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Mapping Power and Interests: Stakeholder Dynamics in Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Governance in Pangandaran, Indonesia

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Abstract

Outdoor recreation drives coastal tourism growth but often creates governance and environmental challenges, especially in ecologically sensitive areas like Pangandaran, West Java, Indonesia. This study examines the power and interest dynamics among Pangandaran's outdoor recreation sector stakeholders. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and stakeholder mapping. Eight stakeholder groups were identified: government agencies, private tourism operators, industry associations, local communities, environmental organizations, tourists, media, and academic institutions. Findings reveal significant power imbalances, with government bodies, tourism businesses, and associations dominating decision-making, while local communities and environmental groups remain marginalized despite their high interest in sustainability. Key conflicts emerge around resource access, exclusion from governance, and trade-offs between economic expansion and ecological conservation. However, the study identifies potential synergies, particularly through community-based tourism, eco-certification programs, and academic collaborations. The study emphasizes the need for inclusive governance models that strengthen community participation, integrate environmental safeguards, and balance stakeholder interests. Promoting collaborative platforms can enhance sustainability, equity, and resilience in Pangandaran's tourism sector. This research contributes to stakeholder theory by applying power-interest mapping in tourism governance and provides actionable insights for developing sustainable coastal recreation strategies.

Keywords: Outdoor Recreation, Stakeholder Mapping, Coastal Tourism, Sustainability

A. INTRODUCTION

Outdoor recreation has emerged as one of the fastest-growing segments of global tourism, particularly in coastal regions where surfing, snorkelling, and trekking increasingly attract visitors seeking physical and mental well-being (Southwick et al., 2009; Taylor & Knight, 2003). This growth generates substantial economic benefits for local economies but simultaneously intensifies environmental pressures, including habitat degradation, pollution, and biodiversity loss. For instance, recreational boating has been directly linked to the destruction of critical coastal vegetation essential for fish recruitment, illustrating the broader ecological risks posed by unmanaged outdoor recreation (Babatunde, 2024; Hansen et al., 2018; Ihtimanski et al., 2020; Rusterholz et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these pressures, as restrictions on urban life led to surging visitation in green spaces and coastal areas, placing additional strain on vulnerable ecosystems (Jūrmalis et al., 2022; Rice et al., 2020; Yli-Pelkonen, 2013)). These dynamics underscore a growing challenge many coastal destinations face: balancing economic growth, environmental sustainability, and community welfare through integrated and inclusive governance approaches (Bookhari et al., 2022; Thomas & Reed, 2019).

Pangandaran, one of Indonesia's premier coastal tourism destinations in West Java, vividly illustrates these challenges. Renowned for its scenic beaches, rich marine biodiversity, and diverse outdoor recreation offerings, Pangandaran attracts domestic and international tourists (N. Hidayah et al., 2023; Rizal et al., 2021). Its Global Geopark designation further underscores its ecological significance and economic potential (R. T. Hidayah, 2023). However, the rapid expansion of outdoor recreational activities has placed mounting pressure on the region's fragile coastal ecosystems, resulting in habitat degradation, pollution, and biodiversity loss (Bozdaglar,

2023; Rizal et al., 2022). Environmental challenges are compounded by social concerns, particularly regarding the equitable distribution of tourism benefits and the preservation of local cultural and natural resources. Community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives have thus gained traction as vital strategies for empowering local populations, enhancing environmental stewardship, and ensuring that tourism benefits are more equitably shared (Bozdaglar, 2023; Damayani et al., 2022; Rizal et al., 2021, 2022). Strengthening community participation is also critical for enhancing local resilience against environmental risks, including the increasing threat of natural disasters such as tsunamis (Danaparamita et al., 2020; Nijman, 2021; Pesimo-Abundabar, 2022; Rahayu et al., 2024).

Navigating these complexities requires a robust understanding of stakeholder dynamics within Pangandaran's tourism governance landscape. Multiple actors—including local government agencies, private tourism operators, local communities, environmental organizations, and tourists—exert distinct interests, resources, and levels of influence over outdoor recreation development (Danaparamita et al., 2020; Pesimo-Abundabar, 2022). Local authorities face the intricate task of balancing economic growth ambitions with environmental preservation (Damayani et al., 2022; Nijman, 2021), while tourism businesses grapple with increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices amid growing environmental scrutiny. Simultaneously, local communities seek to protect cultural and ecological assets while securing fair economic benefits, and environmental organizations continue to play a critical role in shaping conservation policies and influencing public discourse. Tourists have become increasingly influential as demand for eco-friendly and responsible tourism experiences rises.

