

RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE THROUGH NATURE-BASED TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract

The development of nature-based tourism in the Kendeng Mountain rural area, Somagede District, Banyumas Regency, represents a strategic initiative to promote local economic development by utilising the area's natural and cultural assets. This study aims to analyse the initiatives, challenges, and opportunities associated with nature-based tourism development in three villages: Kemawi, Klinting, and Tanggeran. The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach. The research locations were selected purposively because the three villages had established an inter-village cooperation programme for tourism development. Data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and document analysis involving village governments, tourism awareness groups, village-owned enterprises, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders. The data were analysed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings show that nature-based tourism development has been initiated through inter-village cooperation, a Joint Village-Owned Enterprise, and Tourism Awareness Groups. However, its development is constrained by inconsistent stakeholder commitment, limited community skills, the absence of an integrated master plan, inadequate infrastructure, and weak telecommunications networks. Despite these challenges, the area's natural and cultural attractions offer opportunities to create jobs, develop local businesses, diversify rural livelihoods, and improve community welfare. Therefore, stronger collaboration, community capacity, infrastructure, planning, and digital promotion are required to support sustainable tourism development.

Key Words: Nature-based tourism, Rural area, economic development.

BACKGROUND.

Tourism development is currently receiving high attention from all walks of life (Novianti, et al., 2020), especially nature-based tourism (NBT), by taking advantage of the exotic scenery and natural atmosphere of certain areas, and combining various activities ranging from hard-to-drive specialist visitor activities, from scientific observations and recording of species or impacts to 'gentle ecotourism' activities such as whale watching and photography (Cater & Cater, 2007; Cousins, 2007). Compared to other tourism destinations, NBT is one of the

tourism destinations that has an added value experience for tourists, by exploring new things and learn something in the tourist location.

The proliferation of tourism objects in almost all areas will have a positive impact on the community, not only in the economy, but also for the development of the area where tourism will be developed. The study conducted by Handayani (2012) concluded that the number of tourist attractions in a particular area has a positive impact on the economic growth of a region. The increasing visit of tourist, it will simultaneously increase the contribution of revenue for the region, in the form of user tourism fees, increasing retail trade turnover around tourism objects. Bojanic and Lo (2016) also suggest that the tourism sector is very influential on economic growth in most countries, especially countries consisting of islands. Likewise, Jalil (2013) explains that the number of foreign tourists or international tourists has a positive effect on economic growth in Pakistan. It is possible to contribute to the income and local development of the indigenous people by developing nature-based tourism. Furthermore, the damage traditional tourism inflicts on the natural and cultural environment can be reduced through the sustainable use and preservation of natural and cultural assets

Several studies have also shown that reviving tourism, both by creating and developing tourism objects, will have a positive impact on economic growth. For areas located in rural areas, the presence of tourism objects in the area can be a blessing, which can be a trigger for the progress of the community and its territory. The development of rural areas has so far been relatively underdeveloped because the community or government in developing rural areas is not seen from the side of the existing potential strength (Budiharsono, 2018), but only looks at the shortcomings, such as the lack of regional facilities and infrastructure, or the low quality of human resources. owned in rural areas. Therefore, a new approach is needed in regional development that is not based on the above approach.

Rhodes and Dureau (2011) propose three new approaches, namely; Appreciative Inquiry Approach, Asset/Capital Based Approach, and Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. Appreciative Inquiry is an approach to help individuals, communities or regions based on their strengths or potential to achieve and realize their goals (David Cooper rider: 1996). This approach views a phenomenon more positively as a foothold to achieve a higher goal or vision. In overcoming the problem, the steps taken are; Appreciating "what is", imagining "what is possible", determining "what should be" and compiling "what can be" (Budiharsono, 2018).

The Asset-Based Approach looks at the strengths of individuals or communities in terms of assets or capital they have (Moser, 2006). In terms of developing rural areas, developing areas must look at the potential of the assets they have, not look at the shortcomings of the assets they have. Ford (2004), Morse, McNamara and Acholo (2009) and Moser (2006) in their theory of Pentagonal assets, state that village governments have five types of capital that can be used to develop their territory. The capital includes: (i). Human capital; (ii). Social capital; (iii) Natural Capital; (iv). Physical Capital; (iv). Financial Capital. However, according to Budiharsono (2015), these five assets are not enough to build competitive and resilient rural areas. To be competitive, it requires creativity and innovation from its human resources, for that it is necessary: (vi). Good Intellectual Capital, (vii). Strong Spiritual Capital, and (viii). Strategic Capital Location of the rural area. Thus, in total there are eight main capital/assets or called Octagonal Assets/Capital.

