



Multi Stakeholder Partnership in the Governance of Tourism Development in Southwest Papua Province

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Abstract

Tourism development in Southwest Papua Province involves various actors with different roles and interests, necessitating a multistakeholder partnership-based governance approach. However, in practice, the partnerships formed still face various obstacles. This condition causes multistakeholder partnerships to be less effective in supporting tourism development. This study aims to analyze multistakeholder partnerships in tourism development governance in Southwest Papua Province. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study strategy. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, then analyzed using an interactive model through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show that multistakeholder partnerships are influenced by six main aspects. First, the domain of activities is not yet fully integrated across sectors. Second, the type of partnership is still partial and tends to be informal. Third, the actors involved are quite diverse, but do not have optimally coordinated roles. Fourth, the partnership process is not yet participatory and transparent. Fifth, the value-added mechanism has not been able to create maximum synergy. Sixth, the impact of partnerships on the quality of tourism services is still insignificant.

Keywords: opinion leaders; discourse analysis; new autonomous region; political communication; two-step flow

Introduction

Southwest Papua Province is a newly established region with extraordinary tourism potential, particularly in the Raja Ampat region and its surroundings. Its natural beauty, marine biodiversity, and local wisdom make this region a leading destination both nationally and internationally. However, this potential has not been fully utilized through effective governance. The government has attempted to implement a multistakeholder partnership strategy, involving various parties to jointly manage and develop the tourism sector.

Multistakeholder partnerships in tourism development in Southwest Papua still face various obstacles. One prominent issue is weak coordination between actors and fragmented data between institutions. One finding is the discrepancy in tourist numbers, which poses challenges for data-driven planning and policymaking. The number of domestic tourists visiting Southwest Papua Province in 2023 was 255,000, increasing to 419,000 in 2024 (BPS Papua Barat Daya, 2025). Meanwhile, inter-institutional collaboration continues to operate separately and without systematic coordination.

Limited supporting infrastructure, such as land and sea connectivity, sanitation facilities, and access to information technology in Southwest Papua Province, significantly impacts the quality of tourism services. Poor accessibility makes it difficult for tourists to reach key destinations, reducing the region's attractiveness as a tourist destination. The lack of sanitation facilities at tourist sites also impacts visitor satisfaction. Meanwhile, limited information technology limits digital promotion and access to tourism information, making it difficult for tourists to plan their trips. This demonstrates that tourism development has not been built on the basis of a shared strategy among the actors involved.

Another issue arises from multilevel governance conflicts between regional conservation policies and the central government's natural resource exploitation policies. Several areas in Southwest Papua, rich in marine tourism potential, have also become targets for mining and extractive investment activities. This disconnect creates a dilemma between environmental conservation and economic development and demonstrates a lack of policy integration across sectors and levels of government. This underscores the importance of partnership mechanisms capable of bridging diverse interests within a holistic, long-term governance framework.

From the actor perspective, although collaborative efforts have been made, such as collaboration between DEO Airport and local stakeholders or development forums with conservation NGOs (WWF, EcoNusa, etc.), partnership structures in the tourism sector remain informal and unorganized. Consequently, value-adding mechanisms from cross-sector collaboration have not yet been achieved, whether in the form of service innovation, network expansion, or strengthening local human resource capacity.

This study uses the theory proposed by Levinger and Mulroy (2004). This theory emphasizes: 1) Activity Domains, namely multi-stakeholder partnerships operate in certain domains that are relevant to community issues or needs. The selection of this domain is important so that collaboration runs in a focused and directed manner; 2) Partnership Type, where partnerships can be formal or informal, and can be in the form of long-term strategic or short-term operational. The type of partnership is chosen based on the shared goals and capacities of the actors; 3) Actors, where the success of the partnership is highly dependent on the involvement of the right actors, with

their respective roles and contributions. These actors can come from various backgrounds, such as the public sector, private sector, civil society, and others; 4) Process Factors, where effective communication, transparency, participation, and inclusive decision-making mechanisms are important factors that influence the collaboration process in partnerships; 5) Value Adding Mechanisms, where partnerships are able to create synergies that increase the capacity of all parties, accelerate innovation, expand networks, and utilize resources optimally to achieve better results; 6) Impact on Service Coverage and Quality, where one of the main objectives of the partnership is to improve access and quality of services provided to the community, thereby bringing real and sustainable benefits.

