

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Research Background

Tourism in Kutai Kartanegara East Kalimantan is built on the potential for tourism attraction mainly divided into two major groups, natural charm and cultural charm that involve multi-stakeholder engagement and sustainable development principles, with the contribution to inclusive growth through providing employment and economic development opportunities while promoting social integration. The district government of Kutai Kartanegara is actively promoting superior tourism objects to spur local revenue (PAD) and create jobs so that they do not depend on the mining sector as non-renewable energy. Retribution contributions from leading tourism objects continue to increase from only Rp. 700 million in 2015 to Rp. 500 million in 2016, and 2017 the leading tourism objects managed by the district government, namely Kumala Island, Panji Reservoir and Tanah Merah Samboja Beach, have contributed to PAD Rp 3, 1 billion. Thus, it can be concluded briefly that the development in the tourism sector is an effort to develop and utilize tourist objects and attractions of an area in the form of natural and cultural uniqueness. Sustainable tourism development as derived from the main definition of sustainable development itself is considered to be a development which: "...meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while

protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future” (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005). To advance the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the year 2017 has been declared as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development in recognition of tourism’s potential (OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2018). This momentum allows the tourism stakeholders in Kutai Kartanegara to further develop business in eco-tourism and agro-tourism.

In line with the needs of global sustainable development, the tourism sector has for decades been trying to develop a travel method based on careful ecotours experience that aims to conserve and enhance natural and social resources with ecotourism that puts forward the concept of sustainability. Dimensions of sustainability consist of economic, social and environmental that serve as a basis for the design of the commonly used “three-pillar model” (Deutscher, 1994), as cited in Jenkins & Schröder (2013). The hospitality industry is the biggest example showing that sustainable business practices are very important for its long-term success. Due to the cost of energy, water, etc., the hospitality industry is more or less forced to act in an economically, environmentally and socially responsible manner (Bader, 2005). On the other hand, Cavagnaro and Gehrels (2009) argue that the hospitality industry is generally not aware of sustainability. In particular, only a few hospitality businesses implement sustainable practices in their daily routine (Bader, 2005). The reason could be due to the public and industry’s unawareness that sustainable practices benefit local communities, the economy and the environment, and of course the accommodation business at the same time.

However, this will change at other times due to changes in demand, especially the demand for more environmentally friendly products and services.

As the whole planet is facing this problem by adopting policies to protect the environment and people, the hospitality industry as part of tourism is also adopting new business models which can help on the one hand to improve the economic welfare of the people and on the other to preserve. nature, social environment; Therefore, with the phenomenal mentioned above, the writer believes the ecolodge concept fits the need to reveal the accommodation potential of this type of business from an economic, social and environmental perspective following the sustainable accommodation criteria set by the functioning Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) as an international body to promote knowledge and understanding of sustainable tourism, the GSTC adopts universal principles of sustainable tourism, compiles and manufactures global tools and training to be applied in many sustainable tourism practices, and continues to strive to increase demand for sustainable tourism products and services (GSTC, 2011). Thus, the research instrument is mainly structured based on the criteria for sustainable accommodation in the GSTC supported by other resources.

Mass tourism that has developed generally located not far from the town of Tenggarong, Kutai Kartanegara. On the other hand, a nature tour located in the interior area is relatively undeveloped, mainly due to the limited accessibility and availability of supporting facilities such as accommodation. Only a few Tourist attractions in Kutai Kartanegara have been developed, including Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) with its Samboja Lodge as one of

the accommodations managed which provide various research and lodging facilities in the form of the lodge, located in Samboja District about 38 km from Balikpapan City.

Accommodation covers hotels, campsites, caravan stops, motels, villas, tourist cottages, and other types of legally authorized accommodation as stated in the regulation of Ministry of Culture and Tourism No. PM.86 / HK.501 / MKP / 2010 concerning the Procedures of Accommodation Business Registration, in Article 4 point number 2 and 4. Accommodation is defined as a facility that provides a psychological basis for tourists or individuals who are temporarily away from their usual place of residence or work (Mensah & Dei-Mensah, 2013) while an ecolodge can generally be classified as accommodation that follows the concept of ecotourism (The International Ecotourism Society, 2015). The concept behind ecolodges can be briefly interpreted as sustainable accommodation that is integrated with the natural and social environment and the goal is to reduce the carbon footprint while restoring the welfare of local communities as embodied in TIES. Initially, it is important to clarify the concepts of ecotourism and eco-accommodation, identify common features they need and analyze them from different perspectives through the real examples given.

