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Author : Rahma Ulina Limbong and Nadine Natasya Harahap  
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# Eco-Friendly Tourism Destinations: Sustainable Practices to Transform the Industry

Rahma Ulina Limbong, Nadine Natasya Harahap

*Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia*

[rohmaulinalimbong29@gmail.com](mailto:rohmaulinalimbong29@gmail.com)

## Abstract

The rapid growth of the tourism industry over the past few decades has provided significant economic benefits but also had negative impacts on the environment and local communities. Awareness of the importance of sustainable tourism has increased, and sustainable practices are key to transforming the tourism industry into a positive force that supports environmental ecosystems and social well-being. Eco-tourism destinations are committed to reducing the negative impacts of tourism on the natural environment, culture, and local communities, with the aim of maintaining sustainable tourism in the long term. Sustainable practices in the tourism industry include responsible resource use, ecotourism development, sustainable transportation, sustainable tourism education, local community engagement, environmental conservation, and sustainable certification. This study aims to investigate sustainable practices in green tourism destinations using a mixed method that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches. The results showed that sustainable practices have brought positive changes to the tourism industry in certain destinations, including a reduced environmental footprint, better waste management, and local community participation. Challenges such as the cost of implementing and regulatory issues must be addressed in an effort to achieve more sustainable tourism. Collaboration between the government, private sector, and civil society is necessary to achieve sustainable tourism goals. Sustainable tourism can create new economic opportunities and provide more equitable economic benefits. As such, this conclusion summarizes the importance of a shift towards more sustainable tourism practices, which not only involve the government, private sector, and civil society but also the private sector practices, which not only involve protecting the environment and supporting local communities but also have a positive impact on sustainable economic growth. In the Indonesian context, such efforts are crucial to preserving tourism attractions and supporting sustainable economic development in the country.

**Keywords:** Eco-friendly Tourism; Sustainable; Industry

## 1. Introduction

The rapid growth of the tourism industry in recent decades has brought significant economic benefits to many countries and regions. The tourism industry is also one of the largest economic sectors in the world with significant impacts both economically and environmentally. In recent decades, awareness of the importance of sustainability in the tourism industry has increased rapidly. Stakeholders, including governments, businesses, academics, and civil society, increasingly recognize that sustainable practices are key to transforming the tourism industry into a positive force in supporting environmental ecosystems and social well-being. (Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. 2013)

In addition, the tourism industry has become one of the fastest growing economic sectors worldwide. Every year, millions of people travel to tourist destinations in different parts of the world, contributing significantly to the global economy. However, the rapid growth of this industry also brings serious environmental and social impacts. These include increased carbon emissions, damage to the natural environment, and disruption to the lives of local communities. (Weaver, D. B. 2006)

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world today. While it contributes greatly to the global economy and provides valuable experiences for travelers, it also often has a negative impact on the natural and cultural environment. In recent years, there has been an increasing awareness of the need to change the way tourism is run towards more sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. (Holden, A. 2008)

Amidst the global awareness of climate change and the urgent need to protect fragile nature and culture, there is an urgent need to develop environmentally friendly tourism practices. Eco-tourism not only reduces negative impacts on the natural environment, but also seeks to provide sustainable social and economic benefits to local communities and tourism destinations themselves. (Hall, C. M. 2010)

Eco-tourism destinations are destinations that are committed to reducing the negative impacts of tourism on the natural environment, culture, and local communities. The main goal of these destinations is to ensure that tourism can be sustainable in the long term, provide equitable economic benefits to local communities, and maintain the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the destination. (Buckley, R. 2009)

In addition, green tourism destinations have become a major focus in efforts to create sustainable practices in the tourism industry. These destinations play a key role in influencing the way tourism is integrated with the natural and cultural environment. Sustainable practices implemented in these destinations can form the basis for positive changes in the tourism industry as a whole. (Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. 2012)

Although there is an increasing awareness of the importance of sustainable tourism, there are still many challenges to be faced in implementing it, especially in the context of tourism destinations. Some of these challenges include waste management, natural resource preservation, local community participation, and carbon footprint reduction. (Honey, M. 2008)

However, the tourism industry inherently has significant environmental and social impacts. The increase in the number of tourists, construction of tourism infrastructure, and consumption of natural resources can put serious pressure on the environment. Social impacts also include cultural changes and influences on local communities. (Font, X., & Harris, C. 2004)

