

Community Empowerment Strategies in Developing Sustainable Marine Tourism at Kahona Beach

Amrullah^{1*}, Muhammad Adi Junaidi², Yogi Birrul Walid Sugandi³

^{1,2} Tourism Department, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Humanities, Universitas Hamzanwadi

*Corresponding Author Email: amrullah.nwdi@gmail.com

Article History

Received: 04-06-2025

Revised: 17-06-2025

Published: 17-07-2025

Key Words:

Ecotourism, Community,
Digitalization, Conservation,
Marine Tourism

Abstract: This study aims to formulate strategic directions for sustainable marine tourism development at Kahona Beach, located in Sekaroh Village, Jerowaru District, East Lombok, by emphasizing community empowerment and digital innovation. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design, the research targeted key tourism stakeholders in the village. The study population included local tourism operators, community leaders, youth organizations, and village residents. Six informants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement and knowledge. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation review, and visual data analysis. Thematic analysis using Braun and Clarke's six-phase model was applied, complemented by SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis to explore strategic development potential. Findings revealed that Kahona Beach possesses strong ecological and cultural assets, such as healthy coral reefs and vibrant traditions, which support its potential as a marine ecotourism destination. However, internal challenges include underdeveloped infrastructure, limited digital marketing, and low community engagement. External threats involve privatization of coastal access and ecological degradation, yet opportunities are present through rural tourism programs, digital technologies, and increasing demand for nature-based travel. The study recommends the establishment of inclusive tourism institutions, digital training for local youth, and participatory strategies for environmental and cultural preservation. These findings contribute to the discourse on community-based marine tourism and offer practical insights for local governments and policymakers seeking sustainable and inclusive destination governance.

How to Cite: Amrullah, A., Adi Junaidi, M., & Walid Sugandi, Y. B. (2025). Community Empowerment Strategies in Developing Sustainable Marine Tourism at Kahona Beach. *JMET: Journal of Management Entrepreneurship and Tourism*, 3(2), 236–249. <https://doi.org/10.61277/jmet.v3i2.205>



<https://doi.org/10.61277/jmet.v3i2.205>

This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY-SA License](#).



Introduction

Indonesia, as the world's largest archipelagic state, comprises over 17,000 islands and more than 99,000 kilometers of coastline. These geographical features position Indonesia as one of the nations with the greatest potential for marine tourism globally. This potential is not only reflected in its breathtaking seascapes but also in the vast marine biodiversity, complex coastal ecosystems, and rich maritime cultural heritage embedded within local coastal communities (Suryawan et al., 2025). Globally, tourism trends are shifting towards sustainable, nature-based, and culturally authentic destinations. In this context, Indonesia's marine tourism holds considerable promise for supporting

JMET Vol. 3, No 2 (July 2025)

sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly in poverty alleviation, environmental preservation, and community empowerment.

Despite such promise, the utilization of marine tourism potential in Indonesia remains suboptimal. Many coastal areas with immense potential remain untouched by inclusive or sustainable development approaches. One such underexplored yet highly promising destination is Kahona Beach, located in Sekaroh Village, Jerowaru District, East Lombok. The beach features favorable physical characteristics for marine tourism, including a gently sloping shoreline, clear seawater, and well-preserved coral reef ecosystems. Culturally, the area is enriched by vibrant traditions such as kecimol performances and coastal festivities, rooted in strong communal bonds. These natural and cultural assets position Kahona Beach as a viable candidate for the development of community-based marine tourism. However, current tourism management in the area is fragmented, lacks coordination, and fails to meaningfully involve local residents.

Although prior studies have highlighted the role of local communities in marine ecotourism governance, there remains limited empirical research on how underrepresented coastal destinations like Kahona Beach can be strategically developed through both community empowerment and digital innovation. Much of the existing literature focuses on popular tourism areas, while small and emerging sites remain marginalized in policy and academic discourse. This research addresses that gap by examining Kahona Beach as a case study. The study aims to explore the potential and challenges of sustainable marine tourism in the area by applying a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) framework. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following research question: How can community-driven and digitally supported strategies enhance the sustainable development of marine tourism in Kahona Beach? The objectives of this study are to (1) identify the internal and external factors influencing tourism development at Kahona Beach, and (2) formulate strategic recommendations that center on community participation, cultural preservation, and digital transformation.

Preliminary observations suggest that digital promotion of the destination remains limited, tourism-supporting infrastructure is underdeveloped, and community participation in decision-making processes is minimal. Moreover, emerging threats such as the privatization of coastal access by external investors jeopardize public rights over maritime spaces—issues that have yet to be widely addressed in academic literature. These gaps reflect a misalignment between existing potential and on-ground realities, forming the core concern of this study. While previous research in Indonesia has largely focused on prominent destinations such as Bali, Raja Ampat, and Labuan Bajo, relatively few studies have investigated remote areas like Kahona, which face structural and socio-political challenges (Suradja et al., 2024; Fahlevi, 2025).