Against this backdrop, stakeholder mapping emerges as a vital tool for analyzing the power dynamics, potential conflicts, and collaborative opportunities essential to sustainable outdoor recreation management (Hengky, 2023; Wang et al., 2016). By systematically classifying stakeholders based on their relative power and interest, this approach provides valuable insights for policymakers tasked with navigating competing agendas while ensuring that local knowledge, cultural heritage, and ecological priorities are effectively integrated into decision-making (Novita et al., 2023; Ullah et al., 2016; Woo et al., 2016). Moreover, stakeholder mapping is a foundation for developing inclusive governance models capable of proactively addressing emerging conflicts—particularly those involving competing land uses, environmental degradation, and social equity concerns (Muhammad et al., 2016; Nofiyanti et al., 2021). Strengthening these frameworks is crucial to ensuring that Pangandaran's tourism development remains economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable in the long term (Looser & Wehrmeyer, 2015; Petrişor et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2016).

Despite the growing body of literature on stakeholder analysis in tourism studies, research focusing specifically on outdoor recreation and stakeholder dynamics within Indonesian coastal contexts remains limited. Existing studies emphasize general tourism development, often overlooking outdoor recreation's unique environmental, cultural, and governance challenges. Addressing this gap, the present study seeks to identify and map the key stakeholders involved in Pangandaran's outdoor recreation sector. Analyzing each stakeholder's relative power and interest, this research aims to generate strategic recommendations for inclusive and sustainable governance—enhancing resource management and fostering collaborative approaches that balance environmental conservation with local socio-economic interests.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Outdoor Recreation and Its Socio-Economic Importance

Outdoor recreation has become a critical driver of tourism development, particularly in coastal regions where nature-based activities such as hiking, snorkelling, and surfing attract visitors while generating significant economic value. Globally, human-powered outdoor recreation contributes billions of dollars annually, supporting employment across hospitality, transportation, and tourism-related services (J. Norman et al., 2010; Southwick et al., 2009). Beyond large-scale economic gains, outdoor recreation catalyzes the growth of small

and medium enterprises, including tour operators, equipment rentals, and local culinary ventures. These enterprises enhance community resilience and diversify economic opportunities in nature-based tourism destinations (Taylor & Knight, 2003).

Importantly, outdoor recreation extends benefits beyond the economy, contributing substantially to public health and social cohesion. Engaging in nature-based recreational activities improves physical fitness, mitigates anxiety and depression, and promotes emotional well-being (Babatunde, 2024). Simultaneously, outdoor spaces serve as vital social hubs, strengthening community networks and fostering collective action toward sustainable development goals (Hansen et al., 2018). These socio-economic contributions underscore outdoor recreation's integral role in shaping economic resilience and holistic community welfare.

Environmental Challenges of Outdoor Recreation

Despite its multifaceted benefits, outdoor recreation presents significant environmental risks, particularly in fragile coastal ecosystems. The rapid expansion of recreational activities—boating, diving, and coastal infrastructure development—exerts increasing pressure on marine habitats, accelerating habitat degradation, pollution, and biodiversity loss (Drius et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2016). Coral reefs and mangrove forests, critical for biodiversity and coastal defence, are especially vulnerable to intensive tourism use, often leading to the erosion of ecological integrity and undermining the long-term sustainability of tourism destinations (Drius et al., 2022; Naik et al., 2018).

Furthermore, tourism-induced pollution—including oil spills, waste discharge, and land-based runoff—degrades water quality, threatening marine life and diminishing coastal areas' aesthetic and economic value (Fajrin et al., 2024). Human-wildlife interactions, such as snorkelling and diving, exacerbate biodiversity loss by disturbing sensitive marine species and disrupting natural behaviours (Drius et al., 2022; Hengky, 2023; Xiao et al., 2023). Infrastructure developments also accelerate shoreline erosion, increasing exposure to natural hazards while degrading environmental assets and tourism infrastructure (Nara, 2014; Santos-Lacueva et al., 2017). These environmental challenges necessitate sustainable tourism management approaches that integrate ecological knowledge and active stakeholder participation to balance economic gains with ecosystem preservation (Drius et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2016).

