

## The Suitability Level of Ecotourism Characteristics in the Sipin Lake Tourist Destination in Jambi City

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### Abstract

The activity of tourism has more potential to be a new income source in an area with tourism destination. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) released the number of world tourism activities in 2018, which reached 1.4 billion. Global development, including tourism development, is guided by the SDGs. The form of increasingly dynamic tourism activities cannot be separated from the existence of attractions, amenities, accessibility, and institutional services. Jambi City has the tourism object of Sipin Lake as a potential tourism destination that has yet to be developed maximally to have high competitiveness. The research aims to assess the suitability level of ecotourism aspects at the Sipin Lake tourist destination. The analysis method used is a quantitative method using the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) method. The average result of the level of suitability of all variables of the characteristics of ecotourism is 60%, where attractions (61%), accessibility (101%), amenities (61%), institutional services (42%), and environmental conservation (34%).

**Keywords:** ecotourism; IPA; Jambi City; level of suitability; Sipin Lake.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background

The surge in international tourist arrivals continues to increase every year. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimated the number of international tourist arrivals in 2018 at 1.4 billion arrivals. (UNWTO, 2020) the book titled "International Tourism Highlights 2019 Edition" described that strong economic growth has a vital role in tourism activity, which can be seen from the world GDP in 2018, which grew 3.6%. The development of the tourism sector on a global

scale has grown very rapidly and is promising. Tourism activities automatically contribute positively to various industries, especially economic activities in various lines (Nguyen, 2021). In its development, tourism has become a promising industry with many parties involved (Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2020). Today, tourism activity is developing widely in various parts of countries, including Indonesia. The distribution of tourism activities is increasingly diverse at the scale of urban, rural, mountainous, coastal, beach, forest, and others (Arismayanti et al., 2019). In addition, the growth of the tourism industry is

interesting as the sector is highly susceptible to changes that affect the number of visits and interest of tourists (OECD, 2020).

Jambi City, which is a city in Indonesia with fast development, has challenges in maximizing the potential of tourism. This research topic is relevant to the global sustainable action plan (SDGs) point 8. One of the targets from SDGs point 8 is that by 2030 can develop and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. Jambi City is translating the targets of the SDGs through the arrangement of the Sipin Lake tourist area as a leading tourist destination. Jambi City is an area that relies on the main economic activities of trade in goods and services. As an area that focuses on the tertiary sector, Jambi City has various regional potentials that can be developed, including tourist attractions on a city scale. Jambi City scale tourism activities can be one of the leading aspects of the region if development is more conceptualized, adapting to trends and times.

The Sipin Lake tourist attraction area in terms of tourist attractions is still very weak because the conditions in the field only show a natural landscape with several water rides, and there are still limited choices of tourist attraction activities. Hence, tourists feel monotonous (Dahmiri & Khalik, 2022). Sipin Lake tourist destination in Jambi City is a natural destination resulting from the natural formation. The destination has the potential to be developed into environmental conservation tourism. Ecotourism is a form of tourism that focuses on environmental conservation (Boley & Green, 2016).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Ecotourism is a sustainable tourism development that sees market interest in nature conservation-based tourist destinations (Schreurs, 2012). The term ecotourism was first suggested by the organization <http://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/eot>

of "The Ecotourism Society" in 1990; where ecotourism is a form of tourism activity that has the aim of preserving the environment through conservation and also has a welfare impact on local communities (Surya, 2016). In addition, ecotourism is defined as a tourism activity that is influenced by local cultural wisdom (Utami et al., 2016). Ecotourism also has an economic impact on the surrounding environment and is responsible for maintaining environmental quality with various activities in it (Butar-but et al., 2013). Ecotourism consists of six main aspects: natural resources, conservation, community, culture, education, and economy (Wallace & Pierce, 1996). Indonesia's SDGs roadmap to 2030 outlines targets from missions that support the national vision, which is predicted to increase to 53.19% by 2024 (Arismayanti et al., 2019).