Tourism development in Southwest Papua Province is not only about its extraordinary natural potential, but also about how this potential is managed collectively by various actors with varying interests, roles, and capacities. In this context, tourism governance becomes an arena for complex interactions involving the government, indigenous peoples, businesses, NGOs, and local communities. However, the reality on the ground shows that these interactions have not yet fully developed within a structured and effective partnership system.

Based on this description, one theory that is considered appropriate and comprehensive for measuring the effectiveness of multi-party partnerships is the multi-stakeholder partnership theory. Based on the background description, research on multistakeholder partnerships is urgently needed to analyze the effectiveness of multistakeholder partnerships in managing tourism development in Southwest Papua Province.

Materials And Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with an exploratory case study strategy. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to understand the phenomenon in depth. Multistakeholder partnership in the governance of tourism development in Southwest Papua Province, which involves various actors with different backgrounds, interests, and roles. This research was conducted in Southwest Papua Province. The location was selected based on the consideration that the region is a center of tourism activity, especially marine tourism which has national and international appeal. The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Research informants consisted of elements of the local government (relevant OPD), non-governmental organizations, Pokdarwis, and other parties related to tourism development in Southwest Papua Province. The focus of this research is multistakeholder partnerships in the governance of tourism development in Southwest Papua Province, based on the theory of Levinger and Mulroy (2004), which includes activity domain, partnership type, actors, process factors, value-adding mechanisms, impact on service coverage and quality. The data collection technique in this study was carried out first through observation conducted to directly observe field conditions, tourism activities, and interactions between stakeholders in managing tourist destinations. In-depth interview (in-depth interview) conducted to gather comprehensive information regarding the experiences, perceptions, and practices of partnerships between actors. Data analysis in this study uses interactive analysis model as put forward by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes three main stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the findings of the data collection research conducted to understand the phenomena related to tourism development governance in Southwest Papua Province. This study uses the Multistakeholder Partnership approach from Levinger and Mulroy (2004) which emphasizes 1) Domain of Activities, 2) Partnership Type, 3) Actors, 4) Process Factors, 5) Value Adding Mechanisms, 6) Impact on Service Coverage and Quality. These six dimensions are interrelated and form a unity in the implementation of tourism development in Southwest Papua Province.

Domain of Activities

Domain of activities Based on the multistakeholder partnership theory (Levinger and Mulroy, 2004), it is highly relevant for use in the context of sustainable tourism development governance in Southwest Papua Province. The Domain of Activities indicator emphasizes the role of partnerships in identifying community issues and needs. This indicator also emphasizes establishing activity domains within the collaborative process to ensure systematic, focused, and directed collaboration. This can achieve effective multistakeholder collaboration in addressing community needs. The tourism promotion carried out shows the number of tourist visits to Raja Ampat each year as follows:

Table 1. Number of Domestic and International Tourist Visits in Southwest Papua Province in 2022-2024

| Year | Type of Visit | |
|------|---------------|----------|
| | Domestic | Overseas |
| 2022 | 1,222 | 10,772 |
| 2023 | 1,064 | 24,467 |
| 2024 | 8,343 | 30,168 |

Source: UPTD BLUD KKPDA Raja Ampat and Raja Ampat Tourism Office, 2026

The table above shows that tourist visits to Raja Ampat are dominated by international visitors. From 2022 to 2024, there was a surge in international tourist visits to Raja Ampat. Meanwhile, domestic visits experienced a decline in 2023.

