

REGIONAL PLANNING STRATEGY TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE-BASED TOURISM AREAS: A CASE STUDY IN SILALAHISABUNGAN DISTRICT, DAIRI REGENCY

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Abstract

Silalahisabungan District in Dairi Regency has great potential for development as a culture-based tourism area. The natural beauty of the Lake Toba coast, the richness of local traditions, and cultural sites make this area unique and attractive. However, the development of this area faces challenges such as a lack of supporting infrastructure, low community involvement, and suboptimal policies and governance. This study aims to analyze the existing potential and challenges and formulate an appropriate regional planning strategy to support the development of culture-based tourism in Silalahisabungan District. The research method used a qualitative approach with data collection techniques such as interviews, surveys, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using the SWOT method to formulate an effective strategy. The results indicate that recommended strategies include the development of supporting infrastructure, tourism promotion and marketing, local community and stakeholder involvement, environmental and cultural preservation, and the provision of attractive cultural attractions. In addition, the preservation of local cultural wisdom such as regional arts and cultural sites is a primary focus in the development of this area. A sustainable regional planning strategy not only encourages tourism development but also improves the welfare of local communities and maintains cultural and environmental authenticity. With proper implementation, Silalahisabungan District can become a superior and globally competitive culture-based tourism destination.

Keywords : *Regional Planning, Culture-Based Tourism, Silalahisabungan District, Regional Development, Sustainable Strategy*

INTRODUCTION

Silalahisabungan District, Dairi Regency, is a region with enormous potential for culture-based tourism. With Lake Toba as one of the national priority tourist destinations, this region is home to a rich and distinctive Batak culture, including arts, traditions, and historical sites that have the potential to attract both local and international tourists. However, the development of culture-based tourism areas in this region still faces various challenges that require serious attention. Huta Lahi is the name of a village located on the north coast of Lake Toba. Huta Lahi was the first village to be established by King Silalahisabungan at that time. Today, it is stated that many descendants of King Silalahisabungan reside in Huta Lahi (Silalahi Nabolak), and this area has developed into a sub-district, namely Silalahi Sabungan Sub-district.

One of the main issues faced is the lack of integrated and sustainable regional planning. Supporting tourism infrastructure, such as road accessibility, public facilities, and accommodations, remains inadequate to support increased tourist visits. Furthermore, the lack of synergy between the government, local communities, and businesses hinders the management and optimization of cultural tourism potential in Silalahisabungan. Another obstacle is the lack of promotion of culture-based tourism and public education on the importance of preserving local culture as a tourist attraction. This has resulted in unique cultural potential, such as traditional dances, ceremonies, and traditional crafts, remaining underdeveloped and underdeveloped. Furthermore, environmental pressures and social changes resulting from urbanization can threaten the sustainability of the tourism area if not properly managed. Silalahi Sabungan District is located on the northern shore of Lake Toba, precisely within Dairi Regency. Silalahi Sabungan District, with its capital in Silalahi, comprises several villages. Silalahisabungan District is an administrative area in Dairi Regency, North Sumatra, located on the northern shore of Lake Toba. This district is known for its captivating natural beauty, especially the panoramic view of Lake Toba, as well as the rich culture of the Toba Batak people

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which is a tourist attraction. The administrative center of Silalahisabungan District is in Silalahi I Village. This district consists of five villages, namely Silalahi I, Silalahi II, Silalahi III, Paropo, and Paropo I. The following is a brief description of each village. This village is the administrative center of Silalahisabungan District. In addition to being the administrative center, Silalahi I Village is known for the beauty of Lake Toba beaches which are often visited by tourists. This village also has great potential in arts and culture, such as Batak traditional ceremonies and traditional crafts. The infrastructure in this village is relatively more developed than other villages, with better road access and increasingly adequate public facilities. Silalahi III Village is in a more remote part than Silalahi I and II. Despite this, the village has significant tourism potential, particularly in ecotourism and community-based tourism. Its pristine natural beauty and the community's strong adherence to Batak traditions are a unique draw. The village's infrastructure still needs development to support tourism activities.

