

Integration of Ecology-Based Urban Tourism Governance in Kendari Bay

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Abstract: The development of marine-based urban tourism in Kendari bay faces a persistent gap between formal spatial and tourism policies and their implementation at the destination level. This study examines the integration of spatial development, tourism attractions, accessibility, institutional governance, and ecological sustainability to formulate an integrated urban-coastal tourism governance strategy. A qualitative descriptive approach with a descriptive phenomenological orientation was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, field observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis involving relevant tourism stakeholders. The qualitative findings were analyzed through thematic interpretation and triangulation, subsequently translated into SWOT-TOWS strategies, and interpreted using the 5A+3S destination framework. The findings show that Kendari possesses strategic geographical advantages, diverse tourism resources, formal policy support, and improving physical accessibility. However, these assets remain functionally fragmented, particularly in attraction management, destination services, interinstitutional coordination, local economic integration, and ecological safeguards. Accessibility and infrastructure have developed more rapidly than destination readiness and environmental management, creating an infrastructure-ecological governance imbalance. The study proposes an Integrated Ecological Urban Tourism Governance Model that positions Kendari bay as the principal spatial and institutional unit linking destination components, stakeholder coordination, community participation, local economic activities, and ecosystem protection. The study demonstrates that sustainable urban-coastal tourism depends not merely on infrastructure expansion, but on the institutional capacity to integrate destination development with ecological and socioeconomic priorities.

Keywords: Blue economy; coastal tourism governance; ecological sustainability; kendari bay; urban tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Coastal tourism has become an important component of urban development because it connects economic activity, spatial transformation, community livelihoods, visitor mobility, and environmental resources. However, tourism expansion in coastal cities also creates governance challenges when infrastructure development, tourism activities, and ecological protection proceed without adequate coordination. Uncontrolled coastal tourism development may increase pressure on environmental quality, land use, marine resources, and local communities even when it generates economic and social benefits (Mejjad et al., 2022). Sustainable coastal tourism therefore requires governance arrangements capable of balancing destination development with the ecological capacity of coastal areas. This concern is consistent with the Blue Economy perspective, which emphasizes that economic utilization of marine resources should generate socioeconomic benefits without compromising ecosystem functions and long-term environmental sustainability (Picken, 2025).

From a governance perspective, the central challenge of urban-coastal tourism is not simply the availability of attractions or physical infrastructure, but the capacity to coordinate multiple destination functions within an integrated system. Tourism development involves government institutions, tourism businesses, communities, infrastructure providers, investors, environmental actors, and other stakeholders whose responsibilities and interests frequently overlap. Effective destination governance therefore requires mechanisms that connect spatial planning, tourism development, transportation, environmental management, community participation, investment, and destination services rather than allowing these functions to operate independently (Becken & Loehr, 2024; Sentanu et al., 2023). Accordingly, this study adopts integrated destination governance as its primary analytical lens. Within this perspective, destination performance depends on the institutional capacity to align policies, spatial resources, destination components, stakeholder responsibilities, local economic interests, and ecological safeguards within a coherent tourism system.

This governance challenge is particularly relevant to Kendari City, whose urban structure is directly connected with Kendari bay. As the capital of Southeast Sulawesi Province, Kendari functions as an administrative, economic, and mobility center while possessing diverse natural, cultural, and built tourism resources. Kendari bay, Nambo Beach, Kendari bay Pavilion, mangrove areas, waterfront spaces, cultural attractions, and other urban resources provide opportunities to develop interconnected marine, recreational, culinary, cultural, and community-based tourism experiences. Nevertheless, the availability of multiple tourism resources does not automatically create an integrated destination. Destination-planning literature indicates that tourism resources generate greater value when attractions are connected through coherent spatial organization, accessibility, activities, supporting facilities, services, and visitor experiences (Antošová et al., 2019; Cooper & Hall, 2018; UNWTO & WTCTF, 2018).

The formal policy foundation for such development already exists in Kendari. Kendari City Regional Regulation No. 1 of 2012 concerning the Spatial Plan for 2010–2030 designates Kendari bay as a strategic area for tourism, business, and other urban functions, while Regional Regulation No. 2 of 2019 concerning the Tourism Development Master Plan for 2018–2028 provides a policy basis for sustainable tourism development (Pemerintah Kota Kendari, 2012, 2019). The central problem is therefore not merely the absence of spatial or tourism policies, but the capacity to translate these policies into coordinated destination practices. Research on urban tourism planning similarly demonstrates that the formal recognition of tourism within spatial plans does not necessarily result in effective destination governance when implementation mechanisms

remain weak or fragmented (Klepej & Marot, 2024). This distinction is important because policy documents may establish development directions without ensuring that institutional responsibilities, infrastructure, tourism products, maintenance, mobility, and environmental management operate as an integrated system.

