

# TOURISM VILLAGES: DEVELOPING TOURIST ATTRACTIONS BASED ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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## Abstract:

Tourism villages are tourism activities that are considered a means of preserving the nature and cultural heritage of certain communities. Tourism villages are considered to create sustainable tourism that is beneficial to the local community. This researcher aims to explain the form of development of environmentally friendly tourist attractions in the Asinan Tourism Village and its contribution to sustainable tourism. The research method uses qualitative research with data collected through informants, observation and document studies. The data is analyzed through an inductive process to be able to draw a number of conclusions. The results of the study stated that the development of tourist attractions in Asinan Village relies on the wealth of environmental resources, both the natural environment, socio-cultural and the economy of the swamp fishing community. Tourism attractions based on the swamp environment include natural tourism, cultural tourism typical of swamp fishermen, artificial tourism, culinary tourism, and educational tourism. Managed tourist attractions play a role in the preservation of the natural environment, cultural environment, economic environment and community empowerment.

**Keywords:** Tourist Attraction, Sustainable Tourism, Natural Environment, Cultural Environment, Economic Environment

## INTRODUCTION

Village tourism is a travel activity that refers to a type of tourism that focuses on the promotion and preservation of the cultural and natural heritage of a particular village or community (Agung, 2021). Village tourism is considered to create sustainable tourism activities that benefit local communities and help preserve traditions and the environment because it showcases local traditions, customs, and ways of life to visitors. Sustainable tourism is the achievement of a balance between the sustainability of natural resources, the cultural environment of the host community, and the needs of tourists and the services they require. It aims to develop the quality of life of host communities, protect the natural environment, and achieve common goals and cooperation between visitors, local communities, and destinations. Sustainable tourism also focuses on maintaining economic and social benefits while reducing negative impacts on the environment. It involves managing tourism activities in a way that benefits local communities and preserves traditions and the environment.

Developing tourism villages is essential for the economic development of rural areas and the conservation of cultural and natural resources. Rural and local wisdom-based tourism development strategies focus on conservation, preservation of natural resources, development of human resources, and promotion of culture. Local wisdom in rural communities plays an important role in managing natural resources and the environment wisely, contributing to the balance of nature. The World Tourism Organization has encouraged Indonesia to maximize tourism-based village



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development to attract more tourists and boost the local economy. Even the World Tourism Organization has recognized Indonesia as a successful pilot project in empowering rural communities through small-scale industries operated by villagers (Farhan & Anwar, 2016).

By attracting tourists to these villages, local communities can generate income, create jobs and improve infrastructure, while raising awareness about the importance of preserving their unique heritage. In addition, developing tourism villages can also help revitalize traditional practices that may be at risk of being lost. Integrated tourism villages in Indonesia have shown success in meeting the expectations of sustainable tourism by fostering economic growth, maintaining traditional local organizations, and preserving the local (Waluya et al., 2022; Wulandari, Baiquni, and Zubaidi, 2024). Tourist attractions play an important role in boosting local economies by creating jobs, generating revenue for local businesses, and attracting investment in infrastructure development (Ashley et al., 2007).

In addition, they help promote cultural exchange and understanding between visitors and local communities, leading to greater appreciation and preservation of traditional practices and heritage. By investing in and promoting tourist attractions, communities can capitalize on the economic benefits of tourism while preserving their cultural identity and heritage for future generations. By investing in and promoting tourist attractions, communities can capitalize on the economic benefits of tourism while preserving their cultural identity (Rahman and Baddam, 2021; Van, 2024). By showcasing these cultural traditions to visitors, locals are encouraged to continue passing on these skills to future generations. Ultimately, village tourism can be a sustainable tourism model that not only benefits local communities but also promotes cultural diversity and environmental preservation. By supporting these initiatives, tourists can play an important role in preserving the rich cultural heritage of these villages for years to come (Heykal et al., 2024).

Rural tourism plays an important role in the economic development of local communities by enabling them to utilize their natural and cultural assets, contributing wealth into the local economy. This, in turn, triggers the economic activity effect and encourages entrepreneurship. Beyond its economic empowerment, village tourism serves as an effective means to preserve indigenous cultures and traditions, fostering mutual respect and understanding through cross-cultural exchanges (Lian & Xin, 2023; Yanti et al., 2023). By showcasing these cultural traditions to visitors, locals are encouraged to continue passing on these skills to future generations. Ultimately, village tourism can be a sustainable tourism model that not only benefits local communities but also promotes cultural diversity and environmental preservation. By supporting these initiatives, tourists can play an important role in preserving the rich cultural heritage of these villages for years to come.