Paropo Village is located in a hilly area with direct views of Lake Toba. This village is known as a favorite destination for tourists seeking a peaceful and cool natural environment. Paropo has the potential to be developed into a tourist village with a focus on traditional accommodation, trekking activities, and local cultural attractions. Paropo I Village, part of the Paropo area, shares similar characteristics but focuses more on the agricultural and fisheries sectors. This village also has access to Lake Toba, making activities such as boat tours and fishing a major attraction. The village also has strong cultural potential, particularly in traditional Batak music and dance. The five villages in Silalahisabungan District have significant potential for development, both as cultural and nature-based tourism destinations. Adequate infrastructure development, promotion of local potential, and local community involvement are key to maximizing the region's tourism appeal. Furthermore, efforts to preserve local culture and sustainable environmental management must be prioritized so that the development of this region can go hand in hand with social, cultural, and ecological sustainability. The villages in Silalahi Sabungan District have 3 (three) aspects of attraction for visitors, including, the natural tourism aspect consists of 2 (two) interesting aspects, namely the Geological Aspect and the Biological Aspect. The Geological Aspect is in the form of a Geosite Panorama of the Silalahisabungan area, showing columnar joints (bottom left) and eutaxitic texture (bottom right). Panorama of the bedrock complex in the Tongging - Silalahi area (top), blocks of bedrock which are traces of caldera collapse (center) and outcrops of 'pebbly mudstone' or Gondwana mudstone, which is Permo-Carboniferous in age.



Figure 1.1 Panorama of Lake Toba

The panorama of Lake Toba when seen from the villages in Silalahisabungan sub-district also offers exotic views.



Figure 1.2 Panorama of the Beauty of Lake Toba

Biological Aspects of Silahi Geosite Connections from the Biological aspect there are Pine (*Pinus merkusii*), Simartolu (*Schima wallichii*), Cloves (*Engenia aromatic*), Mango (*Mangifera indica*), Makkadame (*Macadamia hildebrandii* V. Steenis forma 1), Ground Orchid/Pijor Liman (*Spiranthes sinensis*). Rattan with rattan stems is usually slender with a diameter of 2-5cm, long segments, not hollow, and many are protected by long, hard and sharp thorns. Rattan grows quickly and is relatively easy to harvest and transport. This is considered to help maintain forest sustainability, because people prefer to harvest rattan than wood. Juhar/Jior Tree (*Senna siamea* (Lam.) Irwin and Barneby) A type of trembesit tree, a tree that is very well known for being strong and hard. Trees used to make traditional Batak musical instruments, namely sarune, and others. Among the rich fauna is the Red Junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*). The Red Junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*) is the common name for a species of wild fowl that lives in forests. Males and females differ in body shape, color, and size. Male junglefowl have colorful and beautiful feathers, in contrast to the females, which tend to be monotonous and dull. The muntjac (deer) is a relative of the deer belonging to the genus *Muntiacus*, and others.



Figure 1.3 Paropo Village is one of the best producers of onions.

Cultural Aspects The Toba Batak Tribe has a culture and traditions passed down through generations that are still practiced today. One of them is the Horja Bius tradition, a custom of deliberation between residents to resolve problems in order to reach a mutual agreement. Silalahi Nabolak was originally called Huta Lahi, according to the name of the owner of the land/bius, Silahi Sabungan. The addition of Raja in front of the name Silahi Sabungan [becoming Raja Silahi Sabungan] is what is attached as an honorary title [often also called Ompu Raja Silahi Sabungan] as Raja Bius in Silalahi Nabolak. In carrying out their customs, the descendants of Raja Silalahi Sabungan hold events in the form of a famous traditional party, the Silahisabungan King's funeral party which is held every year or an annual event with customs that apply in Silahisabungan, this event will take turns being hosted by the descendants of Raja Silahisabungan. Ulos cloth in Silalahi also has differences from the Toba community in general, where there are differences in patterns on ulos and specifically woven in Silalahi.