The policy-implementation gap becomes increasingly significant when physical infrastructure and accessibility develop more rapidly than destination management capacity. Roads, transportation facilities, waterfront spaces, and other infrastructure can improve the physical conditions necessary for tourism development, but they do not automatically produce coherent tourism experiences or sustainable destination performance. Their contribution depends on whether infrastructure is functionally connected with attractions, tourism activities, visitor services, destination mobility, institutional coordination, maintenance, and environmental management. This issue becomes more complex because Kendari bay simultaneously functions as an urban space, economic area, transportation corridor, tourism landscape, public space, and coastal ecosystem. Previous environmental studies have documented marine debris and microplastic pollution within Kendari bay, demonstrating that development pressures are directly connected with environmental quality (Muhsin & Safitri, 2021; Rahim et al., 2020). Tourism and infrastructure development therefore need to be accompanied by sanitation, waste management, ecological monitoring, coastal protection, and other safeguards capable of maintaining the ecological functions of the bay.

Existing literature provides substantial knowledge concerning these individual dimensions, but they are often addressed through relatively separate analytical perspectives. Urban tourism and spatial-planning studies emphasize the importance of incorporating tourism into wider urban development strategies (Klepej & Marot, 2024). Tourism-governance research highlights institutional collaboration, stakeholder coordination, and clear responsibilities as important conditions for sustainable destination management (Becken & Loehr, 2024; Sentanu et al., 2023). Coastal and ecotourism studies emphasize ecosystem management, ecological carrying capacity, community participation, and policy integration (Azzahra et al., 2023; Efani et al., 2024; Sukuryadi et al., 2021). Destination studies further demonstrate that attraction, activity, accessibility, amenities, accommodation, and supporting services collectively influence destination quality and competitiveness (Cooper & Hall, 2018; Jin et al., 2022). These perspectives provide important explanations of particular tourism-development dimensions, but their interaction within multifunctional urban-coastal destinations requires stronger analytical integration.

A more specific analytical gap concerns how urban-coastal tourism should be governed when development progresses unevenly across destination subsystems. Existing perspectives provide limited explanation of situations in which infrastructure and accessibility improve more rapidly than attraction quality, destination services, institutional coordination, community integration, and ecological safeguards. This imbalance is important because stronger connectivity may expand visitor mobility and economic opportunities without necessarily improving destination quality or local benefits when tourism products and governance capacity remain insufficient. Increased accessibility may also intensify waste generation, congestion, coastal land-use pressure, and other environmental impacts when ecological management does not develop proportionately. The unresolved issue is therefore not simply whether individual tourism components are present, but how governance mechanisms can coordinate their interdependence when physical, institutional, economic, and ecological capacities develop at different rates.

Within this analytical structure, the Blue Economy, ecotourism, destination components, and the Sustainable Development Goals are positioned as complementary perspectives rather than parallel theoretical foundations. The Blue Economy provides an ecological-economic perspective emphasizing that the utilization of coastal and marine resources should remain compatible with ecosystem sustainability and equitable stakeholder participation (Das et al., 2024; Picken, 2025). Ecotourism contributes principles related to conservation, community participation, ecological sensitivity, and responsible tourism development (Azzahra et al., 2023; Efani et al., 2024). The destination component perspective, operationalized in this study through the 5A+3S framework, supports the assessment of functional relationships among attractions, activities, accessibility, amenities, accommodation, security, safety, and sanitation (Cooper & Hall, 2018). Meanwhile, the Sustainable Development Goals provide a broader policy orientation linking tourism development with economic opportunity, sustainable urban development, responsible resource use, and marine ecosystem protection. Together, these perspectives support the primary focus on integrated destination governance rather than functioning as separate theoretical frameworks.