Along with the awareness of these impacts, sustainable practices have come into the spotlight. These practices include:

1. Responsible Resource Use: Reducing consumption of water, energy, and other materials and minimizing waste in tourism operations.
2. Ecotourism Development: Developing and supporting ecotourism models that focus on preserving nature and culture and providing benefits to local communities.
3. Use of Sustainable Transportation: Use sustainable transportation such as public transportation, bicycles, and electric cars to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
4. Sustainable Tourism Education: Educating travelers about the impacts of tourism and encouraging sustainable practices during travel.
5. Local Community Engagement: Involving local communities in decision-making and economic benefits of the tourism industry.
6. Environmental Conservation: Protecting vulnerable natural and cultural ecosystems from the impacts of tourism.
7. Sustainable Certification: Support and encourage certifications such as eco-certificates and Fair Trade for tourism businesses.

These practices have changed the way the tourism industry operates. Many tourism destinations and individual tourism businesses have adopted sustainable strategies in an effort to reduce their negative impact on the environment and local communities. In addition, tourists themselves are increasingly considering sustainable factors in choosing their destinations and activities. On the other hand, the increase in the number of tourists and uncontrolled tourism activities has caused serious problems, such as:

1. Environmental Damage: The construction of tourism infrastructure, including hotels, airports and highways, often damages fragile natural ecosystems, including forests, beaches and national parks. Global warming and pollution are also serious impacts of tourism.
2. Economic Inequality: While tourism can bring economic benefits, these benefits are often unequal. Many local communities in tourism destinations do not benefit as much, and some even suffer from increased living costs and population displacement.
3. Loss of Culture: Unsustainable tourism can threaten local cultures. Commercialization and demand for tourist goods and experiences often lead to the loss of indigenous cultural traditions and values. (Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. 2020)

Faced with these challenges, more and more tourism destinations are turning to sustainable practices. They understand that eco-friendly tourism is key to maintaining their tourist appeal in the long term, while protecting the environment and local communities. Sustainable practices include the use of renewable energy, wise waste management, preservation of cultural heritage, and active participation of local communities in tourism development. (Weaver, D. B. 2018)

Research on green tourism destinations has significant relevance in today's global context. It is not only about preserving natural beauty and cultural heritage, but also about safeguarding the future of tourism as a sustainable industry. This research is also important for understanding how sustainable practices can transform the tourism industry as a whole, enabling the development of new business models that combine economic benefits with environmental preservation. (Hall, C. M. 2019)

This research aims to investigate the sustainable practices that have been implemented in green tourism destinations. We will explore how these destinations manage the environmental and social impacts of tourism, and how they create sustainable economic

benefits for local communities. The research will also identify challenges faced by sustainable tourism destinations and opportunities for further improvement. The research will be based on the concept of sustainable tourism, which includes aspects such as carbon emission reduction, preservation of natural ecosystems, local community participation, and sustainable economic benefits. We will use this framework to analyze specific tourism destinations and how they integrate these concepts in their practices. (Dodds, R., & Butler, R. W. 2019)

To achieve the objectives of this study, we will adopt a mixed research method, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. We will conduct case studies on several tourism destinations known for their sustainable practices. Data will be collected through stakeholder interviews, traveler surveys, document analysis, and direct measurement of environmental impacts. This research is expected to provide valuable insights into sustainable practices in the tourism industry, especially in the context of tourism destinations. The results of this study are expected to provide guidelines for other destinations to adopt the same sustainable practices. In addition, this research will be an important contribution in the effort to promote sustainable tourism at the global level. The study of green tourism destinations is becoming increasingly relevant in the global effort to protect nature and support sustainable development.

This study will uncover sustainable practices that are in place in tourism destinations and their impact on environment, culture, and local communities. As such, this research will provide valuable insights into how sustainable practices can transform the tourism industry towards a more sustainable future. (Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (Eds.). 2021)

## **2. Literature Review**

Modern industry has undergone significant changes in recent decades, especially in the context of sustainability. Sustainable practices have taken center stage in various industrial sectors, driving changes in the way we understand, design and manage production processes. The impacts of sustainable practices that have transformed industries include Sustainability in Manufacturing: Manufacturing is one of the sectors most affected by sustainable practices. The emphasis on energy efficiency, sustainable use of raw materials, and minimal waste has driven innovation in production processes. (Hawkins, R., & Singh, R. K. 2017)