Figure 1.4 Weaving Ulos

Local Wisdom Aspects Silalahi Sabungan District is rich in cultural sites, and is a sacred place for its descendants, including: the Tomb Monument of King Silahi Sabungan, Aek Sipaulak Hosa Loja, Jongjong Stone/Nagadap Stone, Nasohaliatan Stone, Tindang Stone, Upper Siattar, Silalahi Island, Parnamoraanan and Partonunan Stone. The Tomb of King Silahi Sabungan, the Silalahi Monument, is located in the territory of King Sidebang (one of Silalahi's sons), built in 1973 to transport the remains of Opung Silalahi and his eight children, and also to mark the founding of the Silalahi village. While it may seem like a relatively recent construction, its historical significance makes it crucial to preserve it. Colorfully painted reliefs depict Opung Silalahi's journey in establishing the village. A celebration is held annually in November. The Sigadap Stone, or Stone of Judgment, is a symbol of local wisdom and culture. It consists of two stones. One lies on the ground, known as the Sigadap Stone. The other is standing upright, known as the Btu Sijong Jong (Tindang). Both stones measure approximately 15 cm in diameter and approximately 50 cm in length from the ground. The two stones are surrounded by a circular cement fence, with the inscription "Supreme Court of the Descendants of King Silalahi Sabungan" written on them. In its time, this stone served as the Supreme Court, used by King Silahisabungan to try the guilty. Even before the Supreme Court existed, a court existed in the Silalahi area, established by the renowned King Silahisabungan.

This Sigadap Stone illustrates a form of court. Examples of cases resolved include: disputes over land ownership. If someone claims it's their land when the previous owner is still there, the disputing parties will be brought to this Stone, and the truth will be proven. Similarly, if someone is found guilty, accused of theft, or there is a dispute between the people of Silalahi, to find a solution and the truth, the disputing parties will be brought to this Stone, attended by the King of Silahisabungan, along with elders and the general public. The disputants will be asked to swear to tell the truth and not to lie. Whoever lies will be proven right, as the liar will fall (in Batak language, Gadap) and die. However, the truthful person will remain standing, and nothing will happen to them. Interested in seeing this stone? If you come to Silalahi, don't forget to stop by the Batu location which is located in the Sidabariba Toruan area of Silalahi I Village, about 300m from the center of Silalahi I Village. The Sigadap stones are two sacred stones which are believed to have mystical powers. This stone is elongated in shape, one standing (jongjong) and the other lying (gadap). By the residents of Silalahi Village, these two stones are called the Sijongjong stone and the Sigadap stone, this stone is called the Panungkunan Stone. Until now, this stone still exists and is believed to be true. If a person's truth or untruth is to be tested, the person is brought to the stone. A person who dares to put betel on these two stones and wants to know the truth and untruth in a matter, then if he is right then he will be safe like a standing stone, but if he is guilty, he will be gadap or die.



Figure 1.5 Sigadap Stone

Aek Sipaulak Hosa Aek is often also called Mual, which means AEK SIPAULAK HOSA is Thirst/Tiredness Quenching Water. This Aek sipaulak hosa is located right on the mountain hills in Silalahi Village, namely Silalahi Nabolak. According to Turi-turian and Folklore, this Aek sipaulak hosa occurred due to the Request/Request of King Silahisabungan to Debata Mulajadi Nabolon (God Almighty) because his wife Pinggan Matio boru Padang Batanghari felt tired as if she had run out of energy in the middle of her journey with King Silahisabungan.



Figure 1.6 Aek Sipaulak Hosa

The development of cultural tourism areas has many important values, especially in the social, economic, and cultural preservation contexts. Here are some reasons why the development of cultural tourism areas is crucial. Cultural Preservation Cultural tourism encourages the preservation of local traditions, customs, arts, and architecture. By promoting tourism areas that showcase aspects of local culture, local communities have an incentive to maintain and preserve their cultural heritage. This helps prevent the loss of traditions or culture due to modernization or external influences. Empowering the Local Economy Cultural tourism plays an important role in improving the local economy. Cultural tourism areas often involve local communities in various sectors such as handicrafts, traditional culinary, art performances, and tour guides. This creates new jobs and sources of income for local communities. Enhancing Local Identity and Pride Cultural tourism development can help strengthen a community's identity and pride in their cultural heritage. By hosting tourists interested in local culture, communities can feel more appreciated and proud of their unique values and traditions.