Based on this gap, this study examines the relationships among spatial development, tourism attractions, accessibility, institutional governance, and ecological sustainability in the development of marine-based urban tourism in Kendari City. It further formulates a governance strategy that positions Kendari bay as an integrated urban-coastal destination rather than as a collection of separate tourism sites and infrastructure projects. The contribution of this study does not primarily lie in combining multiple strategic analytical instruments. Instead, it lies in identifying and explaining the mismatch between infrastructure and accessibility development, destination readiness, institutional integration, and ecological governance. By connecting spatial policy implementation with destination management, stakeholder coordination, local economic participation, visitor experience, and ecosystem protection, the study provides an analytical basis for understanding how an emerging urban-coastal destination can pursue tourism development while maintaining institutional coherence and long-term ecological sustainability.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with a descriptive phenomenological orientation to analyze the governance and development strategies of marine-based urban tourism in Kendari City, Southeast Sulawesi. The qualitative descriptive approach was used to understand destination conditions, policy implementation, management problems, institutional capacity, and environmental sustainability. Meanwhile, the descriptive phenomenological orientation was applied during the analytical stage to understand stakeholders' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of destination development and governance conditions (Englander & Morley, 2023).

The study was conducted over nine months, focusing on Kendari bay and areas connected to the urban-coastal tourism system. The analysis concentrated on three main aspects: tourism development zoning, marine tourism attractions, and accessibility. Institutional arrangements, community participation, connectivity, and ecological sustainability were treated as cross-cutting analytical dimensions.

Informants and Data Sources

Informants were selected purposively based on their knowledge, experience, authority, and involvement in the development and management of tourism destinations in Kendari City. Informants included representatives from government institutions such as the Southeast Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office, Kendari City Culture and Tourism Office, BAPPEDA, and transportation-related agencies. Other informants included tourism industry actors, tourism associations, professional organizations, tourism awareness groups (POKDARWIS), coastal communities, destination users, and other stakeholders directly involved in tourism development.

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews, observations, and focus group discussions, while secondary data were derived from planning documents, regulations, government reports, statistical data, and relevant scientific publications. The principal documents analyzed included the Kendari City Spatial Plan and the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan, particularly sections related to spatial utilization, destination development, accessibility, and sustainability.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, field observations, focus group discussions (FGDs), and document analysis. Interviews were used to explore information concerning policy implementation, Kendari bay management, tourism attraction conditions, facilities, accessibility, institutional coordination, community participation, environmental pressures, and destination development needs. Observations focused on the physical condition of tourism areas, tourism facilities, cleanliness, sanitation, access to attractions, public facilities, connectivity, and community activities.

FGDs were used to confirm and compare stakeholder perspectives regarding major problems, their causes and consequences, and alternative destination development strategies. Document analysis was conducted to compare empirical conditions with government policies and planning directions. Interview and observation data were continuously reviewed, edited, and classified to maintain consistency and minimize potential interpretive errors.

Qualitative Data Analysis with a Descriptive Phenomenological Orientation

Qualitative analysis was conducted through data familiarization, phenomenological reduction, identification of significant statements and meaning units, grouping of categories and themes, and synthesis of meaning. Interview, FGD, observation, and documentary data were reviewed repeatedly to understand the experiences and problems described by stakeholders. Meaning units related to policy implementation, spatial development, tourism attractions, accessibility, institutional arrangements, community participation, and ecological conditions were then identified and grouped into broader categories and themes (Englander & Morley, 2023).

The themes were organized into three principal research domains: tourism development zoning, tourism attractions, and accessibility, while cross-cutting themes such as institutional coordination, community participation, destination management, and environmental sustainability were also retained. The credibility of the interpretation was strengthened through source and method triangulation by comparing interviews, FGDs, observations, and documents to identify convergence, differences, and contradictions across sources.

SWOT and TOWS Analysis

Qualitative findings that had undergone interpretation and triangulation were subsequently used as the basis for SWOT analysis. SWOT factors were not predetermined but were derived from empirical themes identified during the qualitative analysis. Internal conditions that supported destination development were categorized as strengths, while constraining internal conditions were categorized as weaknesses. External conditions that provided development opportunities were classified as opportunities, while external conditions that could create constraints or pressures were classified as threats.

These factors were then analyzed using the TOWS matrix to formulate SO, WO, ST, and WT strategies. Strategy formulation considered the relationships between internal and external factors and their consistency with empirical findings. Accordingly, the analytical sequence followed field data → meaning units → themes → SWOT → TOWS, ensuring that the resulting strategies remained grounded in empirical evidence.

5A+3S Destination Analysis Framework

At the interpretive stage, the study employed a destination component framework based on Cooper and Hall (2018), operationalized through the 5A framework: Attraction, Activity, Accessibility, Amenity, and Accommodation. This framework was used to assess the relationships among tourism attractions, tourism activities, accessibility, supporting facilities, and accommodation in shaping destination quality. Three supporting dimensions, Security, Safety, and Sanitation (3S), were incorporated as analytical extensions appropriate to the characteristics of an urban-coastal destination.