In addition to preserving cultural heritage, tourist villages also provide economic opportunities for residents. By participating in activities such as guided tours, traditional performances and artisan workshops, villagers can generate income and support their families. This not only helps alleviate poverty in rural areas but also strengthens the sense of community pride and identity. As more and more tourists choose to visit a tourist village, the local economy booms, creating a positive cycle of sustainable development that benefits both residents and visitors. In this way, tourist villages not only preserve traditional customs but also ensure a bright and prosperous future for generations to come.

The quality of infrastructure and facilities plays an important role in determining the tourism potential of a destination (Kachniewska, 2015). Travelers are more likely to visit and return to a destination that offers modern and efficient transportation options, well-maintained



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accommodations, and a variety of attractions and activities to enjoy. In addition, the political stability and security of a destination are important considerations for tourists when choosing where to travel. Destinations known for their safety and security will attract more visitors and help build a positive reputation in the tourism industry. Economic factors, such as exchange rates and overall travel costs, also play an important role in influencing travelers' decisions. Travelers are more likely to choose destinations that offer affordable prices and good value for their money. Social and demographic trends can also influence travel preferences and behavior. Millennials, for example, are more likely to prioritize sustainable and authentic travel experiences, while older generations may prefer more traditional tourist activities. By staying informed and adapting to these trends, destinations can better cater to the needs and wants of their target market.

Various factors contribute to the attractiveness of tourism villages, including unique cultural heritage, stunning natural scenery, authentic local experiences, and sustainable practices in tourism development. Travelers value the authenticity of the natural and cultural aspects of a destination's attractions. Perceived authenticity has a positive effect on tourists' perceived image of the destination and satisfaction. Authenticity and nature images have a strong impact on traveler satisfaction. Modern travelers seek authentic experiences and are not easily fooled by fake products (Li & Li, 2022).

Enhancing the attractiveness of tourist villages is essential to support the implementation of sustainable tourism principles, emphasizing the maintenance of ecological processes, preserving cultural heritage, and ensuring economic viability for all stakeholders. Developing tourism villages is a practical application of sustainable tourism development, providing unique cultural experiences while respecting and preserving local traditions (Sitorus et al., 2024). Natural beauty and environmentally friendly practices are also key components of a tourist village's appeal. Preserving the natural environment and promoting sustainable practices will not only attract more tourists but also ensure the sustainability of these villages as tourist destinations. From eco-friendly accommodation to guided nature walks, tourist villages can showcase the beauty of their environment while educating visitors on the importance of conservation. By incorporating these practices into their tourism offerings, tourist villages can distinguish themselves as leaders in sustainable tourism and inspire others to follow their example. Community-based tourism (CBT) focuses on the principles of sustainability in tourism development, aiming to balance economic, socio-cultural and environmental dimensions. CBT involves small and medium-sized enterprises committed to protecting the local environment, offering immersive experiences with minimal impact.

Sustainable tourism aims to utilize natural resources while preserving ecological heritage and processes optimally. It requires the involvement of various entities such as governments, destination management organizations, and communities to organize, manage, and develop sustainable tourism businesses. Overall, promoting sustainable practices in villages through community-based tourism can generate long-term benefits for tourists and local communities (Priatmoko et al., 2021; Juma & Khademi-Vidra, 2019). Preservationists are increasingly recognizing the importance of preserving cultural landscapes, which include historic buildings and their surrounding natural environments. This approach can be an important cornerstone for all historic preservation projects (O'Donnell, 2016).

Authentic local experiences are at the heart of Desa Wisata, offering visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in the rich traditions and customs of the community. Native Tours provides an analysis of the impact of tourism on host-guest relations and the cultural, economic, and



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environmental costs and benefits of tourism in different regions. It discusses trends such as green tourism, community-based tourism, and heritage tourism, which can offer visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in rich community traditions and customs. Local prejudices can influence the view of tourism (Chambers, 2009).

Travelers can participate in traditional ceremonies to learn local crafts and cooking techniques, gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of the cultures they visit. These authentic experiences not only benefit visitors but also provide economic opportunities for locals, helping to support and sustain their way of life. Tourist villages need to ensure that tourism becomes a positive and mutually beneficial force for visitors and communities (Yong & Emily, 2009; Stefaniak et al., 2017). One of the key strategies to develop the appeal of village tourism is through community engagement and empowerment. Actively involving residents in the planning, management, and promotion of such tourism destinations not only ensures that their voices are heard and respected but also creates a sense of belonging and pride within the community. This can result in a more authentic and immersive experience for visitors, as they can interact and learn from the people who live in these unique places. In addition, empowering locals to showcase their cultural traditions and skills can help preserve and promote important aspects of their heritage, further enhancing the overall appeal of a tourist village.