Problems in Silalahisabungan District include limited infrastructure, lack of promotion, challenges to cultural preservation, minimal community participation, and environmental issues. To address these issues, a comprehensive regional planning strategy is needed, focusing on infrastructure development, tourism promotion, cultural preservation, community empowerment, and sustainable environmental management. This approach can increase the tourist appeal of Silalahisabungan District while supporting the overall development of the region. Supporting Sustainable Tourism Cultural tourism tends to be more sustainable than nature tourism, which can damage the environment if not managed properly. Cultural tourism generally focuses on experiences that involve introductions to and interaction with non-material heritage, such as arts and traditions, resulting in less negative impacts on the physical environment. Cultural Education and Exchange Culture-based tourism provides opportunities for tourists to learn and understand other cultures. This can foster intercultural dialogue, strengthen tolerance, and mutual respect

among diverse community groups. Tourists gain deeper insights into the way of life, beliefs, and values of local communities. Infrastructure Development The development of tourist areas often encourages the development of better infrastructure, including transportation, public facilities, and public services. This benefits not only tourists but also local communities, who enjoy an improved quality of life from improved infrastructure. With these various benefits, the development of culture-based tourism areas can be a key pillar of regional development strategies, particularly in a country as rich in cultural diversity as Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Understanding Regional Planning

According to Glasson (2016), regional planning is a multidimensional process aimed at optimally utilizing a region's potential, including natural resources, economic, social, and cultural aspects, to achieve sustainable development. In this context, regional planning is a strategic effort to integrate various sectors to improve the overall quality of life for the community.

2. Basic Principles of Regional Planning

The basic principles of regional planning according to Faludi (2016) include:

- a. Integration: Integrating various sectors in planning, such as economic, social, environmental, and infrastructure.
- b. Sustainability: Maintaining a balance between economic development, cultural preservation, and the natural environment.
- c. Public Participation: Involving local communities in the planning process to ensure the relevance and acceptability of the resulting plans.
- d. Spatial Justice: Ensuring that every part of the region receives the benefits of development fairly.

3. The Relationship between Regional Planning and Tourism Development

According to Hall & Page (2016), regional planning and tourism development are closely linked. Regional planning provides the spatial framework necessary for tourism destination development, including land use, resource management, and the provision of supporting infrastructure. Furthermore, a planned approach to tourism development can enhance destination attractiveness, maximize economic contributions, and minimize negative impacts on the local environment and culture.

4. Culture and Tourism Concept

a. Definition and Characteristics of Culture and Tourism

According to Richards (2016), culture is a collection of values, traditions, beliefs, arts, and social practices that define a community. In the context of tourism, culture is a key attraction that can provide unique experiences for tourists. Characteristics of culture-based tourism include:

- 1) Focuses on tangible cultural heritage (such as buildings, monuments, and art objects) and intangible (such as traditions, dances, and languages).
- 2) Involving interaction between tourists and local communities.
- 3) Encourage the preservation of local culture through tourism activities.

b. Functions and Objectives of Culture-Based Tourism Areas

The functions and objectives of culture-based tourism areas according to Timothy (2016) include:

- 1) Cultural Preservation: Through tourism development, local cultural values can be preserved and passed on to future generations.
- 2) Local Economic Development: Culture-based tourism areas can create jobs and increase the income of local communities.
- 3) Enhancing Intercultural Understanding: Culture-based tourism encourages positive interactions between tourists and local communities, thereby strengthening intercultural social relations.