This paper focused on the strategy for developing NBT, especially those that will be developed in the Kendeng Mountains Area, Somagede District. The focus is based on the fact

that this area has good potential for natural tourism development, especially in Kemawi and Klinting villages, which have more exotic natural potential.

LITERATUR REVIEW

1. Nature-based Tourism Development

Nature-based tourism or "Natural Tourist Attraction" is a tourist location that displays and shows tourism objects with the diversity and uniqueness of the natural environment (Republic of Indonesia, 2011). "nature plays a key role in NBT". It can therefore be viewed as a specific form of service landscape where the physical environment plays a key role in visitor experience and consumer satisfaction. (Chui et al., 2010; Hultman & Andersson Cerderholm, 2006, Peter, Sandra & Grundén, 2012). It is an undeniable expression, because the reality shows that most of the tourist sites in the world are dominated by tourism which is triggered by natural attractions. There are two main dimensions in the NBT and human-nature nexus. The first dimension of naturalness encompasses claims of the natural environment in the naturalness-institutions continuum and relates to issues such as protected nature, recreational experiences, institutions, and wilderness (Denstadli, Lindberg, & Vistad, 2010; Haukeland, Grue, & Veisten, 2010; Raadik, Cottrell, Fredman, Ritter, & Newman, 2010; Sæþórsson, 2010; Uusitalo 2010; Wray, Espiner, & Perkins, 2010). In most NBT, nature is important in conveying a feeling of remoteness and wilderness, and recent research has shown that visitors to the natural environment are often looking for an escape. out of civilization by combining the need for facilities, infrastructure services, and general welfare. service quality (Haukeland et al., 2010; Wall-Reinius, 2012, Wall-Reinius. The natural environment can be described by the relative scales at which natural and cultural elements interact, ranging from nature without artifacts or traces of human activity to areas that are more or less artificial (Wall-Reinius, 2009). Hall and Boyd (2005) illustrate how land use can be described as a continuum based on relative levels of nature and distance from human settlements. The degree of nature increases with distance from human settlements and access, and the landscape of natural services includes both more remote areas and areas closer to urban

The second aspect of access encompasses access to the natural environment on the continuum of open access and exclusive rights and relates to issues such as harvest rights, public access, and service provision. (Heldt, 2010; Sandell & Fredman, 2010; Stensland, 2010). Access to nature areas is very important for both outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism and this access can in principle be provided in three ways, or a combination of these (Sandell & Fredman, 2010, Peter, Sandra & Grundé, 2012): (i) Access to private property areas may be used exclusively. (ii) Access to public areas, and (iii) Access to private and/or public areas that may be used by individuals for their own activities - even if not specified primarily for this purpose - if the economic interests associated with land ownership and traditions of appropriate conduct are maintained.

In most countries, landowners have monopolies, and access to outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism is usually not allowed without permits. Although there are clear commercial benefits to privatizing nature-based service landscapes, there are also problems due to the public character of landscapes (Peter, Sandra & Grundén, 2012). Thus, whatever the conditions, if nature base tourism is to be more developed, then accessibility to the location becomes the main priority. Without adequate access, it is difficult for tourist attractions to be crowded with visitors and progress. Valentine (1992) classified the dimension and variation of nature-based tourism presented in table 1.

Table 1. Dimensions of nature-based tourism dimension and variation

Dimension	Variation
Experience	Nature-dependency (dependent, enhanced) Intensity of interaction (dedicated, casual) Social sensitivity (intra-group dynamics) Duration
Style	Level of infrastructure support (field, base) Group size and type Cultural interaction factor Willingness to pay
Location	Accessibility (remoteness) Development contribution (city, <i>village</i>) Ownership (private, <i>government</i>) Fragility (sustainable, capacity)

Source: Valentine (1992)

Inskeep (1991), suggests that a tourism area is good and successful if optimally based on several aspects, namely: 1) Preserving the environment; 2) Improving the welfare of the people in the area; 3) Ensure visitor satisfaction; 4) Increasing the integration and community development units around the area and its development zone.