Stakeholder Theory and Its Relevance in Tourism

Stakeholder theory provides a robust analytical framework for understanding the diverse actors influencing outdoor recreation and tourism development, particularly in ecologically sensitive coastal zones. Stakeholders—from government agencies and tourism businesses to local communities, environmental organizations, and tourists—possess distinct interests, resources, and varying degrees of influence over tourism governance (S. M. Norman et al., 2010; Southwick et al., 2009; Taylor & Knight, 2003). Government agencies play a pivotal role in crafting policies that balance tourism growth with environmental protection (Babatunde, 2024; Hansen et al., 2018), while private tourism operators—driven by profit—face growing market and regulatory pressures to integrate sustainable practices into their business models (Ihtimanski et al., 2020; Rusterholz et al., 2021). Local communities, often the most directly affected, seek to protect cultural heritage and natural resources while capturing economic benefits from tourism development (Jūrmalis et al., 2022; Rice et al., 2020). Meanwhile, environmental organizations advocate for stronger conservation policies and influence regulatory frameworks and public discourse (Bookhari et al., 2022; Yli-Pelkonen, 2013). Increasingly, tourists emerge as key actors, driving demand for responsible and eco-friendly tourism experiences (R. T. Hidayah, 2023; Thomas & Reed, 2019). In this complex landscape, stakeholder mapping becomes essential for visualizing relationships, assessing influence, and identifying potential conflicts and collaborations. This approach enables policymakers to design inclusive governance models that account for competing interests and foster sustainable tourism development.

Dynamics of Stakeholders in Coastal Outdoor Recreation

The coastal tourism context amplifies stakeholder complexities, where economic imperatives, environmental preservation, and cultural values frequently intersect—and often collide. Local governments must simultaneously pursue economic growth through tourism while safeguarding ecological integrity—a balance often constrained by limited resources and competing development pressures (J. Norman et al., 2010; Southwick et al., 2009). Though motivated by profit, tourism businesses increasingly recognize their dependency on pristine natural environments and are thus incentivized to adopt sustainable practices (Babatunde, 2024; Hansen et al., 2018; Taylor & Knight, 2003). Local communities face disproportionate risks as their traditional livelihoods—spanning fisheries, agriculture, and cultural practices—are directly impacted by the pace and scale of tourism expansion (Jūrmalis et al., 2022; Rusterholz et al., 2021). Strengthening community engagement through participatory planning ensures that tourism development aligns with local needs and rights (Rice et al., 2020; Yli-Pelkonen, 2013). As watchdogs, environmental organizations often collaborate with communities to advance conservation agendas and advocate for stronger regulatory frameworks (Bookhari et al., 2022; N. Hidayah et al., 2023; Thomas & Reed, 2019). This dynamic interplay produces challenges—manifested in conflicts of interest, exclusion, and fragmented governance—and opportunities for integrated management models. Community-based tourism and integrated coastal management emerge as promising approaches to foster collaboration, enhance resilience, and promote equitable, sustainable development in coastal outdoor recreation sectors (Danaparamita et al., 2020; Hengky, 2023; Nijman, 2021; Rahayu et al., 2024).

C. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to examine the dynamics of stakeholder power and interest in managing outdoor recreation within Pangandaran's coastal tourism landscape. The case study method was chosen to explore stakeholder interactions, conflicts, and governance challenges in a specific socio-ecological context. Data were collected through document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and field observations to ensure triangulation and strengthen the credibility of the findings. Document analysis involved reviewing regional tourism development plans, environmental reports, government policies, and relevant academic literature to establish a contextual understanding of Pangandaran's tourism sector, regulatory frameworks, and environmental issues. Complementing this, 20 semi-structured interviews were conducted with purposively selected key informants representing local government agencies, private tourism operators, tourism associations, local communities, environmental organizations, academic researchers, and media representatives. Interviews, each lasting between 45 and 60 minutes, were designed to capture diverse perspectives on outdoor recreation impacts, stakeholder roles, power dynamics, and potential areas of conflict or collaboration. All interviews were audio-recorded with consent and fully transcribed for analysis.