5. Culture-Based Tourism Area Development Strategy

a. Understanding Culture-Based Tourism Area Development Strategies

According to Cooper (2016), a culture-based tourism area development strategy is a planned approach designed to maximize the potential of local culture as a tourist attraction by considering aspects of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

b. Principles of Strategy

According to Jamal and Getz (2016), the development of culture-based tourism areas must pay attention to several principles:

- 1) Authenticity: Maintaining the authenticity of local culture so that it does not experience excessive commodification.
- 2) Community Involvement: Empowering local communities as key actors in tourism management.
- 3) Sustainability: Ensuring that tourism development does not damage the environment or erode cultural values.
- 4) Tourism Product Diversification: Creating a variety of tourism products, such as cultural festivals, educational packages, and ecotourism, to attract diverse tourist segments.

METHOD APPROACH

1. Research Location and Subjects

a. Research Location

This research was conducted in Silalahisabungan District, Dairi Regency, located on the northern coast of Lake Toba. This area has rich cultural tourism potential but still requires better management to support regional development.

b. Research Subjects

Research subjects include:

- 1) Local Communities: Residents living around the tourist areas in Silalahisabungan District, such as Silalahi I, Silalahi II, Silalahi III, and Paropo Villages. They are key to the implementation and sustainability of culture-based tourism development.
- 2) Stakeholders: Local governments, tourism managers, community organizations, and private parties who play a role in the management and development of tourism areas.

2. Research methods

The research method used is a qualitative approach. According to Sugiyono (2016), a qualitative method is a research method used to examine the conditions of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument. This research aims to explore in-depth data in the form of descriptive words, sentences, or images to understand the phenomena occurring at the research location. Characteristics of Qualitative Methods (Creswell, 2016):

Focuses on the meaning that individuals give to phenomena.

- a. Using various data collection techniques, such as interviews, observation, and documentation.
- b. Be flexible and adaptive to changing situations in the field.

3. Data collection technique

a. Interview

- 1) Interview techniques were conducted to obtain direct information from local communities and stakeholders regarding the potential and challenges of developing culture-based tourism areas.
- 2) According to Moleong (2016), interviews in qualitative research aim to obtain in-depth information through direct interaction between researchers and respondents.

b. Survey

- 1) The survey was used to determine the perceptions of local people and tourists regarding the condition of the tourist area and its development potential.
- 2) Sugiyono (2016) explains that surveys are a data collection method that can be used in qualitative research to support understanding of social phenomena.

c. Documentation

- 1) Data collection was carried out through document collection, such as photos, area maps, tourism management reports, and notes related to cultural activities in Silalahisabungan District.
- 2) Moleong (2016) emphasized that documentation provides concrete evidence that complements the results of interviews and observations.

4. Data analysis

a. SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is used to formulate strategies for developing culture-based tourism areas.

- 1) Strengths: Internal factors that support development, such as the beauty of Lake Toba and the richness of Toba Batak culture.
- 2) Weaknesses: Internal factors that become obstacles, such as limited infrastructure and lack of promotion.
- 3) Opportunities: External factors that provide benefits, such as government program support for the Lake Toba tourist area.
- 4) Threats: External factors that hinder, such as competition with other tourist destinations and the risk of environmental damage.

According to Rangkuti (2016), SWOT analysis helps organizations understand internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats, which then become the basis for formulating development strategies.

DISCUSSION

Cultural Potential in Silalahisabungan District

Silalahisabungan District, located on the north shore of Lake Toba, is an area rich in the culture and traditions of the Toba Batak people. Its cultural potential can form the basis for developing culture-based tourism that not only attracts tourists but also preserves local identity.

1. Identify existing cultural heritage and prevailing traditions

a. Physical Cultural Heritage (Tangible)

1) Traditional House of the Toba Batak

The distinctive Toba Batak traditional houses, with their geometric ornamentation and upturned boat-shaped roofs, are a symbol of the richness of local architecture. These houses are a powerful visual attraction for tourists.

2) Ulos

A traditional Batak cloth worn in traditional ceremonies, weddings, and other family occasions, ulos is a symbol of social status, respect, and prayer.