The 5A+3S framework was not used as a quantitative instrument and did not determine the initial themes of the qualitative analysis. Instead, it was applied after the themes and strategies had been developed to assess the interrelationships among destination components and their relevance to the governance needs of Kendari bay. The overall analytical process therefore followed the sequence qualitative data → descriptive phenomenological analysis → triangulation → SWOT → TOWS → 5A+3S interpretation → governance strategy formulation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

The qualitative analysis revealed an interconnected pattern in how stakeholders experienced and interpreted the development of marine-based urban tourism in Kendari City. Across interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and document analysis, three principal themes emerged: spatial development and tourism policy implementation, tourism attraction management, and accessibility and destination connectivity. These themes were accompanied by cross-cutting issues related to institutional coordination, community participation, destination integration, and ecological sustainability. The findings indicate that Kendari does not primarily lack tourism resources, infrastructure, or policy support. Instead, the central challenge lies in the limited integration of these elements into a coherent urban-coastal destination governance system.

Spatial Development and Tourism Policy Implementation

Kendari City has a relatively strong formal policy foundation for marine-based urban tourism development. Kendari City Regional Regulation No. 1 of 2012 concerning the Spatial Plan designates Kendari bay as a strategic area for business, tourism, health services, and other urban

functions. This direction is reinforced by Kendari City Regional Regulation No. 2 of 2019 concerning the Tourism Development Master Plan, which provides a formal basis for utilizing the city's natural and cultural resources for sustainable tourism development.

The geographical structure of Kendari also provides considerable tourism potential because the urban area develops directly around Kendari bay. Tourism resources are distributed across Kendari Barat, Nambo, Abeli, and several coastal areas surrounding the bay. This configuration creates opportunities to integrate marine tourism with urban recreation, culinary activities, public spaces, transportation, cultural activities, and community enterprises. Stakeholder accounts, however, consistently indicated that these spatial advantages have not yet been transformed into a fully integrated tourism system.

Observations and document analysis supported these perceptions. Several tourism areas and infrastructure assets remain insufficiently connected through coherent visitor routes, tourism activities, supporting services, maintenance systems, and destination management. The development of Kendari bay Pavilion, Kendari bay Bridge, and other public infrastructure has strengthened the physical configuration of the area, but these assets have not yet been fully integrated into interconnected marine and urban tourism experiences. The main spatial problem therefore concerns the limited capacity to translate policy recognition and physical development into coordinated destination functions.

Tourism Attraction Conditions and Destination Readiness

Kendari City possesses diverse natural, cultural, and built tourism resources, including Kendari bay, Kendari bay Pavilion, Nambo Beach, mangrove areas, Puncak Victo, and other coastal and urban attractions. These resources provide opportunities for combining marine recreation, urban leisure, culinary tourism, cultural activities, and community-based experiences. Nevertheless, stakeholder experiences and field observations indicate that the availability of tourism resources has not been accompanied by comparable improvements in destination readiness.

Field observations identified recurring weaknesses in facility arrangement, cleanliness, sanitation, destination aesthetics, maintenance, universal accessibility, and visitor services. Nambo Beach illustrates this condition. Although the destination has relatively good access from the urban center, several facilities remain inadequately organized. The arrangement of gazebos reduces visual coherence, pedestrian facilities are not fully adapted to the characteristics of a coastal destination, drainage and temporary waste facilities require improvement, and food stalls and souvenir businesses remain spatially fragmented. Accessibility for visitors with disabilities also requires greater attention.

Interviews with tourism industry actors reinforced these observations. Stakeholders emphasized that the physical availability of attractions alone is insufficient to ensure their inclusion in tourism packages or to generate competitive visitor experiences. Facility maintenance, spatial organization, supporting services, cleanliness, and destination management were repeatedly identified as important concerns. These findings suggest that future attraction development should prioritize the revitalization and integration of existing tourism resources rather than relying primarily on the construction of new physical facilities.

Accessibility and Destination Connectivity

Accessibility represents one of Kendari's stronger physical development assets. The city is connected through land, sea, and air transportation networks. Halu Oleo Airport and Nusantara

Port strengthen Kendari's role as a regional gateway, while road development has improved connections between the urban center and several tourism locations. During 2018–2022, road construction, improvement, and maintenance were recorded across 29 locations with an investment of approximately IDR 132.15 billion.