Additionally, field observations were conducted in major tourism sites, coastal areas, and community spaces to observe tourism activities, environmental conditions, and firsthand stakeholder interactions. Observational data enriched the analysis by providing contextual insights often overlooked in interviews and documents. Data analysis combined thematic content analysis with stakeholder mapping techniques. Interview transcripts and documentary materials were systematically coded to identify emerging themes related to stakeholder interests, influence, and governance challenges. Stakeholders were then assessed and categorized using a power-interest framework, assigning scores from 1 (low) to 5 (high) based on their capacity to influence tourism governance and interest in outdoor recreation sustainability. This process culminated in developing a Power-Interest Matrix to visualize stakeholder positions, potential conflicts, and collaboration pathways. To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, data triangulation across sources was applied, and preliminary results were shared with selected participants for member checking. Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the research process, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring participant anonymity, and safeguarding sensitive information following social science research ethics standards.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Stakeholder Landscape and Characteristics

The stakeholder landscape of outdoor recreation management in Pangandaran reveals a diverse and complex network of actors with varying levels of interest, power, and influence over tourism development and environmental sustainability. The analysis identified eight major stakeholder groups whose roles, motivations, and interactions significantly shape the governance of outdoor recreation in the region. Local government agencies are the primary regulatory authorities responsible for planning, policy-making, and issuing tourism-related permits. The Pangandaran Tourism Office, the Environmental Agency, and village-level tourism committees are key actors. These agencies hold substantial formal power due to their control over infrastructure development and zoning but often face limited capacity in enforcing environmental regulations amid competing economic pressures. Private tourism operators encompass many businesses, from large-scale hotels, resorts, and marine tour operators to small adventure service providers such as surfing and diving schools. Their primary interest lies in profit maximization, but their operations are highly dependent on maintaining the natural beauty and ecological integrity of Pangandaran. While larger businesses wield considerable influence through investments and political connections, small operators have limited bargaining power.

Adding to the complexity, tourism industry associations—including the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association, Association of Indonesian Tour and Travel Agencies, local tour guide groups and Pokdarwis—act as intermediaries between the private sector and government. These associations play a vital role in advocacy, policy negotiation, and setting operational standards, especially as the tourism industry faces increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices. Local communities remain central to the outdoor recreation landscape. This group includes traditional fishermen, farmers, artisans, and small-scale food and craft vendors whose livelihoods are directly tied to Pangandaran's natural resources. Community members often express a high interest in preserving local ecosystems and cultural heritage but possess limited power to influence policy decisions. Their involvement is further fragmented by unequal access to tourism markets and limited organizational capacity. Environmental organizations and conservation groups—including local NGOs, Geopark activists, and academic researchers—serve as watchdogs and technical experts advocating for ecosystem protection. Their activities range from environmental monitoring and education campaigns to lobbying for stricter regulations. While their direct power is moderate, they significantly influence public opinion and sustainability narratives.

Domestic and international tourists are critical demand-side stakeholders whose preferences increasingly shape tourism offerings. Although their formal role in governance is minimal, the growing segment of eco-conscious tourists exerts market pressure on businesses to adopt greener practices and promote responsible tourism. Media and opinion leaders—including local news outlets, travel bloggers, and social media influencers—emerge as influential players in framing tourism narratives, promoting destinations, and amplifying environmental or social issues. Their capacity to shape public perception and policy debates, particularly during conflicts or environmental crises, adds complexity to stakeholder dynamics. Lastly, academic and research institutions provide scientific support, policy analysis, and capacity-building programs for sustainable tourism management. Universities and research centres contribute expertise in environmental monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and tourism governance, positioning them as knowledge brokers in Pangandaran's tourism development.

