedded in daily life. Local fishermen, for instance, observe a customary "hari pantang melaut" (no-fishing day) every Thursday, believed to honor marine spirits and allow ecological regeneration. Similarly, community rituals such as the Sea Alms Ceremony (*Sedekah Laut*) are held annually to express gratitude for the sea's bounty while reinforcing intergenerational bonds and cultural identity. The pandemic period (2020–2022) significantly disrupted tourism flows and local livelihoods. However, it also catalyzed adaptive innovations such as digital marketing of homestays via Instagram and improved waste management practices supported by the local NGO *Jakarta Green Islands*. This context provided fertile ground for exploring how *local wisdom* and *green economy* principles intersect in community recovery and resilience.

Manifestations of Local Wisdom

Field data revealed that *local wisdom (kearifan lokal)* serves not only as cultural heritage but also as a functional framework for sustainable tourism governance. Three dominant themes emerged: *traditional ecological knowledge, collective rituals and social solidarity, and participatory community governance*.

1. Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Conservation Ethics

Participants repeatedly emphasized the community's belief that the sea and coral reefs are "sources of life that must not be taken for granted." This worldview manifests in local rules (*aturan adat*) restricting coral collection, anchoring on reef zones, and dumping waste into the ocean.

A local homestay owner stated:

"Our ancestors taught us that the sea is alive; if we hurt it, it will hurt us back." (Interview, April 2025).

Such moral-ecological narratives have practical implications for conservation. For example, the youth group *Pemuda Hijau Laut* leads mangrove planting and reef restoration projects funded through a visitor donation scheme (IDR 10,000 per tourist). This initiative aligns with the green economy principle of integrating environmental protection with community income generation (UNWTO, 2022).

2. Rituals, Symbolism, and Cultural Continuity

Rituals like *Sedekah Laut* act as collective reaffirmations of the human–nature relationship. Beyond their symbolic dimension, these rituals also function as **cultural institutions** regulating behavior, fostering unity, and transmitting ecological values to younger generations (Adger et al., 2013).

Observation notes indicated that during the ceremony, participants refrained from fishing and engaged in shoreline clean-ups before offerings were released to the sea. The integration of spiritual gratitude with environmental stewardship reinforces the idea that **cultural continuity supports ecological resilience** (Folke, 2016).

3. Participatory Governance and Mutual Assistance

Local wisdom also manifests in **social cooperation mechanisms**, notably the practice of *gotong royong* (mutual aid). This principle underpins tourism-related initiatives such as homestay maintenance, beach cleaning, and guest handling. Decision-making occurs through *musyawarah* (deliberative forums) involving both formal leaders and community elders, ensuring legitimacy and inclusiveness.

Such participatory governance structures reflect bottom-up sustainability – where community agency precedes formal policy intervention (Pretty, 2011). This finding supports prior studies emphasizing that community-managed tourism systems grounded in cultural norms tend to achieve greater environmental compliance and equitable benefit distribution (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Scheyvens, 2015). Overall, local wisdom in Pulau Panggang functions as both a cultural compass and adaptive mechanism. It guides community members in balancing tourism development, ecological preservation, and socio-cultural integrity – demonstrating a form of vernacular sustainability that integrates tradition with modern adaptation.

Adoption of Green Economy Principles

Empirical findings reveal that the tourist village in the Thousand Islands has begun adopting *green economy principles* across several domains, namely waste management, renewable energy utilization, eco-friendly accommodation, and livelihood diversification. These efforts reflect both *grassroots innovation* and *adaptive recovery* following the COVID-19 crisis.

1. Waste Management and Circular Practices

The island community has implemented a simple but effective waste segregation system – separating organic, plastic, and non-recyclable waste. Through collaboration with *Jakarta Green Islands* NGO, the community established a waste bank (bank sampah) where recyclable materials are exchanged for household goods or cash.

Observation data indicate that approximately 65% of households participate in this system, significantly reducing plastic leakage into the marine environment (Field Observation, 2025). Organic waste is converted into compost for small-scale urban farming initiatives, thus embodying the circular economy principle of resource recovery and reuse (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017).