The research results show that the domain of activities within tourism development governance in Southwest Papua Province has developed within a relatively focused framework, primarily by making marine conservation a primary foundation, particularly in the Raja Ampat region. This focus not only reflects the policy orientation of the local government but also demonstrates a collective awareness among stakeholders that the sustainability of tourism in this region is highly dependent on the sustainability of the ecosystem. In other words, conservation is no longer positioned as a limitation on development, but rather as a primary prerequisite for ensuring the sustainability of tourist destinations.

Empirical findings also show that activity domains do not exist in isolation, but rather evolve through integration between conservation, tourism village development, human resource capacity building, and digital-based promotion. This indicates that the partnerships formed have moved toward a systemic approach, where various sectors are intertwined within a single tourism development framework. For example, tourism village development is seen not only as an economic strategy but also as an instrument for cultural preservation and local community empowerment. Similarly, digitalization through the Tourist Information Center (TIC) serves not only as a promotional medium but also as a mechanism for information transparency and service quality improvement. However, behind this integration, there is a strong tendency for activity domains to remain concentrated in certain regions, particularly Raja Ampat. This indicates that while conceptually the activity domains are well-defined, in practice, spatial inequalities in the distribution of attention and resources persist. Other regions, such as Tambrauw or Sorong, have not yet fully achieved equal development intensity, despite possessing equally significant potential. Therefore, the significance of this finding is that the activity domains within the partnership are not yet fully geographically inclusive, potentially creating inequalities in the benefits of tourism development.

Furthermore, the findings also indicate that the activity domain is significantly influenced by the role of NGOs with technical and scientific capacity, particularly in conservation. The presence of NGOs such as FFI, YKAN, and Konservasi Indonesia not only strengthens ecological aspects but also shapes policy direction through an evidence-based management approach. This demonstrates that the activity domain within the partnership is not solely determined by the government but rather results from interactions between actors with varying capacities. Based on the research findings, the domain of activities in this context can be interpreted as the result of social and institutional construction influenced by the interests, capacities, and power of each actor. The domain is not simply a list of activities, but a reflection of how actors interpret tourism development itself. From the perspective of Levinger and Mulroy (2004), the domain of activities is a key element in determining the effectiveness of a partnership, as it relates to the clarity of the scope of cooperation and the alignment between the activities undertaken and community needs. The findings of this study generally support this theoretical framework, particularly regarding the alignment between the domain of activities and local needs, such as conservation and community empowerment.

Overall, the activity domains within tourism development governance in Southwest Papua indicate that partnerships have moved toward greater integration and sustainability, but still require strengthening in terms of equity and systemic integration. This provides an important foundation for developing more effective partnership models in the future. More broadly, these findings can be explained through a broader approach. Collaborative governance as stated by Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh (2012), cross-actor collaboration does not always develop in a linear and coordinated structure, but is often dynamic, fragmented, and context-dependent. The partnerships formed in this study reflect this condition, where there is no single mechanism that regulates all actors, but rather various mechanisms that operate simultaneously. This is also in line with the view of Ansell and Gash (2008) who emphasized that the success of collaboration is largely determined by the existence of institutional design capable of uniting diverse interests within a clear framework. The absence of a strong institutional design in the context of Southwest Papua has led to existing partnerships tending to operate independently.

However, this study makes a more specific contribution than previous studies, particularly in demonstrating how formal and informal partnerships not only coexist but also create complex dynamics in tourism governance. While much of the literature often views informal partnerships as complementary to formal ones, in this context, it appears that informal partnerships play an equally important role, and in some cases, are even more effective in bridging needs on the ground. This is particularly evident in the role of communities and tourism-focused tourism groups (Pokdarwis), which are able to flexibly carry out operational functions without being tied to rigid bureaucratic structures.

Partnership Type

Partnership type Based on the multistakeholder partnership theory explained by Levinger and Mulroy (2004), it is highly relevant to the governance of sustainable tourism development in Southwest Papua Province. This indicator encompasses both formal and informal partnerships, as well as long-term strategic and short-term operational aspects of sustainable tourism development. Partnership implementation is based on shared goals and the capacity of actors involved in sustainable tourism development.