Despite these improvements, the findings reveal an important distinction between access to Kendari City and mobility within the destination. Visitors may reach the city through several transportation modes, but movement between transportation gateways, the urban center, individual attractions, and tourism activity nodes remains less integrated. Public transportation serving tourism areas is limited, internet connectivity remains uneven in several locations, and direct domestic and international flight connections are still restricted.

Interviews with tourism authorities further indicated that transportation services connecting tourism areas had previously been introduced but were difficult to sustain because of operational and maintenance costs. This experience demonstrates that accessibility cannot be assessed solely through road construction or the availability of transportation infrastructure. Destination accessibility also depends on public transportation, digital connectivity, operational sustainability, tourism information, safety, and institutional coordination.

A broader pattern therefore emerges from the three themes. Physical accessibility and infrastructure have developed more strongly than attraction management, destination services, institutional integration, and ecological safeguards. This uneven development creates a destination-readiness gap in which improved connectivity may increase visitor mobility without automatically producing stronger tourism experiences, broader local economic benefits, or sustainable destination performance.

SWOT Analysis of Urban-Coastal Tourism Development

The qualitative themes that had undergone interpretation and triangulation were subsequently classified into internal and external strategic factors. Strengths and weaknesses reflected conditions within the destination system, whereas opportunities and threats represented conditions arising from the broader development environment. The resulting SWOT configuration is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. SWOT Matrix of Kendari Urban-Coastal Tourism Development

Dimension	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Spatial development	Strategic geographical position of Kendari bay; urban area surrounding the bay; existing infrastructure; regulatory support	Fragmented management; inadequate maintenance; limited spatial integration; weak ecological spatial design	Waterfront development; investment partnerships; Bay City branding; integrated tourism routes	Uncontrolled coastal development; environmental degradation; institutional fragmentation
Tourism attractions	Diverse natural, cultural, and built tourism resources; Kendari bay as a	Weak branding; limited tourism competencies; inadequate facility management;	Ecotourism; destination revitalization; digital promotion; integrated tourism	Waste generation; ecosystem degradation; declining visitor

Dimension	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	potential tourism identity	sanitation and aesthetic problems	packages; investment	experience and destination image
		Limited destination-level public transportation; uneven digital connectivity; limited direct connections	Improved connectivity; digital mobility; public transportation; environmentally responsible mobility	Congestion; emissions; maintenance costs; safety and security risks
Accessibility	Land, sea, and air gateways; relatively good road infrastructure			

The SWOT analysis demonstrates that the main constraint on Kendari tourism development does not arise from a fundamental absence of tourism resources, infrastructure, or formal policies. Instead, the principal weaknesses are located in the relationships among these assets. Spatial planning, attraction management, destination mobility, institutional coordination, community participation, and environmental protection have not yet operated as an integrated destination system.

The resulting TOWS strategies therefore emphasize integration rather than isolated physical expansion. SO strategies utilize Kendari bay's geographical position, tourism resources, infrastructure, and policy support to strengthen destination identity, tourism routes, marine activities, investment partnerships, and integrated urban-coastal tourism products. WO strategies utilize collaboration, investment, ecotourism, digital promotion, and partnership opportunities to address weaknesses in facilities, branding, tourism competencies, public transportation, and destination services. ST strategies use existing policy and infrastructure capacity to strengthen environmental protection, destination safety, and visitor management. WT strategies focus on institutional coordination, sanitation, waste management, maintenance, environmentally sensitive spatial planning, and sustainable mobility.

Strategic Directions for Urban-Coastal Tourism Development

The synthesis of qualitative findings and TOWS analysis generated three interconnected strategic directions. The first concerns integrated spatial governance. Kendari bay should be managed as a unified urban-coastal destination rather than as a collection of separate infrastructure projects and tourism sites. This requires stronger coordination among tourism planning, spatial utilization, transportation, environmental management, destination promotion, community participation, investment, and maintenance. The concept of Kendari as a Bay City should therefore be reflected through actual tourism products, waterfront activities, public spaces, culinary areas, cultural events, local enterprises, and integrated visitor routes rather than through destination branding alone.