In terms of the state of the art, existing literature acknowledges the importance of community participation in tourism governance and highlights the growing role of digital media in destination marketing (Endarto et al., 2025; Saba et al., 2025). Nonetheless, field-based research that integrates strategic frameworks such as SWOT analysis with qualitative inquiry remains limited. Addressing this gap is critical for shaping tourism development that is not only rooted in ecological and economic feasibility but also grounded in local perceptions, capacities, and socio-cultural contexts. Further attention is also needed on the development of community-based institutions, digital capacity building, and safeguarding public access and cultural integrity—factors often overlooked in mainstream marine tourism studies.

This research thus aims to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) relevant to the development of marine tourism at Kahona Beach and to propose strategies for strengthening community-based and digital approaches to tourism management. The scientific novelty of this study lies in its integration of primary fieldwork and in-depth interviews with a strategic SWOT framework, along with its focus on local cultural uniqueness and the under-explored issue of land access privatization. The findings are expected to contribute both to the theoretical discourse on sustainable, community-based marine tourism and to provide practical insights for policymakers and stakeholders working on coastal destination development in Indonesia. With an inclusive, adaptive, and locally driven model, Kahona Beach holds the potential to serve as a replicable case for tourism management that prioritizes environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and community empowerment over mere economic gain.

Research Method

This study applied a descriptive qualitative methodology using a case study approach, aiming to examine the ecological, cultural, and governance dynamics of marine tourism development at Kahona Beach, Sekaroh Village, Jerowaru District, East Lombok. The research population consisted of individuals involved in tourism-related activities in the area, including community members, tourism entrepreneurs, youth organizations, and local leaders. A purposive sampling technique was used to select six key informants based on their relevance, expertise, and active roles in tourism development. These included local tourism managers, members of the Gerakan Pemuda Selatan (GPS) youth group, small business operators, cultural figures, and visiting tourists.

Data collection was carried out through four main techniques: (1) participatory observation, in which the researcher engaged in community activities such as beach clean-ups and local meetings to observe tourism-related dynamics; (2) semi-structured in-depth interviews to explore stakeholders' perspectives on the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of Kahona Beach; (3) document analysis involving the review of local regulations, village tourism proposals, and digital records; and (4) visual data collection through photographs and field notes to contextualize physical and social conditions. All procedures were conducted with strict adherence to research ethics, including informed consent, anonymity, and community feedback mechanisms.

For data analysis, the study utilized Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis, which includes data familiarization, initial coding, theme generation, theme review, theme definition, and report production. The resulting themes were further analyzed using a SWOT framework (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to structure strategic insights into tourism development. To enhance the validity and reliability of findings, data triangulation was applied across sources and methods, ensuring a comprehensive and credible interpretation of the field data.

Result and Discussion

Ecological and Cultural Strengths of Kahona Beach as a Marine Tourism Asset

As a newly emerging marine tourism destination, Kahona Beach presents significant strengths and potential from ecological, cultural, and local identity perspectives. Field observations indicate that the area retains a largely untouched marine environment, a local community rich in cultural values, and a distinctive and promising branding concept. These three dimensions form a foundational basis for sustainable tourism development, particularly when pursued through inclusive, community-based approaches. In the broader context of Indonesia's marine tourism development,

Kahona Beach exemplifies a potential bottom-up model built upon strong ecological and social capital. Ecologically, Kahona Beach possesses exceptional natural assets, including healthy coral reefs, clear seawater, and the presence of rare marine species such as blue coral. These conditions make the site highly suitable for snorkeling and diving activities. The clarity of the water and the diversity of seabed topography create a visually captivating underwater landscape. A comparable study by Argeswara et al. (2025) in Nusa Penida demonstrated that well-preserved coral ecosystems significantly increase tourist interest in ecotourism activities. This ecological uniqueness functions not only as an attraction but also as a conservation value that must be protected. In alignment with Malik et al. (2025), such marine ecosystems can also serve as the foundation for eDNA-based management systems to periodically monitor biodiversity changes.