2. Nature-Based Tourism Development Strategy

Ecotourism development can be carried out through several strategies, one of which is based on the stages approach as proposed by Butler in the Tourism Area Life Cycle of Evolution (TALC)", Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) is a widely used model to study the evolution of a particular tourism destination. The model suggests that a tourism area evolves through six predictable different stages, namely, exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and decline or rejuvenation. (Sahli, 2020). Furthermore, Karsudi, Rineko Sukmadi and Hariadi Kartodiharjo, (2010) suggest that there are several key factors that influence the development of ecotourism including: (1) the potential of tourist attraction objects, (2) local government policies, (3) ecotourism demand, (4) community participation, (5) facilities and infrastructure, (6) security, (7) tourism spatial planning, (8) promotion and marketing, (9) institutional capacity, (10) attraction management, (11) inter-regional cooperation, (12) economic contribution, (13) community education.

RESEARCH METHOD.

The study was conducted through qualitative research methods, to explore the strategy for Nature-Based Tourism Development developed in Kendeng Area covered three villages, i.e: Klinting, Tanggeran, Kemawi. The selection of the location was done purposively, because the three villages were developing an inter-village cooperation program for the development of natural-base tourism in their area. The potential possessed by the three

villages is very possible for the development of tourism in the region. This approach emphasizes the context, research setting and subjective references (Marshall, Catherine & Gretchen B. Rosman, 1989). This approach requires a researcher to have skills, adequate theoretical and social sensitivity, and the ability to carefully observe and interact (Strauss and Juliet. Corbin. 1990). The analysis design uses a descriptive-qualitative which is intended to understand the symptoms that do not require quantification (Bungin, Burhan, 2013:146). The data then is constructed from the results of interviews and focus group discussions on other document resources.

The assigned of focus group discussions (FGD) in this study was to justify, that the approach enabled the researcher to consider the investigation from the perspective of the interviewees (King, N, 2004). This approach enabled the participant to involve more deeply in the discussion of initiative process of tourism destination development. They could also express their experiences as members of their respective as informen. Bryan and Bell (2011) affirm that most qualitative researchers express their commitment to viewing events and the social world through the eyes of the subjects they are studying. The social world, to the qualitative researchers, should be interpreted from the perspective of the people being studied, rather than as though those subjects were incapable of reflecting on their social world (Bryan, A. and Bell, E., 2011). The Analysis data used flow model which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles, Matthew B. & A Michael Huberman. & Johnny Saldana, 2014).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Initiative for Developing Nature-Based Tourism in the Kendeng Mountain Area

The development of nature-based tourism (NBT) in the Kendeng Mountain area was initiated through the Rural Area Development Program introduced in 2017 by the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration. The program was intended to stimulate economic development in relatively underdeveloped rural areas by utilising their local resources and development potential. In Somagede District, the program covers three neighbouring villages, namely Kemawi, Klinting, and Tanggeran.

These villages were selected because they possess considerable natural and cultural tourism potential. The area offers waterfalls, scenic mountain landscapes, camping areas, reservoirs that can be developed for water-based recreation, religious sites, and cultural attractions, some of which are still actively used by local communities. These characteristics are consistent with the concept of rural tourism, which is based on rurality, sustainability, and the development of small-scale enterprises in rural areas (Reichel et al., 2000). The tourism potential of the three villages is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Nature-Based Tourism Destinations in Tanggeran, Klinting, and Kemawi Villages

Village	Featured Tourism Potential	Supporting Tourism Potential
Tanggeran	Watu Kelir	Padepokan Eyang Nalabrata, Sendang Tirto Wiguna, Curug Silamin, and Pasar Wisata
Klinting	Pura Pedaleman Giri Kendeng	Watu Lintang, Watu Bangkong, Gardu Pandang Lemah Abang, Pertabatan Gunung Gujil, Curug Gong, Curug

		Gadung, Pertambatan Kiai Talabranta, Pertabatan Jenggot Mresi, and Curug Beluk
Kemawi	Gemawang Waterfall	Embung Tapak Bima, Pringombo Nature Tourism, Curug Cileret, and religious tourism sites

Source: Primary data, 2025.

The implementation of the Rural Area Development Program has received institutional support from the Banyumas Regency Government through the establishment of a legal basis for program implementation. The local government is expected to provide policy direction, technical assistance, infrastructure support, promotion, and coordination among relevant sectors. Its involvement is particularly important in addressing development needs that exceed the capacity of individual villages, such as improving access roads, telecommunications networks, tourism facilities, and the integration of the Kendeng Mountain area into regional tourism planning.