The second strategic direction concerns destination revitalization and tourism-product integration. Existing attractions should be strengthened through improved maintenance, sanitation, environmental management, universal accessibility, tourism services, and spatial quality before extensive physical expansion is undertaken. Kendari bay can function as an overarching tourism identity connecting Nambo Beach, Kendari bay Pavilion, mangrove areas, culinary centers, cultural attractions, and other urban tourism resources. Tourism human resource development and greater involvement of MSMEs, POKDARWIS, and local communities

are also important for improving service quality and widening the distribution of tourism benefits.

The third strategic direction concerns integrated and environmentally responsible destination mobility. Road infrastructure and transportation gateways need to be connected with public transportation, tourism information, digital connectivity, visitor safety, and integrated tourism routes. Improvements in accessibility should simultaneously be accompanied by measures to manage mobility-related environmental pressures through public transportation, traffic management, sanitation, waste management, and lower-emission mobility. These strategic directions are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Strategic Directions for Kendari Urban-Coastal Tourism Development

Strategic Domain	Main Issue	Priority Direction	Expected Outcome
Spatial development	Fragmented spatial and institutional management	Integrate tourism infrastructure, public spaces, mobility, management, and economic activities	Coordinated urban-and coastal destination governance
Tourism attractions	Tourism resources are not fully transformed into quality visitor experiences	Revitalize existing attractions, strengthen Kendari bay branding, improve facilities, competencies, and management	Integrated and competitive tourism products
Accessibility	Strong city access but weak destination-level mobility	Connect gateways, public transportation, tourism routes, digital connectivity, safety, and environmentally responsible mobility	Integrated visitor mobility and reduced environmental pressure

Integration of the 5A+3S Destination Framework

The empirical findings were subsequently interpreted through the 5A+3S destination framework. The analysis indicates that Kendari's destination challenges are not concentrated within a single tourism component. Instead, they emerge primarily from insufficient functional integration among attractions, activities, accessibility, amenities, accommodation, security, safety, and sanitation.

Table 3. Integration of the 5A+3S Framework in Kendari Urban Tourism Development

Component	Main Finding	Strategic Direction
Attraction	Diverse attractions are available but remain suboptimally managed	Attraction revitalization, ecotourism, and Kendari bay destination identity
Activity	Marine and urban tourism activities remain insufficiently integrated	Development of tourism activities and integrated visitor routes
Accessibility	Access to the city is relatively strong, but destination-level mobility remains limited	Public transportation, integrated routes, digital connectivity, and tourism information

Component	Main Finding	Strategic Direction
Amenity	Supporting facilities exist but remain spatially and functionally fragmented	Integrated facility planning and tourism service centers
Accommodation	Accommodation is available, but service quality and standardization require strengthening	Human resource development and service standards
Security	Visitor and asset protection is not consistently integrated into destination management	Destination security standards
Safety	Tourism safety requires stronger operational attention	Tourism safety and risk-management standards
Sanitation	Waste, cleanliness, and environmental management remain significant concerns	Integrated sanitation, waste management, and ecological management

The 5A+3S configuration confirms the systemic character of Kendari's tourism-development challenges. Attractions require relevant activities and effective accessibility, while accessibility requires supporting amenities, accommodation, tourism information, and services. Security and safety establish essential operational conditions for tourism, while sanitation directly connects visitor experience with ecological sustainability. Improvement of individual components in isolation would therefore provide limited benefits unless the functional relationships among these components are strengthened.

Integrated Ecological Urban Tourism Governance Model for Kendari bay

The synthesis of the qualitative findings, SWOT-TOWS analysis, and 5A+3S interpretation produced an Integrated Ecological Urban Tourism Governance Model for Kendari bay. The model positions Kendari bay not merely as a marine tourism attraction but as the principal spatial and institutional unit connecting urban development, tourism activities, visitor mobility, destination services, local economic participation, stakeholder collaboration, and coastal ecosystem protection.



Figure 1. Integrated Ecological Urban Tourism Governance Model for Kendari bay

Integrated spatial planning forms the structural foundation of the model. Tourism attractions and activities create reasons for visitation and generate visitor experiences, while physical and digital accessibility connect tourism nodes and facilitate movement throughout the destination. Amenities, accommodation, security, safety, and sanitation provide the supporting conditions required to transform individual tourism resources into a functional and integrated destination system.

Institutional coordination serves as the central governance mechanism connecting these destination components. It involves government institutions, tourism businesses, communities, tourism organizations, investors, and other relevant stakeholders. Through coordinated governance, spatial planning, tourism development, transportation, destination services, environmental management, investment, and community participation can operate as interconnected functions rather than as fragmented sectoral activities.