3) Stone Tomb

In some villages, there are ancient stone tombs that symbolize the Batak ancestral tradition of honoring the spirits of their ancestors.

b. Traditions and Rituals (Intangible)

1) Mangalahat Horbo Ceremony

A traditional tradition involving the slaughter of buffalo for traditional ceremonies, such as weddings, deaths, or ancestral ceremonies.

2) Gondang Sabangunan

Traditional Toba Batak music is played using musical instruments such as gondang, flute, and taganing, which are used in traditional and religious events.

3) Martumba

Traditional dance depicting the daily life of the Batak people, performed to welcome guests or at traditional ceremonies.

2. Cultural activities that can be developed

a. Annual Cultural Festival

1) Lake Toba Festival

Silalahisabungan District could host events as part of the Lake Toba Festival, featuring traditional dances, boat races, and a Batak culinary exhibition.

2) Ulos Exhibition

A special exhibition that shows the process of making ulos directly, from weaving to dyeing with natural materials.

b. Traditional and Ritual Tourism

1) Traditional Ceremony Experience

Tourists can be invited to witness or even participate in traditional rituals such as Mangalahat Horbo, complete with explanations of their philosophical meaning.

2) Traditional Music Tourism

Gondang sabangunan performances can be held in villages, where tourists not only watch but also learn to play traditional musical instruments.

c. Traditional Culinary Development

- 1) Introducing Batak specialties such as naniura (raw fish with Batak spices) and ombus-ombus (traditional cakes) to tourists through cooking workshops or culinary festivals.

d. Educational Tourism

- 1) Learn to Weave Ulos

This activity teaches tourists how to weave ulos traditionally, including understanding the meaning behind ulos motifs.

- 2) Historical Education of Stone Tombs

Organize a history tour to explain the origins and meaning of the ancient stone tombs scattered throughout the area.

e. Culture-Based Ecotourism Development

- 1) Martumba in the Open Air

Holding Martumba dances in open natural locations such as the shores of Lake Toba, combines cultural beauty with natural panoramas.

- 2) Harvest Thanksgiving Ritual

Organize a harvest thanksgiving ritual that reflects the agrarian traditions of the Toba Batak people, while also providing education to tourists about the lives of local people.

Silalahisabungan District boasts rich cultural potential, including physical cultural heritage such as traditional houses and ulos (traditional clothing), as well as traditions such as Mangalahat Horbo and Martumba. This potential can be developed through various cultural activities, such as festivals, educational tours, and culture-based ecotourism. With the right strategies, such as promotion, community involvement, and cross-sectoral collaboration, this cultural potential can become a driving force for the development of sustainable tourism areas.

Challenge Analysis in Planning

Regional development to support culture-based tourism in Silalahisabungan District faces various challenges that require serious planning attention. These challenges include infrastructure, community involvement, and policy and governance.

1. Infrastructure Problems

a. Basic Infrastructure Limitations

- 1) Transportation Network

Road access to Silalahisabungan District is still limited, with most roads damaged, narrow, or unpaved. This makes it difficult for tourists to reach the area, especially during the rainy season.

- 2) Clean Water Facilities

The availability of clean water remains a challenge, especially in villages far from springs or Lake Toba. This impacts the comfort of tourists and local residents.

- 3) Power and Telecommunication Networks

Electricity availability is not evenly distributed in some areas, while internet and telecommunications access is also limited, making digital-based tourism promotion difficult.

2. Lack of tourist facilities

- a. There's a lack of supporting tourist facilities, such as parking, public restrooms, signposts, and tourist information centers. These facilities are crucial for providing a comfortable and memorable tourist experience.
- b. Adequate accommodation and restaurants around the tourist area are also still very limited, so tourists who want to stay longer must look for accommodation outside the sub-district.

3. Community Involvement

a. Local Community Awareness and Understanding

Not all communities understand the importance of developing culture-based tourism and its impact on the local economy. Most still rely on agricultural or fishing activities, ignoring the tourism sector's potential as a new economic opportunity.

b. Lack of Active Participation

- 1) Although local culture and traditions are a major asset, not all communities are involved in cultural preservation. Many traditions are on the verge of extinction due to the younger generation's lack of interest in continuing them.