A community volunteer explained:

“Before, plastic was everywhere on the beach. Now we treat it like money. Tourists see our effort, and it makes them respect our island more.” (Interview, April 2025).

2. Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

In collaboration with a local renewable energy cooperative, solar panels were installed on the community hall and selected homestays. Although the total installed capacity

(approximately 15 kWp) only meets about 20% of local energy needs, it represents a critical symbolic shift toward low-carbon tourism (UNEP, 2021).

Tourists are encouraged to minimize electricity consumption, and several homestays adopted solar-powered lighting and water-saving systems. The adaptation supports global targets of reducing tourism's carbon footprint and aligns with the UNWTO Green Destinations Framework (2022) emphasizing decarbonization and efficiency.

3. Eco-Friendly Accommodation and Local Products

Post-pandemic reconstruction encouraged homestay owners to use locally sourced materials (bamboo, coconut wood) and natural ventilation instead of air conditioning. Food and beverage services increasingly emphasize *local sourcing*—such as seafood supplied directly by nearby fishers, and traditional meals prepared using local herbs. This not only reduces the carbon footprint but also strengthens economic linkages within the community, a cornerstone of green and inclusive tourism (OECD, 2021).

4. Sustainable Livelihood Diversification

To reduce dependency on tourism, several residents diversified into eco-craft production, organic seaweed farming, and marine education tours. These livelihood shifts represent a strategic adaptation fostering resilience against future shocks (Hall et al., 2020).

Overall, the village demonstrates incremental but meaningful adoption of green economy principles, merging ecological responsibility with economic empowerment—an embodiment of “*small-island green resilience*”.

Challenges in Implementation

Despite visible progress, several structural and institutional challenges persist, hindering the full realization of a green and sustainable tourism model.

1. Limited Infrastructure and Technological Access

The village faces constraints in waste transportation, clean water supply, and renewable energy infrastructure. Remote logistics and high transportation costs make it difficult to sustain large-scale waste collection or solar maintenance programs. Moreover, unstable internet connectivity limits the community's access to e-commerce and online marketing for eco-tourism products.

2. Financial Constraints

Financial capacity remains a significant barrier. Community-based organizations rely heavily on short-term grants and volunteer labor. Without sustained funding or microcredit support, investment in green technologies (e.g., solar power, waste recycling facilities) remains limited (Singh et al., 2025).

A local leader commented:

“We have ideas and motivation, but no capital. When donors leave, many projects stop.” (Interview, May 2025)

3. Capacity Building and Knowledge Gaps

Although local enthusiasm is high, technical expertise in waste treatment, renewable energy maintenance, and digital marketing remains insufficient. The

absence of continuous training programs restricts innovation diffusion and monitoring of environmental performance (Dangi & Jamal, 2016).

4. Policy and Institutional Fragmentation

Overlapping jurisdictions between local tourism offices, environmental agencies, and community groups often lead to inconsistent priorities. Integration of *green economy* goals into *village tourism policies* is still partial, requiring stronger multi-stakeholder coordination (Bramwell & Lane, 2011).

These challenges echo broader findings across Southeast Asia, where small island destinations struggle to balance environmental aspirations with economic and institutional realities (Gössling & Hall, 2019).

Synergy between Local Wisdom and Green Economy

A central finding of this study is the synergistic interplay between *local wisdom* (*kearifan lokal*) and *green economy principles*. Rather than existing as separate frameworks, both form a mutually reinforcing system of sustainability and resilience.

1. Cultural Values as Environmental Regulators

Cultural norms such as *hari pantang melaut* and *Sedekah Laut* act as informal environmental governance mechanisms, fostering compliance without external enforcement. These traditions reinforce ecological restraint, a key value of the green economy. As observed by Folke et al. (2016), cultural institutions often serve as reservoirs of ecological knowledge that guide adaptive behavior.

2. Green Economy as Cultural Continuation

Conversely, green economy initiatives—such as waste recycling and renewable energy use—are framed within local narratives of *respect for nature* and *community solidarity*. This cultural embedding ensures community ownership and prevents the perception of sustainability as an “external” or “Western” agenda (Afandi et al., 2025). For instance, solar panels installed at the community hall were ceremonially blessed during *Sedekah Laut*, symbolizing harmony between *technological modernity* and *ancestral wisdom*. Such integration illustrates how technology adoption becomes culturally meaningful when aligned with local values.