Beyond ecological dimensions, the vibrant cultural heritage of the surrounding community represents another critical strength. Coastal festivals, kecimol dance performances, and social values such as mutual cooperation (gotong royong) and hospitality are intangible assets that support experiential tourism development. Research by Setiawan and Darmanto (2023) has shown that authentic local cultural narratives contribute to destination differentiation and extend tourist stay duration. In Kahona, community participation in safeguarding customs and traditions is evident in how local residents organize collective activities and incorporate cultural expressions into their hospitality practices. This strengthens the concept of ecotourism as one that values both nature and local identity as integrated tourism products. Strategic branding also stands out as a core strength of this destination. The name “Kahona,” an acronym for “Kami Harap Orang Nyaman” (We Hope People Feel Comfortable), is not merely a label, but a reflection of the values the community seeks to offer visitors. This form of branding aligns with storytelling approaches in tourism marketing, where authentic and emotional narratives resonate strongly with tourists (Wahyuni & Utama, 2022). The name conveys an impression of friendliness, calmness, and comfort. According to Yunus and Imran (2023), destinations that incorporate local values into their identity are more capable of building long-term tourist loyalty, especially when supported by effective digital marketing strategies.

These three principal strengths ecological, cultural, and identity must be preserved and managed in a balanced manner to support sustainable tourism development. Their potential will only yield long-term benefits if developed through strategies that integrate environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. The key to the long-term success of a destination like Kahona lies in aligning natural and cultural values with professional tourism management practices rooted in local wisdom. As Suryawan et al. (2024) argue, local strengths should not be treated as complementary, but rather as the primary foundation of a sustainable and competitive tourism development model. As a newly emerging marine tourism destination, Kahona Beach presents significant strengths and potential from ecological, cultural, and local identity perspectives. Field observations indicate that the area retains a largely untouched marine environment, a local community rich in cultural values, and a distinctive and promising branding concept. These three dimensions form a foundational basis for sustainable tourism development, particularly when pursued through inclusive, community-based approaches. In the broader context of Indonesia’s marine tourism development, Kahona Beach exemplifies a potential bottom-up model built upon strong ecological and social capital.

Ecologically, Kahona Beach possesses exceptional natural assets, including healthy coral reefs, clear seawater, and the presence of rare marine species such as blue coral. These conditions make the site highly suitable for snorkeling and diving activities. The clarity of the water and the

diversity of seabed topography create a visually captivating underwater landscape. A comparable study by Argeswara et al. (2025) in Nusa Penida demonstrated that well-preserved coral ecosystems significantly increase tourist interest in ecotourism activities. This ecological uniqueness functions not only as an attraction but also as a conservation value that must be protected. In alignment with Malik et al. (2025), such marine ecosystems can also serve as the foundation for eDNA-based management systems to periodically monitor biodiversity changes. Beyond ecological dimensions, the vibrant cultural heritage of the surrounding community represents another critical strength. Coastal festivals, kecimol dance performances, and social values such as mutual cooperation (gotong royong) and hospitality are intangible assets that support experiential tourism development. Research by Setiawan and Darmanto (2023) has shown that authentic local cultural narratives contribute to destination differentiation and extend tourist stay duration. In Kahona, community participation in safeguarding customs and traditions is evident in how local residents organize collective activities and incorporate cultural expressions into their hospitality practices. This strengthens the concept of ecotourism as one that values both nature and local identity as integrated tourism products.

Strategic branding also stands out as a core strength of this destination. The name “Kahona,” an acronym for “Kami Harap Orang Nyaman” (We Hope People Feel Comfortable), is not merely a label, but a reflection of the values the community seeks to offer visitors. This form of branding aligns with storytelling approaches in tourism marketing, where authentic and emotional narratives resonate strongly with tourists (Wahyuni & Utama, 2022). The name conveys an impression of friendliness, calmness, and comfort. According to Yunus and Imran (2023), destinations that incorporate local values into their identity are more capable of building long-term tourist loyalty, especially when supported by effective digital marketing strategies. These three principal strengths ecological, cultural, and identity must be preserved and managed in a balanced manner to support sustainable tourism development. Their potential will only yield long-term benefits if developed through strategies that integrate environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. The key to the long-term success of a destination like Kahona lies in aligning natural and cultural values with professional tourism management practices rooted in local wisdom. As Suryawan et al. (2024) argue, local strengths should not be treated as complementary, but rather as the primary foundation of a sustainable and competitive tourism development model.

Table 1. Key Findings and Insights: Strengths and Potentials of Kahona Beach

Sub-Aspect	Field Findings	Key Insights
Ecological	Healthy coral reefs, clear waters, presence of blue coral	High potential for diving/snorkeling; strong visual appeal; requires science-based conservation (eDNA)
Local Culture	Kecimol traditions, fishermen’s festivals, social mutual cooperation	Attractive for cultural tourism; reinforces local identity; foundation for Community-Based Tourism
Identity & Branding	Acronym “Kahona” = “Kami Harap Orang Nyaman” (“We Hope People Feel Comfortable”)	Strong and authentic branding; suitable for digital storytelling; builds emotional connection