The use of research variables in measuring the level of suitability of ecotourism characteristics that exist in the Sipin Lake tourist destination is seen from the activities of destinations that are still embryonic. A tourist destination needs new attractions or rides to offer to the market to increase visits by paying attention to attraction, accessibility, amenity, and institutional services (Copper et al., 1995; Scott et al., 2008; Andrianto & Sugiyama, 2016). The quality of attraction affects the interest of tourist visitors (Nunes et al., 2020). The availability of facilities in tourist destinations indirectly provides selling value and the development of tourism activities (Mandic, 2018). Organizers of tourism activities need to pay attention to security and safety aspects to create a sense of security and comfort for tourists (Zou & Yu, 2022). Road infrastructure development has a positive effect on reducing the duration of travel to tourist destinations (Mazrekaj. R., 2020). Tourism destination management is needed to implement, manage and control activities to achieve visitor satisfaction (Varghese & Paul, 2014). Then there are environmental conservation efforts which are defined as steps to manage natural

resources while maintaining and improving environmental quality to ensure sustainable tourist destinations. Community participation is a tool to encourage more developed and sustainable tourism (Wondirad & Ewnetu, 2019). Conservation and empowerment are a form of environmentally friendly tourism that is part of ecotourism (Mishra. K. Prabuddh, 2021). Conservation and love of the environment in ecotourism connect nature tourism trips that have a vision and mission (Siti et al., 2013).

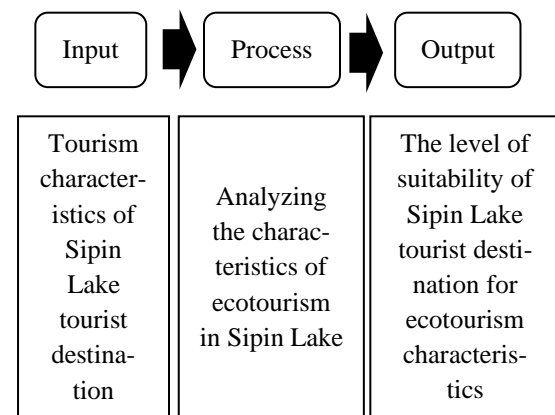
This research measures the level of suitability between the level of performance and the level of importance based on tourist preferences for ecotourism characteristics at the Sipin Lake tourist destination. The aim of the research is to assess the level of suitability of existing ecotourism aspects at the Sipin Lake tourist destination. The level of suitability is measured using importance-performance analysis (IPA).

**METHODS**

This research is deductive that it starts from global problems, which are then narrowed down to challenges and justifications for the region in developing the tourism sector. The data collection stage is carried out through field observations by distributing questionnaires to visitors to determine tourist destination preferences. The data collected is primary, where data is taken from tourist preferences through distributing questionnaires. Data collection is carried out by field observation, where at that stage, the techniques and processes of field monitoring are very complex, and these activities are summarized in biological and psychological processes because they involve memory and observation (Arismayanti et al., 2019).

The distribution of questionnaires with tourist respondents of Sipin Lake tourist destination contains questions related to the suitability of ecotourism indicators in tourist destinations by looking at

the level of performance and importance of the research indicators. The research was conducted using the simple random sampling method, considering that the sample of visitors to the Sipin Lake tourist destination was taken randomly from 100 respondents. Simple random sampling places each member of the population has the same opportunity to be selected. Furthermore, respondents' answers were measured using the weighted score of the assessment of the level of importance and performance. The response to each instrument item has a very positive to negative gradation weight. The analysis technique uses the research framework shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The Framework of Research Analysis

The data presentation process is carried out by measuring the level of suitability of the Sipin Lake tourist destination for ecotourism characteristics through importance-performance analysis (IPA). The level of suitability is a comparison of the achievement of the performance level that describes the existing conditions and the level of importance, which is the expectation of tourists to tourist destinations. Furthermore, a continuum line is used to determine the achievement of the level of suitability of all research variables for ecotourism aspects.

The Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) method focuses on how the respondents assess the level of performance

of reality in the field to determine what has become the respondent' expectations (Boley et al., 2017). The IPA method was suggested by Martilla and James in 1977. The assessment was conducted through the preference of performance level in the field condition and importance level on the expectations desired by the respondents (Martilla & James, 1977). This method aims to identify the most necessities of a tourist destination based on its concept, which must be met by the organizer for visitor satisfaction. The standard formula for measuring the level of suitability is as follows:

$$TK_{i=\frac{X_i}{Y_i} \times 100\%}$$

$Tk_i$  : Suitability Level

$X_i$  : Performance Level Assessment Score

$Y_i$  : Importance Level Assessment Score

The result of the calculation of the level of suitability based on IPA analysis is that if  $Tk_i$  exceeds 100%, then the quality of performance has exceeded what is considered important. If  $Tk_i$  is equal to 100%, then the performance provided is in accordance with what visitors consider important. Then if  $Tk_i$  is less than 100%, the performance provided has not met the level of importance (Supranto, 2006). In calculating the average value for each indicator using the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X_i}{n} \quad \text{and} \quad \bar{Y} = \frac{\sum Y_i}{n}$$

Note:

$\bar{X}$  : Performance level average score

$\bar{Y}$  : Importance level average score

n : Total respondents

**Table 1.** The Scores of Constant Ratio for Various Couple Combination

No.	Variable	Research Data
1.	Attraction	The beauty of Sipin Lake
		The convenience of Sipin Lake
		The safety of Sipin Lake destination
		Year-round water stability
		Water and environmental hygiene
		Various activities in the lake
		Various activities in the lake environment
2.	Accessibility	The signature of the environment
		Interesting local culture
		Road network condition
		Length of path to tourist destinations
		Road type and accessibility by road class
3.	Amenity	Accessibility by travel time from city center
		Availability of hotels around tourist destination
		Availability of facilities in the tourist destination
4.	Institutional Services	Availability of tourist destination infrastructure
		Tourist destination management services
		Safety assurance of tourist destinations
5.	Environmental Conservation	Tourism destination services to visitors
		Participation of local community in supporting environmental

No.	Variable	Research Data
		conservation
		Tourism activities in tourist areas that do not damage the environment
		Local community activities that do not pollute the environment

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After knowing the average value of each indicator and the average of all research indicators, a continuum line is used to determine the overall achievement of the suitability level of the indicators used. The line contains information on the range of achievements from the analysis results (Sugiono, 2018). The calculation steps to find the continuum line are:

1. The cumulative value is the sum of each statement that respondents answer.
2. The percentage is the cumulative value of the item divided by the frequency value multiplied by 100%
3. The number of respondents is 100 people, with the largest measurement scale starting at five and the smallest measurement scale being 1, so that a cumulative number of  $100 \times 5 = 500$  and a cumulative number of  $100 \times 1 = 100$  is obtained. For the percentage value obtained by  $(100: 500) \times 100\% = 20\%$ . The range value is  $100\% - 20\% = 80\%$ . And then, the results of the range value are divided into a scale of 5 measurements, then a percentage interval of 16% is obtained. Based on the calculation steps in finding the continuum line, score interpretation criteria values can be obtained which are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Level of Suitability of Ecotourism Features in Sipin Lake

No	Indicator	Score		TKi
		Performance Level	Importance Level	
<b>Attraction</b>				
1	The beauty of Sipin Lake	402	445	90%
2	The convenience of Sipin Lake	310	424	73%
3	The safety of Sipin Lake destination	288	421	68%
4	Year-round water stability	283	452	64%
5	Water and environmental hygiene	151	451	33%
6	Various activities in the lake	244	446	53%
7	Various activities in the lake environment	175	419	42%
8	The signature of the lake environment	324	439	74%
9	Interesting local culture	229	456	50%
	Attraction Average	267	440	61%
<b>Accessibility</b>				
10	Road network condition	440	451	97%
11	Length of path to tourist destinations	475	415	114%