Environmental sustainability constitutes a cross-cutting principle within the model. Sanitation, waste management, ecosystem conservation, environmentally sensitive infrastructure, and local wisdom are incorporated to ensure that tourism growth and infrastructure expansion do not reduce the ecological quality of Kendari bay. Local economic participation is also positioned as an integral component through the involvement of MSMEs, culinary businesses, souvenir enterprises, cultural activities, POKDARWIS, and other community-based tourism initiatives.

The intended outcome of the model is sustainable urban-coastal tourism characterized by integrated destination functions, stronger local economic participation, coordinated governance, improved visitor experiences, and long-term protection of the Kendari bay ecosystem.

Discussion

Policy Implementation and Destination Governance

The findings indicate that the main challenge in developing marine-based urban tourism in Kendari is not the absence of formal spatial or tourism policies, but the limited capacity to translate these policies into coordinated destination management. Existing planning instruments already recognize the strategic role of Kendari bay, yet implementation remains fragmented across tourism development, transportation, infrastructure maintenance, environmental management, community participation, and institutional responsibilities. This condition reflects a gap between policy recognition and governance capacity, in which regulatory direction has not been fully converted into operational coordination.

This finding is consistent with Klepej and Marot (2024), who argue that incorporating tourism into strategic spatial planning does not automatically ensure effective destination governance. Formal planning requires institutional mechanisms capable of linking policy objectives with destination-level implementation. In Kendari, this need is particularly important because the bay simultaneously functions as a tourism area, transportation corridor, public space, economic zone, community livelihood space, and coastal ecosystem. The governance challenge therefore lies in coordinating these overlapping functions within a common institutional framework.

Institutional fragmentation further explains why existing assets have not yet formed a coherent destination system. Tourism, spatial planning, transportation, environmental management, investment, and community participation are handled by actors with different mandates and interests. This supports Sentanu et al. (2023), who emphasize collaborative governance as a mechanism for addressing tourism problems that exceed the capacity of a single institution. Das et al. (2024) similarly highlight the importance of inclusive stakeholder coordination in Blue Economy governance. Accordingly, the institutional priority for Kendari is not necessarily the creation of a new organization, but the establishment of an effective coordination mechanism capable of integrating existing responsibilities.

Infrastructure Development and Destination Readiness

The study also reveals a clear distinction between physical development and destination readiness. Improvements in roads, transportation facilities, waterfront areas, and public infrastructure have strengthened the physical foundation of tourism development. However, these improvements have not consistently produced integrated tourism products, high-quality visitor experiences, or effective destination functions.

The conditions observed at Nambo Beach illustrate this mismatch. Although physical access and tourism facilities are available, weaknesses remain in spatial organization, drainage, sanitation, maintenance, universal accessibility, visitor services, and business integration. These conditions indicate that infrastructure contributes to tourism performance only when it is

functionally connected with attractions, activities, services, local enterprises, and environmental management.

This interpretation is consistent with Efani et al. (2024), who emphasize that sustainable coastal tourism requires infrastructure planning to be integrated with institutional and ecological management. Azzahra et al. (2023) likewise demonstrate that coastal destination development must consider tourism potential, ecological carrying capacity, and stakeholder support simultaneously. The findings therefore support a shift from an infrastructure-led approach to a destination-led approach, in which physical investment is evaluated according to its contribution to visitor experience, destination identity, local economic participation, accessibility, and ecological sustainability.

Accessibility and Ecological Capacity

Another important finding concerns the imbalance between accessibility development and destination readiness. Physical connectivity has improved more rapidly than attraction management, tourism services, public transportation, institutional coordination, and ecological safeguards. This creates an accessibility–destination readiness gap, in which greater ease of access does not necessarily generate proportional improvements in destination quality.

Improved accessibility can increase visitor flows and economic opportunities, but its benefits depend on the destination's capacity to manage the additional demand. When attractions, services, sanitation, mobility systems, and institutional capacity remain underdeveloped, stronger connectivity may increase movement without substantially improving visitor experience or local tourism benefits. It may also intensify congestion, emissions, waste generation, and pressure on coastal land use.

This pattern is consistent with Mejjad et al. (2022), who show that coastal tourism growth can generate significant environmental pressure when tourism expansion is not accompanied by adequate environmental management. Accessibility should therefore not be treated as an independent measure of tourism success. In Kendari, connectivity development needs to be accompanied by public transportation, visitor-flow management, tourism services, sanitation, environmental monitoring, destination safety, and stronger institutional capacity. The critical issue is not whether accessibility should continue to improve, but whether destination and ecological governance can develop at a comparable rate.