3. Toward a Hybrid Sustainability Model

The synergy suggests a *hybrid sustainability model*—where *green economy principles* provide the technical-economic foundation, while *local wisdom* offers the moral-ethical compass. This dual structure promotes not only ecological outcomes but also social cohesion, identity preservation, and participatory governance (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

In essence, the Thousand Islands case exemplifies how cultural sustainability and green transition can co-evolve, leading to a resilient tourism future that is both environmentally sound and culturally rooted.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this case study of a tourist village in the Thousand Islands provide critical insights into how local wisdom and green economy principles can coalesce to foster *post-pandemic sustainable tourism*. When compared with previous research in other small island and village destinations, both parallels and unique contributions emerge—particularly in the domains of community agency, hybrid governance, and ecological-cultural integration. This study confirms several earlier observations that community-based tourism (CBT) can serve as an effective pathway for sustainable recovery in rural and island contexts. For example, studies in Bali (Cole, 2012) and Lombok (Perdana Putra., 2025) demonstrated how local norms and religious values regulate tourist behavior and resource use. Similarly, the *Pulau Panggang* community's practices—such as *hari pantang melaut* and *Sedekah Laut*—function as informal conservation tools reinforcing the moral basis of sustainability.

In parallel, the integration of *green economy measures*—like waste banks and renewable energy—aligns with findings from small island destinations in Thailand and the Philippines, where eco-innovation emerged from necessity rather than external imposition (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005; Malik et al., 2025). However, the Thousand Islands case presents a more culturally grounded model, in which environmental initiatives are framed through traditional belief systems, rather than purely economic or policy narratives. Moreover, this research expands upon the concept of *vernacular sustainability* (Pato & Duque, 2025), illustrating how indigenous and local knowledge systems can complement contemporary sustainability frameworks. In contrast to top-down green economy programs often criticized for technocratic bias (Bramwell & Lane, 2011), the local approach in the Thousand Islands demonstrates *bottom-up ecological governance* rooted in social trust and customary ethics.

The study also echoes lessons from Pacific Island communities, where hybrid governance blending traditional authority and modern sustainability tools has enhanced resilience to climate and economic shocks (Nugroho et al, 2025). Yet, in contrast to Melanesian or Polynesian contexts where traditional leadership remains dominant, the Thousand Islands case features a shared governance model—balancing formal village institutions with informal community groups (pokdarwis, cooperatives, youth organizations). This reflects an *adaptive pluralism* that accommodates state frameworks without eroding local autonomy. The case contributes theoretically to sustainable tourism development by highlighting three interrelated propositions:

The integration of local wisdom and green economy principles represents a synergistic sustainability framework—one that bridges the cultural and ecological dimensions of resilience. This challenges the binary between traditional and modern systems, suggesting instead that hybrid sustainability (Farrelly, 2020) is both feasible and desirable for post-pandemic recovery. The findings suggest that *cultural resilience*—manifested in community rituals, taboos, and shared ethics—functions as a social catalyst for environmental transformation. The preservation of identity and tradition enhances legitimacy, participation, and behavioral compliance, all of which are essential for achieving long-term sustainability (Adger et al., 2013; Folke et al., 2016).

From a governance perspective, the case supports theories of adaptive co-management and social innovation in tourism (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Hall et al., 2020). The capacity of local

actors to innovate – through digitalization, waste banks, or renewable energy – demonstrates that sustainable tourism is not solely a function of external aid but also of *endogenous creativity and experimentation*. In the broader theoretical discourse, this study reinforces the argument that sustainability transitions in tourism are socio-culturally embedded processes (Gössling & Hall, 2019). Sustainable outcomes depend not only on technology and policy but also on the community's ability to reinterpret modern paradigms through local epistemologies.