This research aims to explore the tourism attractions developed in Asinan Tourism Village, which is a swamp fishermen village. The problem in the area is how tourism can help preserve the swamp ecosystem. A number of issues were studied, namely whether the development of tourist attractions has been environmentally sound, as well as the support of tourist attraction development for sustainable tourism in Asinan Village.

## METHODS

This research in Asinan Tourism Village, Bawen, Semarang Regency used a qualitative method approach. Data collection techniques were conducted using in-depth interviews, field observations and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted with the Asinan village government, Pokdarwis managers, tourism and MSME actors, cultural actors, and community leaders. The results of interviews, observations and documents were analyzed and conducted inductively to get answers to problem formulations.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Development of Environmentally Sound Asian Village Tourism Attraction.** Asinan tourism village is one of the villages located in the Bawen sub-district, Semarang Regency. The livelihood of the people of Asinan Village is mostly as swamp fishermen. Asinan village is geographically divided into 4 hamlets, namely Sumurup hamlet, Ba'an hamlet, Krajan hamlet, and Mengkelang hamlet. The attractions of the nature-based Asinan tourism village include: panoramic views of Rawa Pening, rice paddy fields, witnessing the landscapes of 7 mountains, namely: Mount Merbabu, Mount Telomoyo, Mount Ungaran, Mount Gajah, Mount Andong, Mount Sindoro and Mount Sumbing are clearly visible when the weather is clear, to enjoy the panoramic beauty of nature. Tourists can enjoy boating on Lake Rawa Pening. In addition to natural beauty, tourists can take the ancient train tour that cuts through the rice fields of Asinan Village. Another way to enjoy the beauty of nature is by taking a Jeep Tour to enjoy the coffee plantation in cooperation with Kampoeng Kopi Banaran, owned by PTPN IX The route starts from Banaran Café, coffee plantations, and to the view of the coast of the swamp. Nature tourism offered to tourists is a natural condition of natural scenery



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typical of the Rawa Pening area, which has elements of mountains, rice fields, lakes or swamps and plantations. This shows the attractiveness of environmentally sound natural tourism that presents the natural conditions of the environment around the tourist village.

Rawa Pening is an economic resource for the people of Asinan village and its surroundings, which is able to support thousands of people in the vicinity. However, economic opportunities and the development of this natural tourist attraction have obstacles, namely the beauty of the swamp scenery, which is damaged by the rapid growth of water hyacinth plants (*Eichhornia Crassipes*) covering the surface of the swamp, making it difficult for fishermen to find and net fish for a living. One of the efforts to reduce the growth of water hyacinth plants has been dredging plants with heavy equipment and utilizing plants for handicraft businesses, such as making baskets, chairs, tissue holders and humic acid planting media materials made from water hyacinth.



Source: Personal Documentation, 2025

**Figure1. Natural Panorama of Asinan Village**

**Environmentally Sound Cultural Tourism Attraction.** Asinan tourism village has a wealth of cultural tourism potential, both religious tourism, cultural tradition tourism and village event tourism. Religious tourism includes the provision of mosque facilities, Protestant Christian churches, Catholic churches, Hindu temples and temple inscriptions. Traditional and cultural tourism is in the form of cultural events such as Larungan activities, Earth Alms and Swamp Alms cultural events. Sedekah dusun events are carried out in each hamlet, while Sedekah Rawa and Earth Alms are carried out on a village scale. Tourism events are often held in the field to increase the number of visitors, and in the future, the tourism village will prepare a combination tour package between attractions, witnessing events and homestays. There are also cultural tourism attractions in the form of art, namely ketoprak art, langen budoyo, kuda lumping, kulintang music, tambourine, angklung, and keroncong.

The Merti dusun event, which means clean dusun as an expression of gratitude for the blessings and grace given by God, is carried out in three (3) stages, including recitation, market, and reog. There are also various arts and puppet shows. Another cultural tourism attraction is the grave of the founding figures of Asinan village, namely Yasin in Krajan hamlet. Wayang Kulit performances are performed in the framework of Merti Dusun Krajan. In addition to conveying gratitude, this tradition is considered to strengthen the relationship and also promote the art of cultural traditions that live in the community. Gratitude for the abundance of blessings in the form of crops, safety, as well as peace and harmony of life in the order of social life.

The spirit to revive these traditions has been in place for many years. Under the leadership of the village head, this activity was then scheduled to be held annually. The Merti Dusun event is expected to strengthen the relationship with God, nature and fellow humans. This tradition has existed since the days of Ancient Mataram and then Islamic Mataram, and continues to be preserved today. In addition to appreciating and giving thanks to God, the values of respect and devotion to



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teachers, parents, and ancestors are also emphasized, as well as the relationship with the universe to protect the surrounding nature, so that traditions and nature can be passed on to future generations.