This stakeholder mapping illustrates a highly interdependent system where formal authorities, economic actors, community groups, and knowledge-based stakeholders interact—sometimes cooperatively, sometimes contentiously. Understanding these layered relationships is essential for designing inclusive governance strategies that balance economic growth, community welfare, and environmental sustainability in Pangandaran's outdoor recreation sector. These stakeholder groups' diverse characteristics and motivations

create a complex governance landscape in Pangandaran, where economic growth ambitions, environmental sustainability, and community welfare often intersect and occasionally conflict, as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Stakeholder Roles, Interests, and Influence in Pangandaran Outdoor Recreation

Stakeholder Group	Detailed Actors	Primary Role	Main Interest	Influence
Local Government Agencies	Dinas Pariwisata, Dinas Lingkungan Hidup, Desa	Policy-making, regulation, licensing, infrastructure	Economic growth, environmental regulation	High
Private Tourism Operators	Hotels, resorts, adventure tours (surfing/diving), travel agents	Tourism service provision, investment	Profit maximization, sustaining natural assets	High to Medium
Tourism Industry Associations	PHRI, ASITA, Pokdarwis, Guide Associations	Industry advocacy, standard setting, policy mediation	Business sustainability, influence in policy-making	Medium-High
Local Communities	Fishermen, farmers, UMKM (souvenir, culinary), cultural groups	Resource users, cultural preservation, small business operators	Livelihood access to tourism benefits	Low to Medium
Environmental Organizations	NGOs, Geopark activists, local conservation groups	Advocacy, ecosystem monitoring, policy influence	Conservation, sustainability	Medium
Tourists	Domestic & international tourists, eco-tourists	Consumers of recreation services	Quality experience, eco-friendly options	Low
Media & Opinion Leaders	Local/national media, travel bloggers, influencers	Information dissemination, public opinion shaping	Promotion, raising environmental & social issues	Medium
Academic & Research Institutions	Universities, research centres, tourism and environment experts	Knowledge production, policy advisory, capacity building	Scientific input, sustainability frameworks	Medium

Source: Research data, 2024

Power-Interest Dynamics and Stakeholder Mapping

The power-interest mapping reveals a more nuanced and complex stakeholder landscape within Pangandaran's outdoor recreation governance, reflecting both dominant players and underrepresented actors. Using the Power-Interest Matrix framework, stakeholders were classified based on their ability to influence decision-making and their interest in outdoor recreation development and sustainability outcomes. Local government agencies remain in the Key Player quadrant, possessing high formal power and a strong interest in tourism expansion. With regulatory authority over planning, permits, and infrastructure, agencies such as the Tourism Office and Environmental Agency play central roles in policy formulation. However, their effectiveness is often constrained by resource limitations and the challenge of balancing economic development targets with environmental protection responsibilities.

Private tourism operators—including large hotels, resorts, and adventure service providers—also occupy the Key Player quadrant. Their substantial economic investment, control over service provision, and influence on tourism flows grant them significant power. While profit maximization remains their core interest, increasing market demand for sustainable tourism has pushed some larger operators to explore eco-friendly business practices. Tourism industry associations strengthen the private sector's collective influence, securing their position as Key Players. These associations serve as powerful intermediaries, negotiating with the government and advocating for industry-friendly policies while increasingly pressured to adopt sustainability standards.

Local communities, including fishermen, farmers, small business owners, and cultural groups, are placed in the Subjects quadrant. They demonstrate high interest, driven by livelihood dependency on natural resources and tourism benefits. However, their power remains limited due to weak institutional representation and marginal involvement in decision-making processes. This imbalance leaves them highly vulnerable to the decisions made by more powerful actors despite being among the most directly affected groups. Environmental

organizations and academic institutions occupy the Context Setters quadrant. Environmental NGOs and Geopark activists leverage their technical expertise and public advocacy to influence sustainability agendas. Similarly, universities and research centres contribute knowledge and policy recommendations, but both groups lack direct control over tourism development. Their moderate power positions them as critical but often sidelined players in shaping long-term ecological and governance outcomes.

Media and opinion leaders—local journalists, bloggers, and influencers—also function as Context Setters. Their ability to shape public opinion and spotlight environmental or social issues grants them considerable soft power, particularly during conflicts or crises affecting tourism or coastal ecosystems. Tourists remain positioned within the Crowd quadrant, reflecting their low formal power but moderate interest levels. While they are not involved in governance structures, their preferences—especially the increasing demand for eco-friendly tourism—exert indirect pressure on the industry and policymakers to integrate sustainable practices. This mapping exercise highlights persistent power imbalances in Pangandaran's outdoor recreation governance, with government agencies, large tourism operators, and industry associations dominating decision-making spaces. Meanwhile, local communities and environmental advocates remain underrepresented despite their high stakes in sustainable tourism outcomes. The analysis points to critical opportunities for building coalitions among high-interest but low-power groups—particularly local communities, environmental organizations, and academia—to strengthen participatory governance and ensure Pangandaran's tourism trajectory aligns with sustainability, equity, and resilience principles.