By situating the Thousand Islands case within the global narrative of post-pandemic recovery, this study underscores the importance of small islands as micro-laboratories for sustainability experimentation. As Hall (2020) noted, island destinations – due to their isolation and limited resources – often pioneer adaptive strategies that later inform broader regional policies. The integration of cultural values with environmental innovation offers a transferable model for rural and peripheral tourism recovery across the Global South. It demonstrates how sustainable tourism can emerge not from external prescriptions but from co-produced knowledge systems rooted in everyday cultural practice.

In sum, the case of the Thousand Islands illustrates that local wisdom is not antithetical to modern sustainability goals, but rather provides the ethical and epistemic grounding upon which the green economy can thrive. This insight enriches the theoretical landscape of sustainable tourism development by positioning *culture* and *tradition* as active agents – rather than passive backdrops – in the pursuit of environmental and economic resilience.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study examined the development of a tourism destination based on *local wisdom* and *green economy* principles in a tourist village within the Thousand Islands, Indonesia, during the post-pandemic era. The findings highlight two main insights.

First, local wisdom functions as a cultural foundation for sustainability, shaping how communities interact with their natural and social environments. Traditional knowledge systems – expressed through communal cooperation (*gotong royong*), sacred ecological practices, and customary resource management – have ensured the continuity of social cohesion and environmental stewardship. These cultural assets underpin the resilience of local communities amid external shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic, echoing similar findings in sustainable tourism literature (Berkes, 2018; Cole, 2012).

Second, green economy practices enhance resilience and accelerate economic recovery through initiatives such as waste reduction, renewable energy use, eco-friendly accommodations, and diversification of livelihoods. These practices not only reduce environmental impacts but also foster innovation and inclusivity within the tourism economy, aligning with UNEP's (2011) principles of low-carbon, resource-efficient, and socially equitable growth. Together, local wisdom and green economy principles create a complementary framework for sustainable and resilient tourism development in small island contexts.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research contributes to bridging the gap between **socio-cultural sustainability** and ecological economics within the field of tourism studies. It

reinforces the argument that sustainable tourism cannot rely solely on environmental or economic dimensions—it must also incorporate the *cultural and ethical values* that guide community behaviors toward nature (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

The study extends the theoretical discourse on hybrid sustainability by illustrating how indigenous knowledge systems and green economic frameworks can coexist in a mutually reinforcing manner. This aligns with Berkes's (2018) "glocal sustainability" model, which calls for the integration of local traditions and global environmental principles. Furthermore, the case adds empirical support to the emerging paradigm of regenerative tourism, which seeks not only to sustain but to restore ecological and cultural systems disrupted by mass tourism and crises (Iddawala & Lee, 2026).

Practically, the findings offer actionable insights for policymakers, community-based organizations, and tourism planners seeking to foster inclusive and sustainable recovery strategies in small island destinations.

1. **Policy Recommendations:** Local governments should integrate local wisdom into official destination planning frameworks, ensuring that traditional governance systems and environmental ethics are recognized as legitimate foundations for sustainable management. Policies should also encourage investment in renewable energy infrastructure, circular waste systems, and green certifications for small tourism enterprises.
2. **Community Empowerment and Training:** Capacity-building programs should be developed to strengthen local skills in green entrepreneurship, environmental monitoring, and cultural preservation. Collaboration between universities, NGOs, and local cooperatives can facilitate ongoing education on eco-certification standards and climate resilience practices.
3. **Integrated Destination Management:** A participatory governance model should be promoted—linking local communities, tourism operators, and policymakers—to coordinate tourism activities, monitor environmental impacts, and ensure equitable benefit-sharing. This model supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and 13 (Climate Action).

The study's scope is limited to a single case study of one tourist village in the Thousand Islands, which may constrain the generalizability of its findings to other contexts. Future research should adopt a comparative or multi-site approach across various island destinations in Indonesia or the broader Southeast Asian region to explore variations in how local wisdom and green economy principles interact. Moreover, future studies could integrate quantitative assessments—such as sustainability indicators or carbon footprint measurements—to complement qualitative insights. Longitudinal studies would also help assess how community resilience and sustainability evolve over time as green economy initiatives mature. Finally, research exploring digital transformation and youth participation in preserving local wisdom could further enrich the understanding of sustainable tourism transitions in the post-pandemic era.

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