Functional Integration of Destination Components

The application of the 5A+3S framework shows that Kendari's main destination weakness is not concentrated in a single component, but in the limited functional integration among components. Attractions are available, but activities connecting them remain insufficient. Access to the city is relatively strong, while mobility between tourism nodes remains limited. Amenities and accommodation are present, but their connection with visitor activities and service standards still requires improvement.

Security, safety, and sanitation further reinforce the systemic nature of destination development. Security and safety determine the operational quality of tourism experiences, while sanitation directly links visitor satisfaction with environmental conditions. Waste management, cleanliness, drainage, and environmental quality are therefore not secondary concerns, but essential elements of destination performance.

The contribution of the 5A+3S framework in this study lies in demonstrating the interdependence of destination functions. Sustainable tourism cannot be achieved by improving

individual components in isolation. Attraction, activity, accessibility, amenity, accommodation, security, safety, and sanitation need to operate within an integrated spatial, institutional, and service system. This finding also confirms that destination competitiveness depends less on the quantity of tourism assets than on the quality of their functional relationships.

Integrated Ecological Urban Tourism Governance

The findings support the relevance of an integrated governance approach for Kendari bay. The bay cannot be understood solely as an area for tourism development because it also functions as an ecological system, transportation corridor, economic resource, urban public space, and living environment for coastal communities. Tourism development therefore needs to balance economic utilization with ecological sustainability and stakeholder participation.

This perspective is consistent with Blue Economy governance, which emphasizes the integration of economic, environmental, and social interests in coastal development (Das et al., 2024). For Kendari, this requires the involvement of government institutions, tourism businesses, investors, MSMEs, POKDARWIS, coastal communities, and environmental stakeholders within a collaborative governance structure. Tourism competitiveness, community welfare, local economic participation, and coastal conservation should therefore be addressed as interconnected dimensions rather than as separate policy objectives.

Based on these findings, the proposed Integrated Ecological Urban Tourism Governance Model positions Kendari bay as the principal unit for coordinating spatial planning, tourism development, accessibility, destination services, local economic participation, and ecosystem protection. Spatial planning provides the structural foundation, attractions and activities create tourism experiences, accessibility connects tourism nodes, and amenities and accommodation support visitor activities. Security, safety, and sanitation provide essential conditions for destination quality, while institutional coordination connects these components with community participation and ecological management.

The scientific contribution of the study lies in identifying an infrastructure–ecological governance imbalance. Infrastructure and accessibility have developed more rapidly than attraction quality, destination services, institutional integration, and environmental safeguards. This imbalance explains why physical development alone has not produced an integrated and sustainable destination system. The proposed model responds to this problem by linking destination development with institutional coordination, local economic participation, visitor experience, and ecosystem protection within a unified urban-coastal governance framework.

This study is limited by its focus on a single urban-coastal destination and by its qualitative design, which prioritizes contextual understanding rather than statistical generalization. The proposed governance model is derived from stakeholder perspectives, observations, policy documents, and strategic interpretation, but its effectiveness has not yet been tested through implementation or comparative analysis. Future research should examine the model in other coastal cities, apply mixed-method or longitudinal designs, and develop measurable indicators of institutional integration, destination readiness, community participation, visitor experience, and ecological performance. Such studies would provide stronger evidence regarding the applicability and effectiveness of integrated urban-coastal tourism governance across different institutional and environmental contexts.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the development of marine-based urban tourism in Kendari bay is constrained primarily by the limited integration between policy implementation, destination governance, attraction management, accessibility, and ecological protection. Although the area possesses strong geographical advantages, diverse tourism resources, regulatory support, and improving connectivity, these assets have not yet been fully transformed into a coherent and competitive destination system. The findings indicate that accessibility and physical infrastructure have progressed more rapidly than the quality of attractions, institutional coordination, destination services, and environmental safeguards, creating an imbalance between development intensity and ecological management capacity. Therefore, Kendari bay should be positioned as an integrated urban-coastal destination rather than merely as a marine tourism attraction, with governance directed toward coordinated spatial planning, attraction revitalization, improved destination connectivity, stronger institutional collaboration, professional human resources, community and MSME participation, environmentally sensitive facilities, and coastal ecosystem conservation. The proposed integrated governance approach provides a strategic basis for aligning tourism competitiveness, local economic benefits, visitor experience, and ecological sustainability within the long-term development of Kendari bay.

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