Table 2. Power-Interest Matrix with Scoring

Stakeholder Group	Power (Score 1–5)	Interest (Score 1–5)	Quadrant	Notes
Local Government Agencies	5	5	Key Players	Strong regulatory power and high economic/environmental interest.
Private Tourism Operators	4	5	Key Players	High investment power, driven by profit and resource dependency.
Tourism Industry Associations	4	4	Key Players	Influential in lobbying and policy; strong collective voice.
Local Communities	2	5	Subjects	High interest due to dependency but limited access to power structures.
Environmental Organizations	3	4	Context Setters	Strong technical knowledge and advocacy power but limited control over tourism policies.
Tourists	2	3	Crowd	They have low direct power, but their preferences can shape industry behaviour indirectly.
Media & Opinion Leaders	3	3	Context Setters	Moderate influence through narrative framing and public opinion.
Academic & Research Institutions	3	4	Context Setters	Growing role in shaping evidence-based policy and sustainability discourse.

Source: Research data, 2024

This mapping exercise illustrates a clear imbalance in power relations, with economic actors and government agencies dominating decision-making while local communities and environmental groups remain underrepresented. The matrix also highlights the latent potential of enhancing collaboration among high-interest but lower-power groups, particularly local communities and environmental organizations, to strengthen participatory governance. Addressing these imbalances is crucial for aligning Pangandaran's tourism development trajectory with sustainability, equity, and resilience principles.

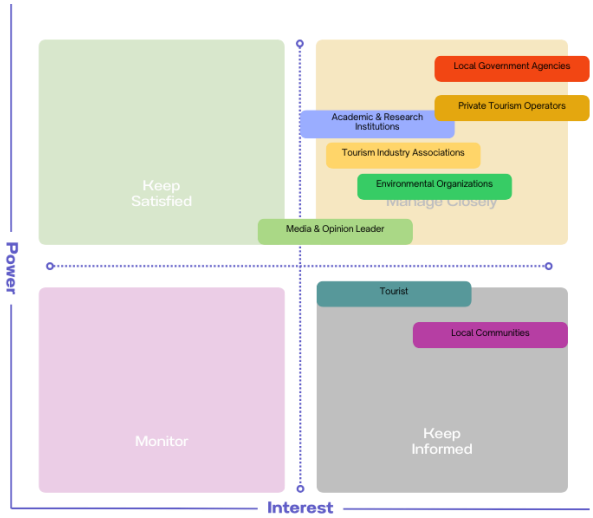


Figure 1. Visualization of Stakeholder Mapping
Source: Research data, 2024

Stakeholder Conflicts, Cooperation, and Potential Trade-offs

The expanded stakeholder mapping reveals several key areas where conflicts of interest emerge, alongside potential zones for collaboration critical to the sustainable management of Pangandaran's outdoor recreation sector. These dynamics are shaped by imbalances in power, differing priorities, and competition over natural resources.

Potential Conflicts and Tensions

Potential conflicts primarily manifest between Key Players, such as government agencies, private tourism operators, and subjects, notably local communities. Large-scale tourism investments—including resort developments, marine recreation, and infrastructure projects—often prioritize economic gains but risk marginalizing traditional livelihoods like fishing and small-scale agriculture. Local communities frequently report limited participation in decision-making, heightening perceptions of exclusion and increasing vulnerability to displacement or loss of access to natural resources. Another major source of conflict involves environmental organizations and tourism businesses. Conservation groups and academics advocate for stricter environmental regulations to protect Pangandaran's coastal ecosystems, including mangroves, coral reefs, and fish habitats.

In contrast, tourism operators and associations sometimes resist these regulations, perceiving them as barriers to business expansion or operational flexibility. This dynamic fuels ongoing disputes over zoning, environmental impact assessments, and enforcing sustainability standards. The growing influence of media and opinion leaders also introduces new tension points. While their role in raising awareness of environmental degradation is essential, their framing of issues can sometimes amplify conflicts, especially when sensationalized narratives exacerbate stakeholder divisions. For instance, media coverage of marine pollution or over-tourism may escalate public pressure on specific groups, complicating negotiation processes.