Internal Weaknesses and Challenges

Despite the promising ecological and cultural strengths of Kahona Beach, the site faces several internal weaknesses that may hinder its development as a sustainable marine tourism destination. Based on field observations and interviews with local managers and community members, these weaknesses include insufficient destination promotion and marketing, inadequate tourism-supporting infrastructure, limited broad-based community participation, and underdeveloped institutional tourism governance at the village level. These issues suggest that the area's ecological and social capital is not yet matched by a well-prepared management system or adaptive promotional strategy, particularly in the context of a highly competitive digital tourism market. One of the most prominent weaknesses is the lack of systematic digital promotion and branding efforts. Kahona Beach does not have official social media channels, a website, or integration into online tourism search platforms. Yet, as Wahyudi and Rahmawati (2023) argue, hidden destinations that rely solely on word-of-mouth promotion experience much slower growth than those supported by digital management. In today's visual and content-driven information era, destinations with no digital footprint are virtually invisible to national and international tourist markets. Furthermore, the absence of visual storytelling or video content limits organic promotion through visitor-generated media.

Another serious challenge is the inadequacy of basic infrastructure needed to support a comfortable visitor experience. The area lacks an integrated waste management system, public transportation access is limited, and sanitation facilities are insufficient. These shortcomings significantly affect visitor satisfaction, and if left unaddressed, may damage the destination's long-term reputation. As Suradja et al. (2024) emphasize, foundational amenities such as cleanliness and accessibility are primary indicators of visitor experience and common sources of dissatisfaction at newly developing destinations. Infrastructural deficits also constrain opportunities for local economic involvement, particularly in tourism-related sectors such as local cuisine, crafts, and homestays. The third weakness relates to uneven patterns of community participation. While a youth group known as GPS (Gerakan Pemuda Selatan) has shown initiative in managing the beach, the broader engagement of adults, women, and small-scale business actors remains limited. This leads to social ownership gaps and hampers the development of local economic networks. Rahmat and Lestari (2021) highlight that inclusive role-sharing is essential in community-based tourism governance to ensure all community segments feel represented. Selective or exclusive participation may result in social tension and diminish the adaptive capacity of local communities in the face of tourism development. Lastly, the absence of a formal village-level tourism institution poses a significant governance challenge. Without an official body, there are no internal regulations, mechanisms for collaboration with external stakeholders, or pathways for government support. This weak institutional foundation limits strategic planning and increases dependency on ad hoc initiatives, undermining long-term sustainability.

Table 2. Key Findings and Insights: Internal Weaknesses and Challenges of Kahona Beach

Sub-Aspect	Field Findings	Key Insights
Promotion & Branding	No social media, website, or digital narratives	Minimal digital presence; lacks broad recognition; underutilized content marketing
Basic	No waste management system;	Reduces comfort; risk of environmental

Sub-Aspect	Field Findings	Key Insights
Infrastructure	limited access; inadequate sanitation	Degradation; obstructs local tourism economy
Community Participation	Only youth group (GPS) is active; low involvement of women and adults	Social disparity; lack of inclusive ownership; risk of internal conflict
Institutional Governance	No formal village tourism body	Absence of internal regulations; weak coordination with government and investors

Tourism Development Opportunities for Kahona Beach

Kahona Beach presents a range of promising opportunities that can be strategically leveraged to transform the area into a leading marine ecotourism destination. Field findings reveal several external enablers, including the rising trend of tourist interest in hidden destinations (hidden gems), the growing popularity of ecotourism and community-based tourism models across Indonesia, the increasing accessibility of digital marketing technologies, and supportive government policies promoting rural tourism development. At the national policy level, sustainability-driven tourism has become a central agenda, and Kahona Beach exhibits several attributes that align well with this direction (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2023). Post-pandemic tourism trends have seen a significant shift toward nature-based experiences that emphasize authenticity, privacy, and deep cultural engagement. Firmansyah and Zainuddin (2023) noted that both domestic and international tourists are increasingly seeking alternative destinations that are less crowded, ecologically intact, and culturally rich. Given its relatively remote geographic location and preserved ecosystems, Kahona Beach fits well into this emerging market segment. In addition, the openness and hospitality of the local community make it an ideal candidate to be included in ecotourism packages in West Nusa Tenggara an area still dominated by mainstream destinations like Gili Trawangan and Pink Beach.

Another major opportunity lies in the use of digital marketing and content-based promotion. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok have proven highly effective in enhancing destination visibility quickly and cost-efficiently, particularly through user-generated content and influencer marketing (Tampubolon & Marwiyah, 2025). By targeting digitally active youth markets, Kahona Beach could dramatically expand its audience reach without relying on conventional advertising. Research by Wahyudi and Rahmawati (2023) shows that digital marketing training in rural tourism villages can triple tourist visits within a year. This underscores the importance of visual strategies and digital storytelling in creating competitive tourism narratives. From an institutional and policy perspective, the government's village tourism development program offers opportunities for collaboration between local managers and external actors. Support measures include capacity-building training, access to village funds (Dana Desa) for tourism infrastructure, and mentoring from universities or NGOs. According to Suteja et al. (2025), partnerships between rural tourism villages and external institutions can significantly accelerate the formation of governance structures and service standards. If strategically managed, these opportunities may enable Kahona Beach not only to grow as a tourism destination but also to serve as a model for coastal village empowerment through adaptive, community-based ecotourism approaches.