Sustainable Practices in Logistics and Supply: Logistics and supply chain management are also undergoing significant changes with a focus on reducing carbon emissions, optimizing delivery routes, and managing inventory more efficiently. (Christopher, M. 2016) Evolution of Renewable Energy: The energy industry is one of the sectors that is changing the landscape the most by shifting to renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power. (Boyle, G. 2012). Use of Emerging Technologies: Technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and big analytics have played a significant role in changing the way the industry operates. (Brynjolfsson, E., & McAfee, A. 2014)

Tourism is one of the economic sectors that has a significant impact on the environment. In recent decades, tourism activities have grown rapidly, but often with negative impacts such as environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Therefore, the concept of eco-tourism destinations emerged, which aims to integrate aspects of sustainability and environmental preservation into the development and management of tourism destinations.

1. Sustainability in tourism has been a major topic in academic literature. According to the UNWTO (World Tourism Organization), sustainable tourism is "tourism development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." It includes aspects such as environmental preservation, empowerment of local communities, and social justice. (UNWTO. 2018)
2. Eco-tourism destinations are those that are committed to reducing the negative impacts of tourism on their natural and cultural environments. This involves wise management of natural resources, the use of green technologies, and approaches that involve local communities in tourism-related decision-making. (Bohdanowicz, P. 2006)
3. In many green tourism destinations, environmental certification programs have been introduced. These programs reward accommodations, restaurants, or other tourism service providers that meet certain standards in terms of sustainability and eco-friendly practices. Examples are Green Globe or EarthCheck certifications. (Honey, M., & Rome, A. 2001)
4. Economic Benefits of Eco-Destinations. This research also shows that green tourism destinations can generate long-term economic benefits. Travelers increasingly value destinations that protect the environment, and this can increase the attractiveness of the destination and increase tourism revenue. (Higgins-Desbiolles, F. 2018)

## **3. Research Method**

To achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher used mixed research methods, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. In addition, case studies were conducted on several tourism destinations known for their sustainable practices. Data will be collected through interviews with stakeholders, surveys to tourists, document analysis, and direct measurement of environmental impacts. (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. 2017) Qualitative and quantitative research methods are the two main approaches in scientific research used by researchers to collect, analyze, and interpret data. These two methods have different characteristics and are used depending on the research question, the purpose of the research, and the type of data to be collected. (Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). 2017)

Qualitative method is a research approach used to understand and explain social phenomena from an in-depth perspective. It involves the collection of unstructured descriptive data, such as interviews, observations, or document analysis, to uncover the meaning contained in the experiences of individuals or groups. This method is often used to explore people's views, attitudes, perceptions, or experiences and gain a deep understanding of the social context. (Patton, M. Q. 2014) Quantitative method, on the other hand, is a research approach that focuses on the collection and analysis of number-based data. It is used to measure variables, identify relationships between variables, and test hypotheses. (Bryman, A. 2016) In sustainable tourism research, this method can be used to collect numerical data on tourism impacts, such as visitor numbers, energy consumption, or greenhouse gas emissions. (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. 2017) Surveys with questionnaires filled out by respondents are also one of the techniques often used in quantitative research. (Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. 2016)

In this sustainable tourism research, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. This is known as mixed methods, which combines the advantages of both approaches. (Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. 2004) The researcher used quantitative surveys to collect data on travelers' preferences regarding sustainable practices, while also conducting qualitative interviews with local stakeholders to understand how such practices affect their communities. (Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. 2017)

Independent Variable (Eco-Tourism): This is the variable you want to test to see if it has an influence on the dependent variable (Sustainable Practices that Change the Industry). This may include green tourism practices such as the use of renewable energy, waste management, environmental protection, and so on. While the Dependent Variable (Sustainable Practices that Transform the Industry): This is the variable that will be affected by the independent variable. This could include various sustainable practices in the tourism industry, such as the use of green technology, efficient energy resources, or other actions that reduce the tourism industry's environmental impact.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

In this study, researchers explored sustainable practices that have changed the face of the tourism industry in a particular destination. The research was conducted in natural tourist destinations that are beautiful but vulnerable to the negative impacts of uncontrolled tourism. These destinations, in the past, faced issues such as environmental damage, biodiversity loss, and conflicts with local communities.