Based on the research findings, it is shown that the development of sustainable tourism requires formal, structured partnerships through development programs, institutional regulations, and coordination across government agencies and non-governmental organizations. The approach used is collaborative governance within the Penta Helix framework, where the government, associations, NGOs, and communities play a synergistic role in strengthening tourism capacity and sustainability. At the provincial level, a significant human resource base is demonstrated in supporting tourism services. The government is also targeting certification for general tour guides and dive guides, demonstrating the government's commitment to improving competency and professionalism. Certification serves not only as an instrument for improving the quality of tourism services provided but also to ensure tourist safety and the protection of natural resources specifically in the context of conservation-based marine tourism. Partnerships with NGOs such as YKAN, Konservasi Indonesia, and Konservasi Anak Nusantara

further strengthen collaboration in the development and management of sustainable tourism. This collaboration takes place not only in the form of technical support and conservation programs but also through informal communication such as discussion groups. Furthermore, the division of roles between the provincial and district governments is further enhanced through institutionalized cross-government agency coordination. District offices play a role in establishing tourism awareness groups and tourist villages, as well as conducting basic training. Meanwhile, the province plays a role in facilitating certification and strengthening sustainability. Formal partnerships in tourism development in Southwest Papua are built through the integration of human resource development programs, certification standardization, the establishment of conservation institutions, and coordination across regional government agencies and external partners.

Research findings with NGOs indicate that partnership activities are not merely administrative but also involve collaborative practices through the Raja Ampat Mooring System (RAMS), the development of a sustainable tourism code of conduct, and Geopark assessments. Institutionally, this partnership is strengthened through accountability commitments established with donor agencies that support conservation and community empowerment programs. Funding support is not only allocated for biodiversity protection but also for the formation and strengthening of empowerment for village communities. Furthermore, the development of sustainable tourism in Southwest Papua focuses not only on improving tourism facilities but also on community mentoring so that conservation does not become a barrier but rather an opportunity for alternative economic development for the community. This mentoring allows communities to obtain economic benefits without damaging the ecosystem, thus creating a balance between environmental protection and social welfare. Conservation success depends not only on area protection but on the synergy between scientific knowledge, social legitimacy, financial support, and long-term cross-actor collaboration.

The findings indicate that community-based tourism development has evolved through intensive mentoring between tourism awareness groups, NGOs, and the central and provincial governments. Furthermore, the involvement of NGOs such as Fauna and Flora International (FFI) since 2020 has been crucial in increasing public understanding of the benefits of conservation and tourism. The mentoring provided not only introduces the concept of tourism as an alternative economic sector but also builds public awareness of the importance of environmental protection for improving well-being. Through the establishment of tourism awareness groups, mentoring programs can be coordinated and sustainable. Partnerships formed through tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis) extend beyond institutional formation and basic training to advanced levels of human resource capacity building. The government or partner partners act as facilitators for capacity building and provide access to certification.

Actors

Within the theoretical framework of multi-stakeholder partnerships as described by Levinger and Mulroy (2004), the actor indicators emphasize the involvement of each actor in driving the success of the partnership, with each actor's role and contribution. In developing sustainable tourism, the roles and contributions of actors are essential for the success of sustainable tourism.

As found in this study, tourism development in Southwest Papua involves various actors, including the central and regional governments, indigenous communities as customary land rights holders, businesses and investors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics, and local communities and the media. Each actor has a distinct position, interests, and capacity within the tourism value chain, from policy formulation and destination management to service provision and environmental promotion and conservation.