No	Indicator	Score		TKi
		Performance Level	Importance Level	
12	Road type and accessibility by road class	390	465	88%
13	Accessibility by travel time from city center	454	410	110%
Accessibility Average		440	435	101%
<b>Amenity</b>				
14	Availability of hotels around tourist destination	234	392	66%
15	Availability of facilities in the tourist destination	283	446	78%
16	Availability of tourist destination infrastructure	271	444	56%
Amenity Average		263	427	61%
<b>Institutional Services</b>				
17	Tourist destination management services	204	463	44%
18	Safety assurance of tourist destinations	194	447	43%
19	Tourism destination services to visitors	177	458	39%
Institutional Services		192	456	42%
<b>Environmental Conservation</b>				
20	Local community activities that do not pollute the environment	155	464	33%
21	Tourism activities in tourist areas that do not damage the environment	162	443	36%
22	Participation of local community in supporting environmental conservation	150	460	32%
Environmental Conservation Average		<b>156</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Variables Average</b>		<b>263</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>60%</b>

The suitability level result shows that the average value of all variables is 60%. Based on the range of continuum lines, it shows that the characteristics of ecotourism in the Sipin Lake tourist destination are in the category of quite suitable. Attraction variables obtained an average suitability level of 61%, accessibility variables 101%, amenity 61%, institutional services 42%, and environmental conservation 34%. From these results, institutional services and environmental

conservation variables are the variables that get the lowest score of all research variables. The following is a description of the level of performance and level of importance of each variable.

#### **Attraction**

The variable attraction gained a suitability level score of 61%. This result is an accumulation of aspects in the research indicators related to tourist attractions. The indicator of the beauty of Sipin Lake

received the highest score of 90%. The assessment is based on tourists' impressions of the beautiful view of the lake and the lake environment by looking at the harmony of the buildings and the atmosphere of the attractions visited. In addition, the convenience of Sipin Lake gained a suitability percentage of 73%. The assessment of tourists is based on the smell of lake water which feels a bit smelly, the absence of sloping lake banks, and the not maximum greening, especially along the jogging track. Furthermore, the impression of the safety of tourist destinations has a suitability level of 68%. Although Sipin Lake does not have dangerous water currents, the destination's safety is also doubted by visitors since there have been landslides and flooded lake water in the jogging track rest area of the Putri River.

The indicator of lake water stability throughout the year has a total score of 64%. The assessment seen by the tourists is based on the water surface of Sipin Lake, which often changes according to the weather conditions and runoff from the Batanghari River that connects to Sipin Lake. Water and environmental hygiene have a total suitability level of 33%; the low score is due to the large amount of garbage on the lake water surface and around the tourist area. The residential settlements and the Jambi City watershed, which empties into Sipin Lake, indirectly contribute to household waste connected to the Sipin Lake sluice gate access. The variety of activities in the lake has a suitability level of 53%. The Sipin Lake tourist area already has activities such as boating, fishing, and enjoying the beauty and sports, but it is still not satisfactory for tourists. The level of suitability for the variety of activities around the lake environment is 42%. The level of significance of the lake environment has a total of 74%. This number is due to the lack of understanding of the majority of respondents on the concept of tourism that looks at the historical value and cultural distinctiveness of the Sipin Lake tourist destination. The impression of interesting

local culture has a level of suitability of 50%. The assessment seen from the lack of maximum opportunities for tourists and the surrounding community to share experiences and cultural exchanges through interactions in the tourist destination environment, rental activities on water bike rides, and tourist boats and culinary businesses in the tourist area has not really built intense communication and interaction with tourists.