Table 3. Summary of Stakeholder Conflicts and Synergies in Pangandaran Outdoor Recreation

Stakeholder Pair	Potential Conflict	Potential Synergy / Collaboration
Local Gov Agencies vs. Local Communities	Land use conflicts; exclusion of communities from decision-making	Community-based tourism (CBT) programs; participatory planning forums
Private Tourism Operators vs. Environmental Orgs	Resistance to environmental regulations; habitat degradation from overdevelopment	Joint eco-tourism certifications; adoption of sustainable business models

Stakeholder Pair	Potential Conflict	Potential Synergy / Collaboration
Private Tourism Operators vs. Local Communities	Competition over coastal resources; economic benefits not reaching the local level	Partnership in supply chains (UMKM, local guides); local hiring and capacity building
Tourism Associations vs. NGOs	Differing priorities: economic growth vs. conservation	Development of green standards; joint environmental campaigns
Environmental Orgs vs. Government Agencies	Weak enforcement of environmental policies; conflicting priorities between conservation and growth	Technical support for policy design; environmental monitoring partnerships
Tourists vs. Local Communities	Over-tourism impact on local livelihoods and culture	Promotion of cultural tourism; tourist education on local values and environmental protection
Media & Opinion Leaders vs. Business Sector	Negative exposure to environmental damage; reputational risk	Media as a partner in sustainability campaigns, promoting responsible tourism
Academics vs. Government/Private Sector	Research ignored in policy and practice	Evidence-based planning; collaborative environmental impact assessments

Source: Research data, 2024

Synergies and Collaboration Opportunities

Despite these conflicts, significant opportunities exist to foster synergies across stakeholder groups. Community-based tourism initiatives (CBT) represent one of the most promising pathways to align local economic interests with environmental stewardship. Empowering local communities to co-manage tourism resources can strengthen their role in governance while preserving cultural heritage and traditional livelihoods. Environmental organizations and academic institutions offer vital technical expertise that can support both government and private sectors in designing and implementing evidence-based sustainability practices. Collaborative projects, such as eco-tourism certification, habitat restoration programs, and capacity-building for local guides, can bridge the gap between conservation goals and economic imperatives. Tourism industry associations are important mediators capable of harmonizing business interests with sustainability demands. Their involvement in dialogue platforms and joint planning mechanisms can facilitate the adoption of greener business models, ensuring that environmental considerations are embedded into tourism operations. Finally, tourists' growing preference for sustainable experiences offers market-driven incentives for all stakeholders to invest in environmental protection and community engagement. Harnessing this demand can create a competitive advantage for Pangandaran, positioning it as a leading example of eco-friendly coastal tourism in Indonesia.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal complex stakeholder dynamics and power asymmetries that significantly influence the governance of outdoor recreation in Pangandaran's coastal tourism sector. The stakeholder mapping underscores the dominance of local government agencies, private tourism operators, and industry associations, all occupying the Key Player quadrant due to their strong influence and strong economic interest in tourism development. Their central role in shaping policies and controlling investments reinforces the top-down governance approach, often sidelining local communities and environmental advocates from meaningful participation in decision-making processes. This pattern reflects broader challenges in tourism governance within developing coastal regions, where economic growth imperatives frequently overshadow sustainability commitments.

Despite being directly dependent on natural resources and highly interested in sustainable outcomes, local communities remain structurally weak and marginalized in planning processes. Their positioning as Subjects within the power-interest matrix highlights their limited access to decision-making forums and vulnerability to external development pressures. The exclusion of communities from formal governance structures exacerbates

local conflicts, particularly when tourism expansion threatens traditional livelihoods such as fishing and small-scale agriculture. Yet, this study affirms the potential of community-based tourism (CBT) as a viable pathway to empower local actors, promote cultural heritage, and integrate indigenous knowledge into environmental management. Strengthening the capacity of community groups to engage in tourism value chains and governance mechanisms is therefore critical to ensuring equitable benefit-sharing and long-term social resilience.