Table 2. Actors and Roles in Tourism Development in Southwest Papua Province

| No | Actor | Role in Tourism Development |
|----|------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Central government | Formulating national policies, budget allocation (DAK, Otsus), determining priority destinations |
| 2 | Provincial government | Cross-sector coordination, strategic tourism planning |
| 3 | Regency/City Government | Destination management, program implementation |
| 4 | Indigenous Peoples | Owners of customary rights, guardians of cultural and environmental values |
| 5 | Community (MSMEs, Pokdarwis) | Tourism service providers, local economic drivers |
| 6 | Business Actors / Investors | Service providers (resorts, transportation, tours), job creators |
| 7 | NGOs (WWF, EcoNusa) | Community assistance, conservation, advocacy |
| 8 | Academics | Provider of scientific studies, policy recommendations |
| 9 | Media & Digital Influencer | Destination promotion, building tourism image |

Source: processed author data, 2026

The table shows that the actor structure in tourism development in Southwest Papua Province formally encompasses various parties representing the public, private, and community sectors. This diversity of actors is theoretically a prerequisite for the formation of a tourism industry. multistakeholder partnershipstrong, because it allows for the division of complementary roles in tourism management in Southwest Papua Province.

Based on the research results, several findings from the government's perspective indicate that the government's function and role in developing sustainable tourism in Southwest Papua Province is as a regulator and leading sector in tourism development. Normatively, provincial authority is limited to the functions of guidance,

supervision, and evaluation of districts/cities. Meanwhile, ownership and management of destination areas rests with the district government. In infrastructure development to support tourism, support provided in the form of gazebos, homestays, and other basic facilities is largely sourced from the central government through the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing. This indicates a vertical collaboration in financing and development, where the central government provides support through budgets and infrastructure, the province carries out guidance and supervision functions, while the district is the main implementer in tourism.

The government's explanation, supported by NGOs, demonstrates that NGOs, as actors in sustainable tourism development, serve as providers of scientific data, while conservation institutions regularly and systematically monitor biodiversity. This demonstrates efforts to maintain continuity between marine and terrestrial protected zones, reflected in integrated ecosystems. Furthermore, NGOs are integrated into community support, demonstrated through social empowerment and multi-stakeholder collaboration. This focus not only focuses on ecological protection but also supports community economic sustainability and strengthens governance in sustainable tourism development. Furthermore, the research findings explain the gap in synergy between provincial and district governments and indigenous communities in tourism management. Indigenous communities emphasize that tourism development should be a collective responsibility across institutions, not simply the responsibility of technical agencies. Furthermore, the training and selection of geotourism guides and the formation of "Guardians of the Geosite" demonstrate the ongoing training and professionalization of local managers. Knowledge transfer focuses not only on the physical potential of the destination but also on governance, organizational structure, revenue transparency, and strategies for addressing social conflict.

The research findings show that the actor structure in tourism development in Southwest Papua Province appears complete and in accordance with the ideal framework. Multistakeholder partnershipThe government acts as a regulator and policy director, NGOs provide technical expertise and safeguard sustainability issues, the private sector provides services and investment, and local communities and tourism awareness groups act as direct implementers at the grassroots level. However, upon closer examination of this structure, it becomes apparent that the primary issue lies not in "who is involved," but rather in "how they relate." The relationships between actors in the research findings demonstrate a pattern of partial equality. The government, particularly at the provincial and district levels, remains dominant as the formal authority, but in practice often relies on the technical capacity of NGOs for conservation and data-driven management. On the other hand, NGOs contribute significantly to determining the direction of conservation-based policies but lack strong formal legitimacy as decision-makers. The private sector operates within a relatively independent market logic, while local communities are closest to the resources but have the most limited access to power and decision-making. This configuration demonstrates that the actor structure within the partnership is not a neutral system, but rather an arena rife with power relations (power relations).

Process Factors

Process factorsIn the theory explained by Levinger and Mulroy (2004), effective communication, transparency, participation, and inclusive decision-making mechanisms are emphasized as important factors influencing the collaborative process in partnerships. In the development of sustainable tourism, effective communication is essential to align the program implementation of each actor involved, so that synergy occurs and there is no overlap. Furthermore, transparency and participation are also important in the implementation of sustainable tourism development because they will influence the success of collaboration in partnerships.