Table 3. Key Findings and Insights: Tourism Development Opportunities for Kahona Beach

Source of Opportunity	Field Findings	Key Insights
Ecotourism Trends	Tourists seek natural, quiet, and authentic destinations	High potential in ecotourism markets; aligns with post-COVID lifestyle trends
Digital Marketing	Social media underutilized; limited tourism content	Can expand market reach at low cost through content creation and influencer engagement
Government Support	Village designated as potential tourism site; funds available (Dana Desa)	Access to training, infrastructure, and promotion through official government channels
External Partnerships	No current partnerships with universities or NGOs	Opportunity to strengthen institutions and enable community knowledge transfer through collaborative models

Social and Environmental Threats

Despite its notable strengths and opportunities, Kahona Beach also faces several external threats that could undermine its development as a sustainable marine tourism destination. These threats include pressures on marine ecosystems due to uncontrolled tourism activities, potential spatial conflicts from beach access privatization by investors, local community dependency without adequate capacity building, and the degradation of cultural values through commercialization. Field observations indicate that these emerging social and environmental dynamics have not yet been addressed strategically, posing systemic risks to the long-term viability of the destination if not mitigated promptly. The primary ecological threat stems from the risk of coral reef and coastal degradation due to unmanaged tourist activity. Without strict regulation, mass snorkeling and diving, unregulated construction of coastal facilities, and improper waste disposal can accelerate ecological decline. Lam et al. (2023) found that uncontrolled tourism activities have contributed to the destruction of 37% of coral reefs in Southeast Asian coastal destinations over the past decade. If Kahona's ecosystem deteriorates before it gains broader recognition, its nature-based tourism potential will be permanently lost. This concern is compounded by the limited technical capacity of the local community in managing marine environmental carrying capacities.

Privatization of beach access by external investors also presents a serious threat to spatial justice and social sustainability. Hills surrounding Kahona Beach have begun to be acquired by private investors without involving local communities in planning processes, raising concerns about restricted public access. Similar experiences in coastal areas of Bali and Labuan Bajo have led to spatial conflicts, social resistance, and reputational damage to tourism destinations (Wijaya & Gurning, 2024). In Kahona's context, the absence of community-centered spatial planning regulations could lead to exclusion from public space, generating conflict and destabilizing the community. Furthermore, the commercialization of tourism poses a risk to the integrity of local cultural values. Without guidance on designing culturally sensitive tourism packages, traditions like kecimol performances or fishermen's festivals may become superficial spectacles stripped of their original meaning. This phenomenon, known as cultural commodification, involves turning culture into a commodity for economic gain while neglecting its authentic value and social function. According to Kurniawati and Hermawan (2023), destinations that experience excessive cultural

commodification often lose their identity and face market saturation within the first five years. Thus, maintaining a balance between cultural preservation and ethical tourism packaging is essential.

Table 4. Key Findings and Insights: Social and Environmental Threats at Kahona Beach

Type of Threat	Field Findings	Key Insights
Ecological	Coral reef degradation risk due to unregulated snorkeling	Requires strict regulation of tourism activities and continuous monitoring of environmental carrying capacity
Access Privatization	Coastal hills acquired by investors without community involvement	Risk of spatial conflict; threat of public exclusion; potential for social resistance
Cultural Commodification	Traditional festivals may become meaningless performances	Calls for ethnographic approaches in designing culturally sensitive tourism experiences
Community Dependency	Community members act only as implementers, not planners	Highlights lack of autonomy; requires capacity building and tourism education

Community Driven and Digital-Based Empowerment Strategies

Considering the strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats faced by Kahona Beach, the most relevant and sustainable development strategy is community-based tourism (CBT) supported by digital transformation. This integrated approach emphasizes the active involvement of local communities throughout all phases of tourism management from planning and implementation to evaluation. In parallel, digitalization strengthens the destination's capacity in promotion, service delivery, and documentation. Commitment to locality and long-term sustainability requires a collaborative strategy that harmonizes cultural, environmental, technological, and institutional elements into a participatory governance framework. The first step is the establishment of an official tourism management body at the village level that is inclusive and representative. This institution can take the form of a local tourism awareness group (Pokdarwis) or a village-owned enterprise (BUMDes) dedicated to tourism, involving various community segments including youth, women, cultural leaders, and small business owners. Gunawan and Jannah (2021) emphasize that strong local institutions can improve economic benefit distribution and prevent intra-community conflict. In the context of Kahona, such a body would serve as a coordination hub between the village, external partners, and government agencies to manage funds, build infrastructure, and design educational and tourism capacity-building programs.