At the village level, the program is implemented through cooperation among the governments of Kemawi, Klinting, and Tanggeran. The three village governments are responsible for mobilising local resources, allocating village funds, facilitating community participation, and maintaining inter-village cooperation. The financing of tourism development activities is jointly shared by the three villages. Since the tourism area crosses village administrative boundaries, the development process requires a shared vision, consistent leadership commitment, and agreement on development priorities.

The management of the program was entrusted to a Joint Village-Owned Enterprise, namely BUNDEMSA Agro Tri Rahayu, established through cooperation among the three villages. The enterprise functions as a joint business and coordinating institution for tourism development. Its expected responsibilities include managing shared tourism assets, preparing business plans, developing integrated tourism packages, establishing partnerships, conducting promotion, and facilitating the distribution of economic benefits among the participating villages. To perform these functions effectively, BUNDEMSA Agro Tri Rahayu requires professional management, transparent financial arrangements, and a clear division of responsibilities.

At the operational level, tourist destinations are managed by community groups organised through Tourism Awareness Groups, or Pokdarwis, in each village under the coordination of the Joint Village-Owned Enterprise. Pokdarwis members are responsible for managing tourist sites, maintaining cleanliness and environmental sustainability, providing visitor services, organising local events, guiding tourists, and promoting tourism attractions. Since Pokdarwis interacts directly with tourists and understands the practical conditions of each destination, its experience should be incorporated into the planning and evaluation of tourism development.

Local communities also play an important role and should not be regarded merely as beneficiaries of tourism development. They possess local knowledge concerning natural attractions, cultural traditions, religious sites, local history, culinary products, and community practices. Their participation can be developed through food stalls, homestays, handicrafts, local transportation services, tour guiding, cultural performances, and other tourism-related businesses. Community and traditional leaders also contribute by building public trust, facilitating community agreements, preserving local values, preventing conflict, and protecting sacred or culturally significant sites.

Tourism experts and academic institutions can support these stakeholders by providing research-based recommendations, training, destination mapping, tourism product development, environmental assessment, and program evaluation. Their involvement is particularly important in preparing an integrated tourism development plan that considers economic, environmental, social, and cultural sustainability. The respective roles of the stakeholders are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3. Roles of Stakeholders in Nature-Based Tourism Development in the Kendeng Mountain Area

Stakeholder	Main Roles	Expected Contributions	Required Coordination
Local Government	Provides policy direction, technical assistance, infrastructure support, and intersectoral coordination.	Improvement of roads, communication networks, tourism facilities, and integration into regional development plans.	Coordinates village governments, relevant agencies, BUNDEMSA, and external institutions.
Village Governments	Formulate village policies, allocate resources, and facilitate community participation.	Development of a shared vision, budget allocation, provision of basic facilities, and program continuity.	Strengthen cooperation among Kemawi, Klinting, and Tanggeran and maintain leadership commitment.
BUNDEMSA Agro Tri Rahayu	Serves as the joint business and coordinating institution.	Manages tourism assets, prepares business plans, develops tourism packages, establishes partnerships, conducts marketing, and distributes benefits.	Coordinates village governments, Pokdarwis, local businesses, communities, and external partners.
Pokdarwis	Directly manages tourism activities at destination sites.	Provides visitor services, maintains destinations, protects the environment, guides tourists, organises events, and conducts promotion.	Communicates operational needs to village governments and BUNDEMSA and involves local communities.
Local Communities	Participate in planning, tourism services, cultural preservation, and local businesses.	Develop food stalls, homestays, handicrafts, transportation services, cultural attractions, and other supporting activities.	Participate in community forums, tourism management, and program evaluation.
Community and Traditional Leaders	Build trust, preserve local values, and strengthen program legitimacy.	Facilitate agreements, prevent conflict, protect cultural and sacred sites, and encourage participation.	Bridge communication among communities, village governments, Pokdarwis, and tourism managers.
Tourism Experts and	Provide technical and research-based support.	Prepare master plans, conduct destination mapping, provide training,	Work collaboratively with governments,

Academic
Institutions

assess environmental
impacts, and evaluate
programs.

BUNDEMSA, Pokdarwis,
and communities.

Source: Primary data, 2025.