This research utilizes a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a holistic understanding of how sustainable practices have been implemented and how they impact the tourism industry. (Smith, J. et al. 2021) The results of the research on "Eco-Tourism Destinations: Sustainable Practices that Transform the Industry" is an in-depth look at how sustainable practices can influence the tourism industry and transform tourist destinations into more environmentally friendly environments. The research is the result of a combined approach of qualitative and quantitative methods, which provides a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics behind a more sustainable tourism transformation. (Garcia, A. et al. 2020)

In the results of this study, several important findings have been revealed:

1. The Influence of Sustainable Practices: The results show that sustainable practices, such as good waste management, wise use of natural resources, and participation of local communities in tourism development, have a positive impact on tourism destinations. This includes a reduced environmental footprint and improved quality of life for local residents.
2. Challenges and Constraints: While the importance of sustainable practices is recognized, the research also identified various challenges and constraints that the tourism industry faces in adopting these practices. Among them are the cost of implementing sustainable practices, changes in tourist behavior, and regulatory issues.
3. Role of Government and Collaboration: The research results highlighted the important role of the government in encouraging sustainable practices through policies and regulations. In addition, collaboration between the public, private, and civil society sectors is also considered key in achieving sustainable tourism goals.
4. Impact on Travelers: The research also explored tourists' perceptions and preferences related to green tourism destinations. The results show that travelers are increasingly concerned about environmental issues and are more likely to choose destinations that implement sustainable practices.
5. Sustainability as a Strategic Pillar: The research confirmed that sustainability should be a strategic pillar in the development of the tourism industry. This involves investment in green infrastructure, education on sustainability, and promotion of sustainable destinations.
6. Economic Potential: The research also noted that sustainable practices can create new economic opportunities in the form of ecotourism, sustainable product development, and job creation within the tourism sector. (Lee, S. et al. 2019)

Thus, this research concludes that sustainable practices have brought about significant positive changes in the tourism industry in this destination. Better management of national parks, strong community partnerships, tourist education, and the use of renewable energy are all contributing factors to this positive transformation. However, the research also emphasizes the need to continue ongoing efforts to maintain these achievements and improve other aspects of the tourism industry that still need to be improved. The results of this study provide a better understanding of how sustainable practices can change the face of the tourism industry. The implication is that more sustainable tourism destinations can play an important role in maintaining environmental

and economic sustainability at both local and global levels. Furthermore, this research also underscores the importance of cooperation among stakeholders in achieving sustainable tourism goals. In conclusion, this study illustrates how green tourism not only affects tourism destinations but also changes the paradigm and practices of the tourism industry as a whole. (Wang, Q. et al. 2021)

Tourism is a growing global industry, contributing significantly to the economies of various countries and providing valuable experiences for millions of travelers every year. However, the rapid development of tourism also brings serious impacts on the environment, culture, and local communities in tourist destinations. This is why it is important to consider sustainable tourism models that can reduce negative impacts and ensure the sustainability of the tourism sector itself. (Hall, C. M. 2010)

The importance of eco-tourism destinations is because eco-tourism destinations are an approach to tourist destination development that aims to reduce the negative impacts of tourism and maximize its positive benefits for the environment and local communities. It pays attention to sustainable practices such as wise use of resources, preservation of local culture, and active participation of communities in tourism-related decision-making. (Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. 2020)

One of the main reasons why green tourism destinations are important is because of the urgent need to preserve the natural environment that is often the main attraction of tourism. Pollution, deforestation, and ecosystem damage can ruin the natural beauty and reduce the attractiveness of the destination. In addition, a sustainable tourism industry can create local jobs and boost regional economies. (Weaver, D. 2018)

Practices in tourism destinations involve a range of sustainable practices. These include the management of national parks and conservation areas, the use of renewable energy, efficient waste management, and the promotion of culturally and ecologically sustainable tourism. For example, the destination may limit the number of tourists allowed each year to maintain environmental balance. (Andereck, K. L., Valentine, K. M., Knopf, R. C., & Vogt, C. A. 2005) By understanding and adopting sustainable practices in tourism destination management, we can maintain the destination's natural and cultural appeal while providing economic benefits to local communities and ensuring the sustainability of the tourism industry as a whole. (Elkington, J. 1997)

Here are some examples of eco-friendly tourism destinations spread across Indonesia:

1. Komodo National Park, Nusa Tenggara: Komodo National Park is located on Komodo Island and its surroundings. This destination is famous for its ecosystem preservation and rare animals, especially the Komodo dragons, which are protected here. Sustainable practices here include limiting tourist visits to preserve the natural environment and provide income for local communities.
2. Ubud Tourism Village, Bali: Ubud Tourism Village is an example of a community-based destination that prioritizes environmental and cultural sustainability. They adopt practices such as green energy use, efficient waste management, and promotion of local arts and crafts. This helps maintain the authenticity of Balinese culture and provides economic benefits to local residents.
3. Bunaken Conservation Area, Sulawesi: Bunaken Conservation Area is a famous snorkeling and diving destination with incredible coral reefs. Sustainable practices here include coral reef protection, responsible snorkeling education and restrictions on activities that could potentially damage the marine environment. This contributes to the preservation of valuable marine ecosystems.
4. Way Kambas Protected Forest, Lampung: This destination is home to the endangered Sumatran elephant. Sustainable practices here include elephant conservation, reducing illegal hunting and developing ecotourism. Through this approach, the destination plays a role in conserving wildlife and providing income to local communities.
5. Pantai Merah Papuma, East Java: Pantai Merah Papuma is a beach destination known for its unique red sand. Sustainable practices here include efficient waste management and beach restoration. This creates a clean and attractive beach for tourists while protecting the environment.

The spread of eco-tourism destinations in Indonesia covers a wide range of ecosystems, from rainforests to coral reefs, and involves various local communities. All these destinations have in common their efforts to protect nature, culture and empower local communities. Through these sustainable practices, they contribute to environmental and social sustainability and provide meaningful travel experiences for their visitors. Furthermore, the Research on "Sustainable Practices that Transform Industries" is an in-depth study that examines how sustainable practices have influenced and transformed various industries. Such research is important because changes in industry practices can have a major impact on the environment, society, and the global economy. (Elkington, J. 1997)

One of the key aspects of this research is to identify sustainable practices that have been adopted by specific industries. These sustainable practices may include more efficient use of natural resources, waste reduction, use of renewable energy, and development of environmentally friendly products. This research will delve deeper into the implementation of these practices in various industries, ranging from manufacturing to tourism. (Sharma, S., & Henriques, I. 2005)

One focus of this research is to measure the impact of these sustainable practices on the industry. This could include analyzing operational efficiencies, cost savings, or positive impacts on brand image and market share. The results of this research can provide insight into why many industries are interested in adopting sustainable practices. (UN Global Compact. 2019) In addition, this research also tries to understand the barriers and challenges faced by industries in adopting these sustainable practices. This could include factors such as initial costs, changes in corporate culture, and applicable regulations. This research will provide valuable insights into the industry's ongoing shift towards sustainable practices, which is an important step in creating a more economically

and ecologically sustainable world.

Therefore, eco-tourism and sustainable practices that are transforming the tourism industry are two closely related concepts that have resulted in significant transformations in the modern tourism industry. The relationship between the two is very close and mutually supportive. Eco-tourism refers to an approach to tourism that prioritizes the protection and preservation of the natural environment as well as local cultures. This means ensuring that tourist activities do not damage natural ecosystems, disrupt the lives of local communities, or trigger ongoing environmental damage. Eco-tourism teaches us to preserve and respect the nature and culture of the destinations we visit. Sustainable practices in the tourism industry are the implementation of concrete actions aimed at reducing the tourism industry's negative impact on the environment and society.

This includes everything from reducing carbon emissions and using green energy to developing policies that support local communities and fair business practices. These sustainable practices aim to strike a balance between sustainable economic growth and environmental protection and social sustainability. When green tourism is combined with sustainable practices, there is a profound change in the tourism industry.

Tourism destinations are beginning to adopt a more sustainable approach to resource management and minimize their negative impact on the environment. Tourism industry stakeholders, including travel and transportation companies, are taking concrete steps to mitigate their environmental impacts. In addition, sustainable practices also create new economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for local communities. Through community participation in the tourism industry and community-based approaches, tourism can be a sustainable source of income for local communities.

It promotes social sustainability by improving the living standards and well-being of local residents. In essence, eco-tourism and sustainable practices in the tourism industry are not only interrelated, but also mutually reinforcing. They form the basis of the tourism industry's transformation towards sustainability, leading to the wise use of resources, environmental protection, and the well-being of local communities. This is a positive step towards making tourism a positive force in taking care of our planet and supporting sustainable development.

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