2) Communities often feel that tourism development projects are only managed by the government or private parties without involving them in the planning or implementation process.

c. Human Resources (HR) Capacity

The majority of local people do not yet have the skills to manage tourism, such as being a tour guide, managing accommodation, or making craft products to sell to tourists.

4. Policy and Governance Aspects

a. Lack of Comprehensive Policy

Tourism development policies in Silalahisabungan District have not been fully integrated with the vision of sustainable development. Existing plans often focus solely on physical development without considering cultural and environmental aspects.

b. Weak Inter-Stakeholder Coordination

1) The lack of effective coordination between local governments, local communities, and the private sector leads to overlapping programs, which slows the implementation of infrastructure development and cultural preservation projects.

2) Conflicts of interest also arise when policies taken by the government are not in line with the needs of local communities.

c. Unsupportive Regulations

Several regulations regarding land use and tourism area management still hamper innovation and investment. For example, certain restrictions on the management of the Lake Toba area are often considered inflexible.

d. Limited Funding

Budgets for tourism development are often limited. Local governments struggle to attract investors due to inadequate basic infrastructure and a lack of investment incentives.

The challenges in planning a culture-based tourism area in Silalahisabungan District are complex, ranging from infrastructure issues and community involvement to policy and governance aspects. Addressing these challenges requires an integrated approach involving all relevant parties, raising public awareness, and comprehensively improving policies and governance. With these steps, Silalahisabungan District can become a tourist destination that not only boosts the local economy but also preserves cultural heritage.

Recommended Planning Strategy

To support the development of culture-based tourism areas in Silalahisabungan District, a comprehensive planning strategy is required. The following is an in-depth discussion of these strategic recommendations:

1. Development of supporting infrastructure

a. Transportation and Accessibility

1) Improving the main road access to Silalahisabungan District to make it easier for domestic and foreign tourists.

2) Provide public transportation routes or special tourist vehicles to connect important destinations.

b. Tourist Facilities

1) Build adequate parking areas, clean public toilets, and user-friendly tourist information centers.

2) Developing local culture-based accommodation such as homestays that offer unique experiences.

c. Environmental Supporting Infrastructure

Provision of clean water and adequate electricity, including renewable energy to support the sustainability of tourist areas.

2. Tourism promotion and marketing

a. Tourism Area Branding

1) Making Silalahisabungan District a leading cultural-based tourist destination in the Lake Toba area.

2) Create attractive logos, slogans and visual identities to promote tourism potential.

b. Digital Marketing

1) Using social media, blogs and websites to introduce the culture, traditions and natural beauty of Silalahisabungan.

2) Collaborate with travel influencers and vloggers to increase the region's visibility.

c. Event Organizing

Holding events such as cultural festivals, local craft exhibitions, or traditional cooking competitions to attract more tourists.

3. Collaboration with local communities and stakeholders

- 1) Local Community Involvement: Providing training to communities on homestay management, tour guiding, and cultural product creation. Encouraging active community participation in every stage of tourism development, from planning to implementation.
- 2) Stakeholder Partnerships: Engaging the private sector to fund the development of tourism facilities. Collaborating with local governments, universities, and non-governmental organizations to support the sustainable development of the area.

4. Sustainable preservation of the natural and cultural environment

- 1) Environmental Conservation: Protecting Lake Toba's ecosystem by preventing pollution and limiting environmentally damaging activities. Implementing environmentally friendly policies such as waste management and a ban on single-use plastics.
- 2) Eco-Friendly Tourism Management: Limiting the number of visitors to certain destinations to prevent overtourism. Providing eco-friendly trekking routes and tourist facilities.

5. Preservation of local cultural wisdom

- 1) Local Product Development: Encourage the production of unique crafts such as ulos, jewelry, or traditional musical instruments for sale to tourists. Provide skills training for the younger generation in traditional arts and crafts.
- 2) Education and Preservation of Traditions Integrate lessons about local culture into the school curriculum to raise awareness among the younger generation. Hold regular cultural activities to keep traditions alive.