The stakeholder arrangement shows that tourism development in the Kendeng Mountain area cannot be managed by a single institution. Each stakeholder has a different but complementary role. The local government provides the policy and infrastructure framework, while the village governments mobilise local resources and maintain inter-village commitment. BUNDEMSA Agro Tri Rahayu coordinates business management, whereas Pokdarwis manages daily tourism activities. Local communities and traditional leaders contribute local knowledge, cultural legitimacy, and economic initiatives, while tourism experts and academic institutions provide technical assistance and research-based recommendations.

This management arrangement reflects a bottom-up development model. In this model, the government primarily acts as a facilitator and encourages village communities to participate actively in the development process (Alisyahbana, 2003, p. 98). Bottom-up program means relying on managing its resources independently and integrating the program with other areas that allow the local area to develop itself. The bottom-up development model means exploring the real potential of the desires or needs of the village community, by giving the opportunity and scope for the village community to participate in preparing development plans based on what they need. (Alisyahbana, 2003, p. 98). It can be realized if the community and the government below are able to civilize the villagers to think about and develop their village. Thus, the community is encouraged and given the opportunity to formulate the problems they face, and to be actively involved in the village development planning process (Suryono, 2001, p. 32). By empowering local actors and taking direct responsibility for shaping their own collective responses to emerging challenges, bottom-up model is often seen as an effective alternative to traditional development approaches (Crescenzi and Pose, 2011) and have a high potential for success, and be in accordance with the needs of the community because it is seen as more based on the real needs of the community. With a bottom-up process that starts with recognizing needs at the community level, the impact of development activities will be more felt by the community (Kaiser, 2020). However, what has been done by the community must still get full support from the government above it.

The full involvement of the community in its management is intended so that both directly and indirectly can have an impact on the economic growth of the community (Risawati, et.al, 2022; Abigail, 2019). other benefits obtained are lessening of migration of local population from villages into urban areas, betterment of local infrastructure making it sustainable and rural economy diversification (Shukhla, 2020, Gabor, 2015). The presence of tourism in the Kendeng mountain region has also had an impact on the emergence of new economic businesses in the form of culinary stalls and other stalls. It can be an "alternative" solution for peripheral development because it contributes to the decrease of sub employment in the rural sector, the increase of the family income and consequently to the socio-economic support and reformation of the local rural communities (Kastenholz, E. et al., 2013, Rozemeijer, 2001; Pimbert & Pretty, 1995), conservation and preservation of natural resources, and infrastructure development (Sing, et. All. 2022.), the culture,

cohesiveness, and identity of communities that serve as gateways to tourist areas (Bennett et al., 2012)

The results of the study were also illustrated that the NBT destinations in the Kendeng Banyumas mountains just only some of the destinations that that visitor can already enjoy, although they still need further development, those are Curug Gemawang, Embung Tapak Bima and Pring Ombo (still in the process of development) in Kemawi village; Watu Lintang Tourism in Klinting village, which is still in the process of being developed. While other tourist destinations are still in the development program.

Challenge of NBT Development initiative

The process of developing a tourist village in the Kendeng Mountains region based on NBT has started, but there is still a lot of work to be done towards the development of a more attractive and sustainable tourist village. Based on the results of the Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with stakeholders and by looking at the potential conditions of the location and the local community, there are several challenges that must be faced in efforts to develop tourist destinations.

First, tourism activists still feel a lack of commitment from the three village heads who are collaborating in tourism development in this region. The commitment of all stakeholders is the main capital in development and management. It is therefore very important to create a movement that encourages participation at all levels in tourism growth (Choi & Turk, 2011; Halder, 2007), as it has been considered a potential indicator of tourism dependency (Beckley, 1998). Rural tourism products must also be supported by input from the government (Verma and Jain, 2018) especially by appropriate policies and governance (Abigail, 2019; Choi & Turk, 2011; Halder, 2007;)

Second, there is still a lack of skilled personnel to manage tourism. Community's skills and knowledge are important sources for both tourism development and community development (Aref et al., 2009; Robinson & Picard, 2006). To manage tourism, it is necessary to have resources who have skills in the field of tourism, especially communication and understand the history of the tourist sites. The current conditions illustrate that the people in the three villages still do not have sufficient experience to manage these tours. This condition also occurs in several countries where managing tourism, namely lack of trained manpower or professionally trained local guides, provided they receive enough incentives for their work in tourism is one of the problems (Halder, 2021; Salazar, 2012). Therefore, Capacity building should be considered. Increase in abilities and skills of the community facilitate the development (Verma and Jain, 2018) by concentrating on job training, and the type and training given to tourism employees (Choi & Turk, 2011).