The second strategy involves enhancing the community's digital capacity in areas such as promotion, visual storytelling, and content management. Local youth, particularly those involved in the GPS (Gerakan Pemuda Selatan), can be trained as digital ambassadors for the tourism village. They can manage official social media accounts, create photo and video content, and integrate the destination with tourism platforms like Google Maps, TripAdvisor, and TikTok. Research by Yunus and Imran (2023) indicates that digitally active tourism villages experience up to a 60% increase in visitor numbers within two years. This digital transformation not only boosts visibility but also helps construct a sustained narrative of identity in digital spaces. Next, community engagement strategies must be intertwined with conservation and cultural preservation. This means that all tourism activities should aim to enhance environmental awareness and reinforce local values not just serve as economic attractions. Innovative programs such as coral reef adoption schemes, cultural education tours, or co-creation tourism packages can help actualize this vision. Sari and Nugroho (2024)

JMET Vol. 3, No 2 (July 2025)

advocate for the co-management model, in which village governments, communities, and external actors share roles in ensuring destination sustainability. Under this framework, Kahona Beach could emerge as a new marine tourism model, one built from the ground up and sustained through its local strengths.

Table 5. Strategic Directions and Recommended Actions

Strategy	Concrete Recommended Actions	Objectives
Establish Tourism Management Body	Create an inclusive and accountable Pokdarwis or tourism BUMDes	Foster participatory governance and equitable economic benefit distribution
Digital Promotion	Train youth to manage social media, produce content, and integrate with online travel platforms	Expand destination visibility and promote cost-efficient marketing
Community Training & Education	Conduct workshops on conservation, hospitality, and small tourism enterprise development	Enhance local capacity and prepare human resources for tourism village management
Participatory Cultural Tourism	Design tourism packages that involve locals as guides, performers, or facilitators	Promote cultural preservation and create value-added identity-based experiences

Conclusion

This study was conducted to explore the direction of sustainable marine tourism development at Kahona Beach, positioning local communities as key stakeholders. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research revealed that the development of coastal tourism destinations cannot be separated from the interconnected social, cultural, and ecological contexts. The significant potential of Kahona Beach lies in the combination of its rich marine ecosystems and the distinctive characteristics of its local culture. However, managing this potential requires an inclusive governance system and collective awareness among stakeholders to ensure that development remains aligned with sustainability principles. Therefore, the findings of this study go beyond identifying potential; they emphasize the necessity of collaborative, community-based approaches as essential conditions for long-term success. The scientific contribution of this research lies in its strategic mapping of tourism development based on active community participation and digital technology integration. This approach opens the possibility of establishing a marine tourism model that is not only economically competitive but also firmly rooted in local identity. Digitalization is not merely a promotional tool; it serves as a bridge connecting local narratives with global markets. These findings fulfill the study's objective to construct a development framework that is both adaptive to contemporary changes and responsive to the needs of coastal communities. By empowering youth as digital promoters and managers and strengthening local institutions, destinations like Kahona can grow without losing their cultural essence. This presents a valuable conceptual contribution to the advancement of sustainable tourism grounded in local wisdom.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that the success of destination management is highly dependent on the degree of genuine community involvement in decision-making processes, beyond symbolic inclusion. Internal weaknesses such as limited promotion, inadequate infrastructure, and low community capacity are not absolute barriers; rather, they are indicators that development interventions must begin with socio-cultural empowerment. In this context, preserving local traditions such as kecimol and coastal festivals is not merely about creating tourist attractions—it is also a mechanism for maintaining social continuity. Thus, an integrated approach to environmental

JMET Vol. 3, No 2 (July 2025)

conservation and cultural revitalization becomes increasingly relevant, especially as threats like public space privatization and ecosystem degradation emerge in under-managed destinations. Ultimately, this research provides both conceptual and practical foundations that can inform community-based tourism policy development at village, district, and national levels. Strategies oriented toward community self-reliance, adaptive use of digital technologies, and cross-sector collaboration enhance the potential for successfully transforming Kahona Beach into a model of sustainable marine tourism. More than a tourism destination, Kahona can stand as a symbol of synergy between people, nature, and culture that mutually reinforce one another. In the long term, this contributes to shaping a tourism structure that is not only economically resilient but also socially equitable and ecologically sustainable. Thus, the study underscores that sustainability cannot be achieved without spatial justice, genuine participation, and trust in local capabilities.