Based on the research findings, it was found that cross-OPD coordination and regional development are not optimal at the provincial level. This is because Southwest Papua Province is a newly formed province, so cross-OPD coordination has not been fully implemented optimally. This is due to the persistence of sectoral egos that hamper the implementation of sustainable tourism development. Furthermore, synchronization between the Province and the Central Government has been running well, but coordination and synchronization between the Regency and the Province have not been running optimally. This is evident from when problems arise, the existing solutions are still lacking. There is still miscoordination between partners in this case regarding CSR support for tourist attractions. Where the research findings explain that tourist attractions are designed by the Culture and Tourism Office of Raja Ampat Regency. However, in its implementation when there is external assistance in the development of facilities, the Culture and Tourism Office is not involved, meaning that the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) provider does not coordinate with the Culture and Tourism Office of Raja Ampat Regency.

The program implementation at the Regency level is demonstrated through mentoring and coaching for communities in tourist areas. The findings show that the overall program consists of four programs: destination development is a strategy in terms of supporting the interest or attraction of tourists to visit, accessibility to tourist attractions, the provision of tourist facilities such as resorts and homestays, and the provision of tourism services that can increase the number of tourist visits, regional income and improve the welfare of local communities that provide accommodation facilities and sellers of local products made by the local community. Furthermore, marketing development aims to promote tourist areas in Southwest Papua Province. Not only promoting areas and tourist destinations but also opening economic opportunities for the community through the sale of local products. Through the development of the creative economy, it can create strengthening of local potential in Raja Ampat through culture and main cultural-based attractions, creative product development, namely creating typical culinary, handicrafts by the local community.

From the NGO perspective, the process factor indicator includes providing technical assistance and participating in joint planning with the government. In the context of sustainable tourism development in Southwest Papua Province, the implementation of the program established by the NGO, in this case the NGO Flora and Fauna International (FFI) in Raja Ampat, has three program components: biodiversity, which is intended for research and protection of terrestrial and marine biodiversity. The program aims to protect coastal, marine, and terrestrial

ecosystems through a sustainable approach. Furthermore, through a program prepared by FFI, it provides support to the local government in managing marine conservation areas. Based on the study conducted, FFI integrates biodiversity data into sustainable tourism development policies in Raja Ampat Regency. Furthermore, the likelihood program aims to assess the level of security and management of diving destinations, so that its implementation requires special attention. The next program is community assistance, a form of assistance provided to the community in the form of training related to destination development. In its implementation, it is seen through the potential of tourist destinations, including bird watching, herping, mammal watching, and jungle trekking. The potential of these tourist destinations has become a guideline, outlined in a book intended for community training. Community support provided by NGOs includes ecotourism guide training and homestay management training.

In business management, private sector businesses operate independently. Strong institutional autonomy is reflected in the management of private sector tourism businesses, where operators design, operate, and develop facilities independently without direct government intervention. This trend reflects a market-based governance model, where the ability of business operators to internally respond to tourist demand and preferences determines the company's sustainability and improves service quality. In the context of a strategic location like Sorong City, which serves as a gateway to Raja Ampat, independence in hotel and restaurant management demonstrates a professional and competitive orientation in the private sector.

From the community perspective, the process factor indicator is village deliberation in decision-making. In every decision-making process, the community conducts it through customary/village deliberation, where traditional mechanisms are used as a basis for collective principles, where customary voice (joint decisions) prioritizes environmental sustainability and community welfare. Village deliberation plays a crucial role in decision-making as a collaborative, participatory, and locally-based deliberation procedure. Village deliberation functions as a social institution that combines customs, social legitimacy, and interests between groups within the community, not simply a formal platform for policy decision-making. This system reflects a collective-based local governance system, where decisions are made through collective representation and not the dominance of a particular individual or group. The practice of deliberation illustrates a deliberative decision-making process, namely through open communication, value considerations, and negotiation of interests within the community's social space. Social solidarity and a sense of ownership of the decisions taken are strengthened by the communal concept underlying this procedure. Because these decisions are considered to be the result of collective agreements that are morally and socially binding, this has the consequence of increasing the legitimacy of the decisions as well as the likelihood of community compliance and participation in their implementation.