The Merti Dusun celebration is held every year before the harvest season. The shadow puppet show was chosen because it is a flexible and powerful medium to convey moral messages to Asinan villagers. Wayang kulit is not just an entertaining spectacle, but a guide to life based on the positive storyline presented by the puppeteer.

Another cultural event, Sedekah Dusun, is held at the Asinan village square. When there is an event, the Asinan village square is packed with vendors selling a wide range of food, drinks, toys and clothing. Various series of entertaining events such as gamelan performances, sinden, drumblack, and finally puppet shows. In addition, there is a cultural event called Nyadran Tradition "Mikul Dhuwur Mendhem Jero. Residents of Krajan Hamlet carry out the Nyadran tradition. This event is a routine activity in the month of Rajab as a way to preserve local culture and ancestral traditions. The Nyadran tradition is believed to be a means of realizing gratitude to God Almighty, as well as to send prayers for ancestors who have passed away.

The term "Mikul Dhuwur Mendhem Jero" means filial piety to parents and ancestors, both when they are still alive in the world and when they have passed away. The activity is centered in the Cungkup and Sepete grave complexes. The ritual starts at around 06.00 WIB, beginning with a grave pilgrimage and tahlil to pray for the spirits of the ancestors. Almost all residents brought a basket of rice, complete with side dishes; both men and women seemed enthusiastic about coming to the tomb complex that had been prepared for the gathering place of all Krajan Hamlet residents. One resident, Suryadi, stated that he participates in this activity every year. Starting from the grave pilgrimage to eating together with savory rice with ingkung chicken distributed by the committee.



Source: Asinan Tourism Village Documentation, 2025

**Figure 2.** Cultural Tourism Attraction of Merti Dusun Tradition, Wayang Kulit performance, Nyadran and Environmentally Sound Regional Arts



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One of the important arts in Asinan Village is Kuda lumping or jaran kepang, which features a group of soldiers riding a horse. This dance uses a horse made of bamboo woven and cut to resemble the shape of a horse, which is then decorated with paint and given a multicolored cloth so that it attracts more attention. Lumping horse dances usually only feature scenes of soldiers riding horses. Kuda Lumping art is very attractive when performing in various events organized at the village level, up to the district level. To preserve regional arts, the government provides stimulant funds for facilities and motivation, as well as educating art activists and all citizens that cultural heritage needs to be preserved so that it is not lost to the times.

**Environmentally Sound Artificial Tourism Attractions.** Asinan tourism village has not developed many artificial tourism attractions. One of the prominent artificial attractions is the Blue Bridge in Sumurup hamlet, which can be used to enjoy the natural beauty of Rawa Pening and as a place to take selfies. The blue bridge is also used as a waiting place for tourists who will ride the boat tour of Rawa Pening.



Source: Asinan Village Documentation, 2025

**Figure 3.** Artificial Tourism Blue Bridge Rawa Pening

**Culinary Attractions and Environmentally Sensitive Tourist Activities.** Asinan Village is also a destination for culinary tourism. The natural conditions of the swamp lake, which is used for the cultivation of fish, shrimp, etc., have developed Warung Apung as the culinary center of the swamp area. The concept of a floating restaurant, which offers delicious food while watching the panorama, is also very beautiful. In addition to various fish and shrimp foods, chicken and vegetable preparations are also provided. In addition to culinary, Warung Apung provides activities for fishing in Rawa Pening Lake. Tourists can rent a boat if tourists want to go to the middle of the lake, or rent fishing gear and fish in the Warung Apung area.

Another culinary center in Asinan village is located at Pasar Sawahan, provided by Sawahan MSMEs near Joglo Sabdo Palon, which is open to the public. This Sawahan Market area offers the natural beauty of rice fields and mountains. Various traditional foods from Asinan village include: lepet jagung, jenang cikur, and coklat singkong. While the drinks; lampah or teleng tea and spices. Lampah tea is much loved, as it gives warmth to the body naturally. In addition to teleng flowers, it contains ginger, pandanus, and lime.

**Environmental Educational Tourism Attraction.** Asinan Village has developed several educational tours, namely traditional boatbuilding, the manufacture of humic acid planting media as organic fertilizer, the production of various cracker foods, the manufacture of sawdust briquettes, and so on. In the boat-making educational tour, tourists get information on the legend of Rawa Pening and the lives of swamp fishermen, types of wood for boat materials, the manufacturing process, selling prices, boat sales markets and types of boats. Boat making is done manually and



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traditionally, the tools used are unduk or peg, saw, pansy, and folding meter. Visitors can try out various tools and see the boat-making process.