Recommendation

Based on the findings and discussion, the sustainable development of marine tourism at Pantai Kahona demands a comprehensive, community-based, and well-directed strategy. The primary recommendation of this study is to establish an official and inclusive tourism management institution at the village level. This institution should be formalized through village regulations (Perdes), and must represent diverse community elements such as youth, women, customary leaders, and local micro-entrepreneurs. With a clear structure and governance mandate, the institution should be empowered to oversee tourism-related financial management, licensing, promotion, and supervision. Inclusive representation is crucial to prevent domination by specific groups and ensure equitable distribution of economic benefits across the community.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need to systematically build the digital capacity of local residents, particularly the youth, in destination marketing and content creation. Through targeted training programs, community members can learn to manage official social media accounts, produce visual content, and construct compelling narratives that highlight Kahona's ecological beauty and cultural uniqueness. This aligns with the growing trend of visual storytelling in tourism marketing, leveraging platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to increase engagement. Empowering local actors as digital promoters ensures that promotion remains authentic and community-driven, rather than externally imposed. In addition to institutional and promotional improvements, infrastructure development must be prioritized based on the real needs of visitors. Essential facilities such as public toilets, waste sorting stations, rinse-off points, parking lots, and accessible roads should be incrementally developed using transparent allocations from the village fund (Dana Desa). To protect long-term social sustainability, spatial planning regulations must be designed to safeguard public access to coastal areas from external privatization. Inclusive spatial governance will mitigate potential land-use conflicts and ensure that the coastal zone remains a shared space for all stakeholders.

Lastly, a collaborative approach involving village communities, local governments, universities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should be fostered to strengthen sustainability practices. Such collaborations can include technical assistance, environmental conservation training, the development of educational tourism packages, and monitoring research on marine ecosystem carrying capacity. In terms of cultural preservation, tourism activities involving local traditions—such as kecimol performances or coastal festivals should be developed ethically to

retain their symbolic meanings. Tourism must serve not only as an economic driver but also as a tool for cultural revitalization and environmental stewardship.

Table 6 .Strategic Recommendations Summary Table

No.	Strategic Recommendation
1	Establish a village-level tourism management body (BUMDes or Pokdarwis) with inclusive representation.
2	Train local youth and residents in digital marketing, content production, and visual storytelling.
3	Develop basic infrastructure (toilets, waste stations, rinse-off areas, access roads) using village funds.
4	Safeguard public access through inclusive coastal spatial planning regulations.
5	Build partnerships with universities, NGOs, and tourism sector stakeholders for capacity development.
6	Design participatory educational and conservation tour packages such as “adopt-a-reef.”
7	Ensure that cultural tourism preserves local values and avoids commodification.

Acknowledgment

This section can be written in case there are certain parties need to be acknowledged, such as research sponsors. The acknowledgment must be written in brief and clear. In addition, avoid hyperbole acknowledgment.

References

- Al Malik, M. D., Ambariyanto, A., & Hartati, R. (2025). Fish diversity using eDNA. *Studies in Marine Ecology*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marenvres.2025.106020>
- Anwar, M., & Fitri, N. (2025). Community resistance to tourism commodification. *International Journal of Tourism Anthropology*, 9(1), 51–66. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTA.2025.100624>
- Argeswara, J. K. P., Venables, S. K., & Germanov, E. S. (2025). Estimating the abundance and population trends of reef manta rays in Nusa Penida, Bali. *Environmental Biology of Fishes*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10641-025-01681-z>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Budiman, A., & Subekti, T. (2022). Social innovation in village-based marine tourism. *Innovation and Society*, 10(1), 33–49.
- Endarto, B., Indriastuty, D. E., & Mardiana, F. (2025). Legal transplantation of blue bond regulation in Indonesia. *Environmental Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envdev.2024.100767>
- Fahlevi, M. (2025). Experiential quality and satisfaction in marine tourism: A gendered analysis of post-visit behavior and frequency of visits in Lampung, Indonesia. *Cogent Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2025.2460811>
- Firmansyah, M., & Zainuddin, M. (2023). Green tourism behavior and post-COVID preferences in Indonesia. *Tourism Geographies*, 25(2), 184–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2023.2168031>
- Gunawan, A. N., & Jannah, M. (2021). Community-based tourism governance in coastal villages. *Journal of Tourism Policy*, 18(2), 88–103.
- Harahap, R., & Yuliani, E. (2025). Participatory digital storytelling in Indonesia's coastal tourism. *Tourism Futures*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourfut.2025.100134>