### **Accessibility**

The accessibility variable is the highest total suitability score of all research variables used. The accessibility variable has a total score of 101%. However, there are still several indicators with achievements below 100%. The condition of the road network that supports the accessibility of the tourism area has a suitability level of 97%. According to tourists, the condition of the road network to the Sipin Lake tourist attraction is already good. But there are weaknesses in the markers and directions to the tourist area that the markers are not yet available, so it is quite difficult for tourists who first visit the Sipin Lake tourist destination. The next visible weakness is that public transportation services, especially city transportation, do not directly cross the Sipin Lake tourist area. Tourists see that the current road capacity is able to accommodate the enthusiastic flow of tourists who will visit with the daily volume of vehicles, but if there are activities or events held in the Sipin Lake tourist area, the road conditions become congested, and traffic will be diverted to other roads so that it can discourage tourists from coming.

The indicator of the length of the track to the tourist destination is the only one that has a performance level higher than the level of importance, with a suitability level of 114%. It is because the location of the Sipin Lake tourist destination is very easy to reach from various parts of Jambi City and is in the strategic area of the Jambi Provincial Government office area. The type of road and road class in the

tourist destination has a suitability level of 88%. Furthermore, accessibility according to travel time from the city center has a suitability level of 110%. The duration of travel for tourists from the location of residence to the point of tourist attraction in a span of less than 1 hour is also influenced by the administrative area of Jambi City, with a buffer radius of about 10 km from the city center.

### **Amenity**

The score on the amenity variable has a total score of 61%. This score shows that the indicators in the variable are still not satisfactory for tourists. In the accessibility variable, there are three sub-variables with three indicators. The statement of the availability of hotel and lodging services around the location of tourist destinations seen by tourists still has a level of suitability of 66% between existing conditions and expectations; the availability of hotels and lodging closest to the tourist area is very limited where there is only one hotel, namely Hotel Ratu. The impression of the availability of tourist destination facilities has a suitability level value of 78%. Perfect amenity services are available outside the Sipin Lake tourist area. Tourists add that the limitations of existing services have an influence on the duration of visits and the form of tourist activities while doing activities at the Sipin Lake tourist attraction. In terms of lodging, tourists from outside the city responded that if there is hotel support that is easily accessible from tourist sites that carry the concept of lake views, it can increase the chances of visiting settled tourists from outside Jambi City. The statement on the impression of the availability of tourist destination infrastructure has a suitability level score of 56%.

The focus of tourists immediately leads to poor waste services. This can be seen by a large amount of garbage, especially along the jogging track that connects the Telanaipura rest area and Sungai Putri. This is due to the difficulty in finding trash cans. Tourists who have visited the Sipin

Lake ecotourism attraction area since it was inaugurated in 2018 stated that initially, there was a segregated waste bin service available at points of location and easily accessible, but in the course of tourist area activities, the existing facilities were lost, and damaged. Tourist assessments also show that many tourists are still not aware of not throwing garbage into the lake, such as throwing away leftovers, food and beverage packaging, and other garbage. The existing drainage network in the Sipin Lake tourist area still needs to be improved. The presence of puddles that do not flow at several points, especially in the drainage in the Telanaipura rest area, can be one of the factors causing the decline in the surface of the jogging track due to puddles that make the soil more unstable.

The availability of clean water services is also very minimal and limited. Public toilet services are managed by the community at a distance that is far apart and not easy to know directly. Tourists visiting for the first time must ask the seller or ride service provider for information on the nearest toilet. The public toilet service is also a paid facility. The availability of telecommunication networks is considered by tourists to be sufficient because it does not have an important influence on the form of tourism activities carried out by tourists when visiting. Furthermore, access to electricity, according to the tourists, provides benefits when visiting the nearest amenity, which indirectly depends on its facilities with electrical resources such as food and beverage processing equipment, televisions, fans, charger services, and so on.

### **Institutional Services**

The institutional services variable has a suitability level score of 42% which means it needs immediate improvement. The indicator of the impression of the manager's service has a level of suitability of 44% which indicates that tourists are not satisfied because they do not find the form of management services at the Sipin Lake tourist destination. This impression is



based on the assessment of tourists who do not find the form of management and those responsible for activities in the Sipin Lake tourist destination area. The tourist area is also not equipped with an information center or tourist map that has a plan of attraction points. The form of promotion of tourist destinations is also still very limited in the era of information technology development. Tourists get a lot of information by word of mouth and have difficulty finding descriptions of the activities of Sipin Lake tourist destinations through websites or social media.