6. Holding cultural attractions through more interesting events every year

- 1) Annual Festivals: Host cultural festivals such as traditional dances, culinary exhibitions, or local musical instrument competitions to attract tourists. Hold folklore competitions to introduce local history and culture to visitors.
- 2) Attraction Innovation Combining traditional arts with modern technology, such as video mapping or interactive shows, to attract the interest of the younger generation.

7. Maintaining religious elements in accordance with the identity of the Silalahisabungan area

- 1) Preservation of Local Religion Maintaining religious values that are the cultural identity of local communities, including customs in religious ceremonies. Making religious sites part of tourist attractions, while still respecting their sacredness.
- 2) Religious Tourism Promotion Holding religious tourism programs that educate tourists about the cultural philosophy and spiritual values of local communities.

8. Caring for and protecting cultural sites

- 1) Site Inventory and Maintenance: Conducting inventory and restoration of cultural sites of high historical value. Protecting sites from damage caused by natural or human factors through strict conservation policies.
- 2) Education and Conservation Campaigns: Educate the public and tourists about the importance of preserving cultural heritage. Form cultural preservation communities to care for historical sites.

9. Preserving the traditional arts of Silalahi village

- 1) Performing Arts Organize regular arts performances, such as traditional dance, music, or cultural drama. Provide arts space for local artists to practice and perform.
- 2) Arts Education: Providing arts training to the younger generation to ensure the regeneration of local artists. Integrating traditional arts into the school curriculum as part of cultural education.
- 3) Art Production as a Tourist Attraction Encourage the production and sale of works of art such as wood carvings, weavings, or paintings that reflect Silalahi culture.

CONCLUSION

1. Conclusion

- a. Summary of main findings
Silalahisabungan District has great potential as a cultural tourism destination located on the shores of Lake Toba. This potential encompasses cultural heritage, traditions, and unique and captivating natural beauty. The main challenges in developing this area include a lack of supporting infrastructure, low local community involvement, and suboptimal governance policies. Appropriate regional planning strategies are essential to maximize cultural and tourism potential and address the various challenges. Developing culture-based tourism areas not only supports heritage preservation but also contributes to improving community well-being and environmental sustainability.
- b. The importance of regional planning strategies

A comprehensive regional planning strategy is a crucial foundation for ensuring planned, participatory, and sustainable development. Approaches that involve local communities, collaborate with stakeholders, and preserve the environment can create globally competitive tourism areas without sacrificing local values. Cultural preservation and sustainable environmental management are the keys to making Silalahisabungan District a superior and sustainable tourist destination.

2. Suggestion

- a. Steps for implementing regional planning strategies
 - 1) Supporting Infrastructure Development. Accelerate the development of access roads, public facilities, and culturally-based accommodation. Provide environmentally friendly infrastructure such as solar panels and waste management systems.
 - 2) Tourism Area Promotion and Branding: Launching an integrated promotional campaign showcasing Silalahi's culture and natural beauty through digital and traditional media. Holding annual events such as cultural festivals to attract domestic and international tourists.
 - 3) Local Community Training and Empowerment: Providing tourism-related skills training, such as tour guiding, homestay management, and handicraft production. Encouraging community participation in every stage of tourism area planning and management.
 - 4) Cultural and Environmental Preservation: Integrating local cultural values into all tourism activities. Forming community groups to care for cultural sites and the surrounding environment.
- b. Follow-up plan for local governments and stakeholders
 - 1) Regional governments must develop regulations that support the development of culture-based tourism, including incentives for local businesses. Allocate budgets for infrastructure development and cultural preservation.
 - 2) Stakeholders: Partnering with the private sector and investors to develop tourism facilities that support sustainability. Collaborating with educational institutions for research and training related to tourism development.
 - 3) Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish a monitoring and evaluation system to ensure strategy implementation is proceeding according to plan. Hold regular forums to discuss progress, challenges, and necessary corrective actions.

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