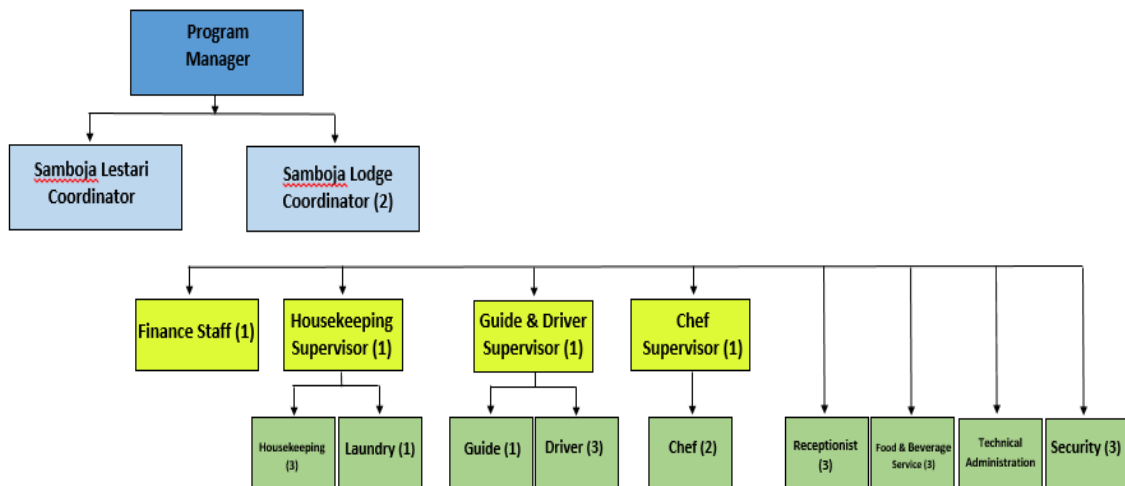
Samboja Lestari, an orangutan conservation area is located in the Samboja Forest. This area is located in Margomulyo District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, East Kalimantan. Samboja Lestari is the first orangutan reintroduction programme established by the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOS) in 1991. Along with the Samboja Lestari programme, the

management has set up the conservation area together as an ecotourism destination with the presence of Samboja Lodge which is located in the middle of 1,800 hectares of lush forest vegetation. This type of accommodation is one of the Samboja Lestari programmes focused on developing ecotourism, which has hands-on experience of what it takes to rebuild forests and protect their wildlife, built in 1991 with the initial purpose as a facility for researchers and staff of Samboja Lestari which is now actively converted into an ecolodge for commercial use for ecotourism objects since 2007. The main market for Samboja Lodge comes from foreign tourists. We can see that the previous data taken from 2019 saw a total of 1,090 tourists from thirty-five countries staying at this lodge and in 2018 there were a total of 1,195 guests coming from forty-seven countries, with tourists from Germany occupying the highest number for both years.

Samboja Lodge has a management system that prioritizes the needs of the three parties who play an important role in its development - foundations, guests/donors, and employees, with its vision of becoming the best ecotourism destination in Indonesia that focuses on conservation, prioritizing services and education for guests/donors that support the conservation work undertaken at BOSF Samboja Lestari and empower the local community. In line with that, the mission is to establish a tourism programme that provides education on orangutan and sun bear conservation, provide the best service by prioritizing the needs of the customer, contribute most/all of the profits/income to support the orangutan and sun bear conservation effort and offer employment

opportunities for members of the surrounding communities, which will improve the lives of the local community both financially and in a self-development capacity. Samboja Lodge has a total of twenty-six staff with one programme manager as a leader with the organization chart as below:

**FIGURE 1: SAMBOJA LODGE ORGANIZATION CHART**

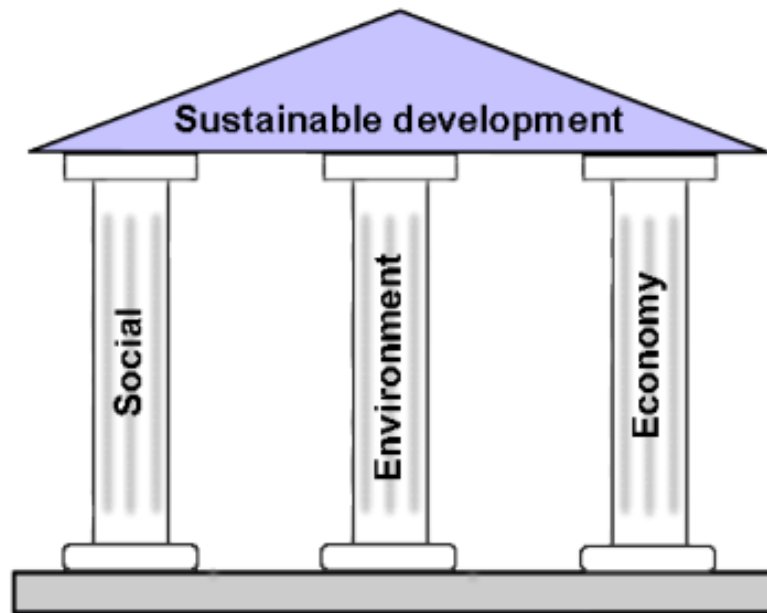


Source: Processed by the writer 2021

Samboja Lodge is uniquely designed based on local architecture, its interior and exterior walls are made of recycled materials, decorated with typical Kalimantan handicrafts produced by local and Dayak people around the area where construction is focused on two factors: materials and design. Choosing more suitable and appropriate materials can reduce environmental impacts, and building design for example can help reduce energy use by adapting to the local climate, educating tourists in sustainable design, and providing a more authentic

cultural experience using local materials. Regardless, local communities from nearby make up the majority of employees at Samboja Lodge. The knowledge of the tribal and mixed ethnic traditions in Samboja is also becoming more interesting because this cultural feature provides added value to tourists and the management of Samboja Lodge is still working to keep it sustainable with the help and cooperation of the local community. However, Samboja Lodge continues to strive to implement good waste management and energy conservation which is often constrained due to the high costs required but the priority of funds is aimed at the conservation of Orang Utans and Sun Bears which has become a long-term challenge for the management of the lodge. Meanwhile, in terms of social the practice of preserving cultural heritage is also a challenge that must be faced by lodges because programmes that focus on social development are still not well mapped in the socio-cultural welfare development plan. These are among the biggest challenges facing Samboja Lodge. This shows that sustainable ecolodge is not only sensitive to the environment; it is also financially dynamic over time and a social asset for the local population.

## **FIGURE 2: PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY**



Source: Adapted from thwink.org, 2014

The value in terms of economic, social and environmental sustainability of this accommodation has to be in line with one another and be taken into consideration that makes the writer decide to research the topic “**Developing Sustainable Accommodation: A Case Study of An Ecolodge in Kutai Kartanegara East Kalimantan**” based on observations, interviews, reviews & the recent research findings of the sustainable management practices done by the lodge.

## **B. Research Questions**

Based on the background stated, the formulations of the problems determined are:

1. How are the economic practices in Samboja Lodge in developing sustainable accommodation?



2. How are the social practices in Samboja Lodge in developing sustainable accommodation?
3. How are the environmental practices in Samboja Lodge in developing sustainable accommodation?

**C. Research Objectives**

The aim of this research is:

1. To identify the economic practices in Samboja Lodge in developing sustainable accommodation.
2. To examine the social practices in Samboja Lodge in developing sustainable accommodation.
3. To evaluate the environmental practices in Samboja Lodge in developing sustainable accommodation.

**D. Research Limitations**

The limitation of this thesis is reinforced by the fact that Sustainable Accommodation Research as well as the Global Sustainable Tourism Indicator and Criteria System by UNWTO, or several other research Samboja Lodges and bodies, are regularly being developed, so it is quite dynamic and experiences many variables. Therefore, the final analysis of sustainable accommodation development is based on the use of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria and indicator systems are also limited.

Another limitation is the rapid development of this area, the samples that have been taken, the relevant studies and the research that has been used may not

have been further identified, especially the more recent ones. On the other hand, the limited time available for this study is also a factor, which is reflected in more refined or more comprehensive interviews and personal communication, for example, the criteria and indicators sometimes do not work. The example of practices involved in this study will be limited to the geographic boundaries of ecotourism in Kutai Kartanegara.

#### **E. Research Benefits**

The benefits of this research are:

##### **1. Theoretical Benefits**

- a. To add references to accommodation development studies related to the response to sustainable amenities aspect in the hospitality industry.
- b. To give the writer a deeper understanding of ecolodge as a type of sustainable accommodation that emphasizes the three dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environment.

##### **2. Practical Benefits**

The research results can be used by local governments or stakeholders as well as the Bandung Institute of Tourism to deepen understanding of types and forms of sustainable accommodation and be taken into consideration in carrying out the construction of sustainability in the future for hospitality.