Tourists also give the impression of organizing events that are often carried out but not maximized in the arrangement, as seen in the boat race activities held on November 5, 2022; the form of selling activities from businesses that take up the jogging track body makes the movement and movement of tourists become disrupted. Tourists also expect an increase in the variety of existing activities because the current form of tourism activity is considered monotonous, especially for tourists who often visit repeatedly. The indicator of security guarantees for tourist destinations has a suitability level score of 43%; this is due to the preferences of tourists who have not seen the presence of destination authorities as responsible for the form of activities in the tourist area, including security guarantees both in tourist areas and the surrounding environment. The indicator on the impression of tourist destination services to visitors has the lowest score of the existing indicators; the indicator has a suitability level of 39%. This assessment comes from the impression of tourists seeing that tourist activities in these destinations have not been conceptualized and are only a place to relax, which cannot be said to be a tourist destination that has competitiveness.

### **Environmental Conservation**

The environmental conservation variable is the variable that gets the lowest score of all variables used in this research.

The total value of the variable suitability level is 34%. The indicator of the impression of community activities that do not pollute the environment has a suitability level of 33%. This is because tourists still assess the community, especially residents living by the lake, doing fish farming activities. Tourists also do not see the form of community contributions that carry out greening actions around the place of residence to support tourist areas. The garbage cleaning on the edge of the lake is still carried out by regional apparatus and has yet to collaborate with the local community. The indicator of the impression of tourist area activities that do not damage the environment has a total score of 36% suitability level. The assessment score is based on the activities of tourists who become a momentary burden from the destination area. Indirectly, visitors to Sipin Lake tourist destinations take part in producing waste that tourist areas will bear. The movement of the vehicle also impacts the quality of the lake water surface, then the movement of tourists has the potential to damage existing facilities and fauna indirectly.

Indicators of community participation in supporting tourism area conservation have a suitability level score of 32%. Tourists' assessment of community participation is considered invisible regarding the development of tourism activities, so it can be said that the form of tourism activities that exist in the Sipin Lake tourist destination does not yet reflect a collaborative ecotourism destination. Based on visitors' assessment of tourism services in the Sipin Lake tourist area in Jambi City, which is not satisfactory. To find out the priority handling of existing tourism variables, it will be described through a cartesian diagram at a later stage.

### **CONCLUSION**

From the assessment of the used variables to determine the characteristics of ecotourism in the Sipin Lake tourist destination, accessibility based on the tourists'

preference has met and exceeds the level of suitability of existing conditions and expectations looking at the distance of the city center to the tourist destination and network support and road class. Tourist attractions have not fulfilled the aspects of ecotourism, where tourists assess that there are still many weaknesses related to hygiene and environmental quality. The condition of amenities in the tourist destination also does not meet the aspects of ecotourism, where tourists assess that there are still many weaknesses in terms of supporting facilities and infrastructure. Institutional services that are not yet available make the tourist destination have no one in charge, not conceptualized, and monotonous. Environmental conservation is the aspect with the lowest level of suitability for ecotourism characteristics where local communities are not involved in efforts to maintain and improve environmental quality.

By paying attention to the results of this research, it is necessary to improve the weak aspects of the Sipin Lake tourist destination to realize a destination with ecotourism characteristics. Support aspects that need to be considered include increasing the variety of activities available at Sipin Lake to not depend only on natural attractions in the form of lakes. Amenity support that pays attention to facilities and infrastructure such as clean water networks, drainage, electricity, telecommunications, and good waste services, then also the availability of accommodation and other service centers that can support existing tourism activities. The community can carry out forms of environmental conservation in the form of involvement in conservation activities, socialization, and training to maintain environmental quality around the area where they live. Institutional service support related to tourist destination managers and information centers makes activities conceptualized and varied and can guarantee the safety and security of visitors.

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