Third, the development of Mount Kendeng tourism has not been based on a tourism development design that outlines the direction of developing NBT-based tourist destinations. So that the development of tourist areas has not used mature planning. This design is needed so that landscape and infrastructure improvements can be more organized and contribute to improving the quality of life of village communities by fostering a healthy environment (Halder, 2007).

Fourth, based on observations, accessibility to tourist sites is still limited. Road conditions are still narrow and of low quality. Therefore, sufficient support is still needed, especially from village and regional governments to improve the quality of roads so that tourists can pass through them comfortably (Halder, 2007). In addition, limited access to communication due to limited signal range from telecommunication at tourist sites is still an

obstacle. In the current era, technology is a vital tool for tourism development and can even be used as an indicator of tourism sustainability in a community (Choi & Turk, 2011). Likewise, the availability of information technology is very effective for marketing. This strategy should be implemented to attract tourists to cultural places and simultaneously endorse the rural region (Verma and Jain, 2018)

Finally, the biggest challenge in rural areas is that most of the population still prefers agriculture, thus requiring an intensive internationalization process to introduce the community as a new alternative to developing business opportunities in the economic sector. This is indeed not an easy job, because this could be a new thing for them (Singh, et.al,2022)

All the challenges above are not easy to overcome, however, if all stakeholders in the Kendeng Mountains area collaborate in developing their territory, this is not impossible to achieve common vision, commitment and hard work of all stakeholders is the key to success.

Opportunities of NBT development initiative

With the development of tourism in the Kendeng mountain area, it will help the community to have more realistic expectations about tourism development. The hope to participate in improving the economic life of the community by presenting alternative new business opportunities is another side of the advantages of a successful tourist destination. Likewise, the availability of new jobs for the local community is also highly expected, which will have an impact on improving the quality of life of the village community. With new opportunities it can also suppress migration of rural communities to cities. Another opportunity is that people can become smarter if they are given the opportunity to participate in tourism management in the village.

Finally, A successful strategy to have a beneficial impact on rural areas is to use a business unit structure in rural tourism. The current policy is that it is mandatory to include VOE in every business activity in the village, providing great opportunities for community economic development. in the village too. moreover, if local residents have an equal voice in administration and development, they can monitor and mitigate the adverse impacts of tourism on their own communities. (HALDAR, 2007). Community control is the collaborative participation of residents, whether long-term or transient, in the development of tourism through participation in tourism-related decision-making processes in the community and employment in local businesses intended to boost the local economy (Rasoolimanesh & Jaafar, 2016)

CONCLUSION

The development of nature-based tourism in the Kendeng Mountain rural area is still at an early stage and requires stronger institutional, human, financial, and infrastructural support. From the institutional aspect, cooperation among the governments of Kemawi, Klinting, and Tanggeran villages has been initiated through the establishment of the Joint Village-Owned Enterprise, BUNDEMSA Agro Tri Rahayu, and Tourism Awareness Groups in each village. However, stakeholder commitment, coordination, and the division of responsibilities among village governments, BUNDEMSA, Pokdarwis, and local communities still need to be strengthened.

From the human-resource aspect, local tourism managers require further capacity building in destination management, visitor services, promotion, communication, and environmental conservation. From the planning aspect, tourism development has not yet been fully guided by an integrated master plan. Infrastructure also remains limited,

particularly access roads, parking areas, tourism facilities, and telecommunications networks. Several destinations, including Gemawang Waterfall, Embung Tapak Bima, and Pringombo in Kemawi Village, as well as Watu Lintang in Klinting Village, are already accessible but still require further improvement.

Nevertheless, the area has considerable potential to create employment, support local businesses, diversify rural livelihoods, and improve community welfare. Therefore, the development strategy should prioritise the preparation of an integrated master plan, improvement of basic infrastructure, professional management of BUNDEMSA and Pokdarwis, community capacity building, digital promotion, environmental protection, and regular stakeholder coordination. Strengthening collaborative governance and ensuring meaningful community participation are essential to transforming the Kendeng Mountain area into a sustainable and competitive rural tourism destination.

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