Simultaneously, the growing tension between tourism businesses and environmental organizations reflects persistent struggles to balance economic expansion with ecological sustainability. Private tourism operators, supported by associations, prioritize profit-driven growth, often resisting environmental regulations perceived as barriers to development. This dynamic underscores the urgent need for regulatory reforms that embed environmental standards into tourism planning and operations. Eco-certification schemes and market incentives driven by tourists' increasing preference for responsible travel experiences can serve as strategic tools to align private sector behaviour with sustainability objectives. Furthermore, integrating environmental NGOs and academic institutions into formal policy-making processes offers opportunities to improve the scientific credibility of environmental impact assessments and inform evidence-based decision-making.

Media and academic institutions have emerged as influential context setters within Pangandaran's tourism landscape. Media outlets, including local journalists and social media influencers, play a critical role in shaping public perceptions and amplifying environmental or social concerns. While their narratives can intensify conflicts when sensationalized, strategic engagement with media actors presents opportunities to promote sustainable tourism values and raise awareness of local community struggles. Academic and research institutions contribute significantly by providing scientific knowledge, policy analysis, and technical support. Their involvement enhances the quality of governance and helps bridge gaps between environmental priorities and tourism development goals.

Addressing the identified conflicts and unlocking collaborative potentials requires a deliberate shift towards inclusive governance structures that institutionalize multi-stakeholder dialogues and participatory planning processes. Collaborative platforms bringing together local communities, private sector actors, environmental organizations, and policymakers are essential for mediating interests, negotiating trade-offs, and fostering trust. Enhancing local community capacity through education, technical training, and access to tourism markets will further strengthen their role in governance and ensure more equitable outcomes. Additionally, policy coherence must be pursued to better align economic development strategies with environmental conservation imperatives, ensuring that tourism growth does not come at the expense of ecological integrity or social justice.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on stakeholder theory by demonstrating the utility of power-interest mapping in unpacking the complexities of tourism governance in coastal settings. It reinforces the argument that sustainability transitions are unlikely without addressing entrenched power imbalances and fostering inclusive decision-making processes. Future research should explore the evolution of stakeholder dynamics over time, particularly in response to global pressures such as climate change, shifting tourist preferences, and the increasing integration of digital platforms in tourism governance. By embracing collaborative, knowledge-driven, and equity-centered governance models, Pangandaran has the potential to become a leading example of sustainable coastal tourism in Indonesia.

E. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the complex interplay of power, interests, and influence among diverse stakeholders in Pangandaran's outdoor recreation sector, offering critical insights into the governance challenges facing coastal tourism in Indonesia. The stakeholder mapping and power-interest analysis reveal significant imbalances, where government agencies, private tourism operators, and industry associations dominate decision-making spaces, while local communities and environmental advocates remain marginalized despite their high stakes. These dynamics create persistent conflicts between economic development priorities and ecological sustainability,

with local communities often excluded from reaping the benefits of tourism growth while bearing the environmental and social costs. The findings underscore the urgent need to strengthen participatory governance frameworks that elevate the role of local communities, environmental organizations, and academic institutions in shaping tourism policies and practices. Community-based tourism emerges as a strategic approach to bridge this gap, enabling local actors to safeguard their cultural heritage, protect natural resources, and secure sustainable livelihoods. Equally important is integrating environmental standards and eco-certification mechanisms within the tourism industry, supported by regulatory reforms aligning economic incentives with conservation objectives.

Moreover, the study highlights the growing influence of media and academic institutions as potential change agents capable of reshaping tourism narratives and informing policy through scientific evidence. Collaborative efforts that leverage these knowledge brokers, alongside private sector and government actors, are essential to balance competing interests and foster a more resilient and sustainable tourism landscape. Achieving sustainable outdoor recreation development in Pangandaran requires a fundamental reconfiguration of stakeholder relationships that prioritizes inclusivity, transparency, and shared responsibility. By embracing collaborative governance models and empowering marginalized groups, Pangandaran can serve as a model for other coastal regions in Indonesia and beyond, demonstrating that economic growth, environmental integrity, and community welfare are not mutually exclusive but inherently interconnected. Future research should build on this framework by examining how these dynamics evolve and exploring scalable governance innovations adaptable to similar coastal tourism contexts globally.

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