**Figure 4.** Educational Tour of Making Various Crackers and Traditional Boats

Furthermore, sawdust from traditional boatbuilding is utilized by the local youth organization to make briquettes, and this manufacturing process is used as an educational tour. Another educational tour is the education on making various crackers, where one of the ingredients of the crackers is the genjer plant that grows in the rice fields of Asinan Village. A typical educational activity from Asinan village is the manufacture of humic acid planting media made from water hyacinth with materials obtained from the Pening swamp area. From this explanation, the development of educational tourism in Asinan village is very environmentally sound, where the daily economic activities of residents become educational materials, and the materials of the community's economic products are taken from locally available materials.

**Support for the Development of Tourist Attractions for Sustainable Tourism.** The institution that drives the Asinan tourism village is under the movement of Bumdes (Village-Owned Enterprises) called Bumdes Maju Mapan, and in the development of one of the business fields of the Asinan tourism village, which is then managed by Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Group), whose institutional name is Pokdarwis Svarghajagad Anugraha. Bumdes has a business engaged in tax payments, waste processing, and pawnshop services. Other institutions involved in the tourism village are all entrepreneurial actors under the tourism boat association, the association of UMKM sawahan stalls, the association of culinary stalls commonly known as stalls / floating houses and all of them are integrated in Pokdarwis.

Tourist attraction development activities in Asinan Tourism Village have provided support for the concept of sustainable tourism, namely creating a balance between nature conservation, culture, economy and community empowerment. Support for the development of tourist attractions for sustainable tourism in Asinan Village is as follows:

**Nature Conservation.** The management of nature-based tourist attractions in Asinan Village, which relies on the panoramic beauty of the swamp, mountains and rice fields, helps to preserve



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nature. Tourists are presented with a typical ecosystem of Rawa Pening with its rich ecosystem. This swamp-based natural tourism attraction has a problem with the rapid growth of water hyacinth plants on the surface of the swamp, causing siltation of the lake, and making it difficult for fishermen to find fish. Various efforts have been made, namely cleaning the swamp of water hyacinth plants and utilizing water hyacinth plants both for food and souvenirs. The development of natural tourist attractions has been carried out in order to sustain natural resources and reduce negative impacts on the environment.

**Cultural Preservation.** The development of tourist attractions in Asinan Village with cultural tourism potential in religious tourism, art tourism, tradition and cultural tourism, as well as religious and cultural events, supports the continuity of the community's cultural environment and preserves local traditions and the philosophies and values contained therein. Village government support is realized with stimulants to art groups and is consistent in carrying out traditional and religious events that involve the community and aim to increase the number of tourist visits.

**Economic Preservation.** The development of tourist attractions leads to economic preservation. Natural, cultural, artificial and culinary tourism activities provide opportunities for job creation, business opportunities and income in the provision of tourist attractions, amenities, and accessibility. Every cultural event organized by the village provides opportunities for economic activities and income for local MSMEs that meet the visitors' needs. The daily economic activities of the community are also an attraction for educational tourism activities for visitors.

**Community Empowerment.** The Asinan Village community is involved in tourism activities by providing all the needs of tourists. The community is involved in the provision of natural tourism, cultural tourism both religious tourism, traditions, arts and events, artificial tourism, culinary tourism and tourist activities. In addition to community involvement in tourist attractions, the community is also empowered to provide food and beverage amenities, lodging, souvenirs, tour guides, as well as transportation and tourist village institutions.

Tourist attraction support in sustainable tourism can be divided as shown in the chart in Figure 5.



**Figure 5.** Chart of Tourism Village Development Support for Sustainable Tourism in Asinan Tourism Village



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## CONCLUSION

The development of tourist attractions in Asinan Village relies on the richness of environmental resources, both the natural environment, socio-culture and the economy of the swamp fishing community. The tourist attractions offered include natural panoramic swamp tours, mountain views, rice fields and activities along the Rawa Pening lake. Cultural tourism has enormous potential in the types of religious tourism, arts tourism, traditional tourism and village events that have become factors that help preserve the culture and historical heritage of the local community. Asinan Village does not develop much artificial tourism, but the potential for culinary tourism with local raw materials is very interesting and diverse. One of the strengths of Asinan Village is its educational tourism in the fields of crafts, food and agriculture. A number of managed tourist attractions play a major role in preserving the natural environment, culture and historical heritage and have an impact on preserving the natural environment, cultural environment, economic environment and community empowerment.

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