Value Adding Mechanisms

Value-adding mechanisms within the framework of multi-stakeholder partnership theory proposed by Levinger and Mulroy (2004) emphasize the ability of partners to create synergy in increasing the capacity of all parties involved, accelerating innovation, expanding networks, and utilizing resources optimally to achieve good results. In the context of tourism development, value-adding mechanisms have a very important influence in analyzing how far partners synergize in increasing capacity and forming innovations in sustainable tourism development in Southwest Papua Province.

Based on the findings of research with the government, it shows that the Raja Ampat tourist destination has received awards and recognition both nationally and internationally. In 2019, Raja Ampat received national and international recognition from UNESCO. One of the international recognitions obtained is UNESCO Global World Park 2023. Furthermore, Raja Ampat also received international recognition from UNESCO related to Biodiversity. This international recognition indirectly creates positive branding for the Raja Ampat tourist destination. This international recognition demonstrates that Raja Ampat has met certain globally recognized standards in terms of conservation and sustainability.

The quality of management and uniqueness of Raja Ampat's natural resources have been internationally recognized through global recognition, which also serves as a status symbol. Because UNESCO standards are synonymous with the values of ecosystem sustainability, environmental conservation, and responsible governance, this legitimacy strengthens Raja Ampat's position in the global tourism sector. Therefore, this achievement demonstrates a management approach that aligns with the principles of sustainable tourism development, particularly in balancing environmental preservation and economic exploitation. The branding and image of this destination are directly influenced by this global recognition. Support from a leading organization like UNESCO is viewed from a tourism marketing perspective as a strategic branding tool that enhances the destination's appeal and credibility among tourists worldwide. This global label strengthens Raja Ampat's position as a leading biodiversity-based tourism destination by instilling a sense of quality, exclusivity, and ecological excellence. This positive branding has the potential to attract investment and encourage cross-sector collaboration in addition to promoting tourism. This global recognition encompasses the shared need to adhere to recognized management standards. Consistency in the implementation of conservation policies, reducing environmental impacts, and enhancing institutional capacity are essential for international status. Therefore, this award serves as a tool to strengthen the commitment to sustainable and long-term tourism management, not just a symbolic achievement.

By optimizing local potential, including natural and cultural resources, the development of tourism villages aims to improve the economic capabilities of local communities. In this regard, tourism villages serve as an empowerment tool that encourages active community participation in the management, marketing, and utilization of tourism potential. Consequently, the growth of tourism villages is focused on two things: increasing the number of visitors and distributing economic benefits more equitably and inclusively. Findings related to the registration of Malasigi Tourism Village for the 2024 Tourism Village Award (ADW) indicate that tourism village

development is being formalized and institutionalized within the national policy framework. The village's participation in the ADW indicates that the village has met specific requirements related to sustainability, community engagement, tourism attractions, and governance. The potential of Malasigi Tourism Village, including hot springs, forests, and birdwatching opportunities, demonstrates the characteristics of an ecotourism destination that adheres to the principles of conservation and biodiversity preservation. The application of the triple bottom line principle, namely balancing economic, social, and environmental factors in sustainable tourism, is reflected in the integration of natural potential with community empowerment.

Based on research findings, NGO participation in maintaining ecosystem sustainability demonstrates the institutional and social capacity to support conservation-based natural resource management. NGOs play a variety of roles in the ecotourism industry, from environmental activism to community support, awareness-raising, and monitoring potentially damaging ecosystem management practices. This helps establish natural and social control mechanisms that make a place more resilient to the impacts of overexploitation. However, the NGO research findings highlight concerns regarding program implementation impacted by leadership changes. Program priorities, policy direction, and the consistency of implementation of conservation and sustainable tourism strategies can be affected by political dynamics and leadership shifts. These criteria suggest that institutional continuity and policy consistency at the government level are just as important to ecosystem sustainability as the dedication of non-governmental actors.