- Hibatullah, M. F., & Mutaqin, B. W. (2024). Marine debris characteristics in various coastal typologies in the Gunungkidul coastal area of Yogyakarta—Indonesia. *Discover Geoscience*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44288-024-00033-1>
- Hidayat, R., & Azizah, L. (2021). Conflict management in tourism development in coastal villages. *Marine Policy*, 132, 104715. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104715>
- Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif. (2023). *Rencana Induk Pengembangan Pariwisata Nasional 2020–2045*. Jakarta: Deputy Bidang Pengembangan Destinasi dan Infrastruktur.
- Kurniawati, A., & Hermawan, H. (2023). Cultural commodification and tourism authenticity in local communities. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 18(1), 33–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743873X.2023.2123459>
- Lam, K. Y., Tang, T. K. Y., & Cheung, S. M. (2023). Impacts of mass tourism on coral reef health in Southeast Asia. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 238, 106570. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2023.106570>
- Lee, C. H., & Suryawan, I. W. K. (2024). Mangrove conservation for marine tourism. *Ocean & Coastal Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2024.106279>
- Malik, M. D. A., Ambariyanto, A., & Hartati, R. (2025). eDNA in coral reef ecosystems in Karimunjawa. *Marine Environmental Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marenvres.2025.106018>
- Mulyadi, R., & Askar, M. (2022). Community participation in the sustainable marine tourism development: The case of Wakatobi. *Journal of Marine Policy*, 144, 105215. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2022.105215>
- Mutaqin, B. W., & Hibatullah, M. F. (2024). Typologies of marine tourism in Yogyakarta. *Discover Geoscience*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44288-024-00033-1>
- Pramudito, S. N., & Wulandari, T. (2021). Legal framework for protecting public coastal access. *Coastal Zone Law Journal*, 12(2), 99–117.
- Prasetyo, A., & Aulia, F. (2021). Strengthening local governance for marine ecotourism. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 202, 105492. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2021.105492>
- Rahmat, A., & Lestari, D. (2021). Community participation in ecotourism development in Wakatobi. *Marine Policy*, 130, 104576. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104576>
- Saba, A. O., & Salisu, M. A. (2025). Environmental impact mitigation in Halal marine tourism. *Springer*. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-96-1729-6_6
- Sari, D. A., & Suprpti, W. (2022). The risk of over-commercialization of culture in rural tourism. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 27(3), 246–263. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2022.2042168>
- Sari, N. D., & Nugroho, I. (2024). Co-management in sustainable marine tourism. *Marine Policy*, 150, 106180. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2024.106180>
- Setiawan, A., & Darmanto, H. (2023). Empowerment of rural youth in digital tourism innovation. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 48, 101131. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2023.101131>
- Setiawan, A., & Darmanto, H. (2023). Local tourism branding and challenges. *International Journal of Sustainable Tourism Research*, 5(1), 51–67.
- Suhardono, S., Lee, C. H., & Suryawan, I. W. K. (2024). Marine debris and citizen behavior. *Urban Governance*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.urbgov.2024.100014>

- Suradja, I., Asih, T. S., Dyspriani, D. P., & Lionata, H. (2024). Alternating livelihoods and coping with shocks: An examination of coastal tourism in Indonesia amidst COVID-19. *Marine Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2024.105780>
- Suradja, I., Asih, T. S., Dyspriani, D. P., & Lionata, H. (2024). Coastal tourism in Indonesia amidst COVID-19. *Marine Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2024.105780>
- Suryawan, I. W. K., Gunawan, V. D., & Lee, C. H. (2025). The role of local adaptive capacity in marine ecotourism scenarios. *Tourism Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2025.105759>
- Suteja, Y., Budhiman, S., & Radjawane, I. M. (2025). Capacity building for coastal village tourism. *Marine Policy*, 149, 106042. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2025.106042>
- Suteja, Y., Budhiman, S., & Radjawane, I. M. (2025). Marine debris on touristic beaches. *Marine Pollution Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2025.116821>
- Tampubolon, L. R. R. U., & Marwiyah, S. (2025). Integrating CBT and SWOT models for marine ecotourism management in Tlocor Indonesia. *Cogent Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2025.2494713>
- Utama, I. G. B. R., & Wahyuni, S. (2023). Digital branding of hidden marine tourism destinations: Case study in East Nusa Tenggara. *Tourism Review International*, 27(2), 132–147.
- Wahyudi, D., & Rahmawati, N. (2023). Digital training for rural tourism community. *Indonesian Journal of Tourism Innovation*, 4(1), 55–71.
- Wijaya, G. P., & Gurning, R. O. (2024). Spatial injustice and tourism privatization in Indonesian coastal zones. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 50, 101129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2024.101129>
- Yuliani, E., & Maharani, I. (2023). Cultural sustainability in community-based marine tourism. *Sustainability*, 15(6), 4568. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15064568>
- Yunus, M., & Imran, M. (2023). Co-management model in marine tourism in South Sulawesi. *Journal of Tourism Studies Indonesia*, 6(1), 19–35