Furthermore, tourism development also opens up employment opportunities for local communities. These include work in homestays and as local tour guides. Direct household-based economic opportunities are reflected in employment opportunities for homestay managers. Besides generating additional income, managing a homestay motivates family members to work hard, which in turn improves household financial stability. Furthermore, the role of local tour guides demonstrates how local expertise is leveraged as social and cultural capital to enhance the visitor experience. In addition to providing information on culture, local knowledge, and environmental preservation, local tour guides play a crucial role in facilitating interactions between visitors and the local environment.

In the context of tourism governance research in Southwest Papua Province, findings regarding value adding mechanisms demonstrate that the multi-stakeholder partnerships formed not only resulted in interactions between actors but also created significant added value, across economic, social, and ecological dimensions. However, this added value cannot be simply interpreted as a result of successful collaboration, but rather requires a more critical understanding as a result of the dynamic distribution of roles, capacities, and access among actors. Empirically, economic added value is evident in the increase in tourism activity, which has impacted local community income growth, particularly through homestay management, tourism services, and involvement in the tourism economic chain. Partnerships between the government, the private sector, and communities have opened up opportunities for communities to become not only objects of development but also economic actors. In this regard, the presence of tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis) is crucial as a bridge between communities and the broader tourism system.

On the other hand, the ecological dimension is also a prominent added value. The focus on marine conservation has had a positive impact on ecosystem sustainability, which in turn has become a major tourist attraction. In this context, partnerships between the government and NGOs play a crucial role in maintaining a balance between utilization and preservation. In other words, the resulting added value is not only short-term but also long-term. However, upon closer examination, these findings also indicate that the resulting added value has not been fully distributed equitably. Regions with better access to leading destinations, such as Raja Ampat, tend to benefit more than others. This suggests that the added value of partnerships is determined not only by the existence of collaboration, but also by geographic location, accessibility, and the level of involvement within the partnership network. Furthermore, there are indications that the resulting added value is still enjoyed more by actors with higher capacity, such as business actors and external actors, compared to local communities with limited access to capital and information. Thus, existing partnerships have not been fully able to create a fair distribution of benefits, even though they show improvement in the aggregate.

Impact on Service Coverage and Quality

Within the theoretical framework of Multistakeholder Partnerships as described by Levinger and Mulroy (2004), the Impact on Coverage and Quality of Services indicator refers to the extent to which the partnership is able to produce a tangible impact on expanding services and improving the quality of services for the community. This indicator emphasizes that the success of a partnership is not only measured by the smoothness of the collaboration process, but primarily by the concrete results felt by the beneficiaries. Based on various statistical data searches, various findings were found that demonstrate the impact and quality of services in tourism development governance as follows.

Table 3. Tourism Destinations in Southwest Papua Province

| City/Regency | Accommodation | Craft | Restaurant |
|----------------------|---------------|-------|------------|
| Sorong City | 66 | 40 | 363 |
| Raja Ampat Regency | 260 | 7 | 128 |
| Sorong Regency | 20 | 52 | 51 |
| Tambrau Regency | 4 | 2 | 31 |
| Maybrat Regency | 3 | 6 | 21 |
| South Sorong Regency | 10 | 2 | 53 |

Source: Department of Youth, Sports, Tourism and Creative Economy of Southwest Papua Province, 2025

The table above shows that Sorong City and Raja Ampat Regency are dominant tourist destinations, particularly in terms of accommodations and restaurants. Raja Ampat boasts 260 accommodations, demonstrating its appeal to many tourists. Furthermore, Sorong City boasts the largest number of restaurants, with 363. This is because Sorong City serves as the main gateway for tourists visiting Southwest Papua Province. Furthermore, Sorong City is a hub of economic activity.

Table 4. Number of Domestic and International Tourist Visits to Southwest Papua Province in 2023-2024

| Traveler | Year | | Percentage | |
|---------------|--------|--------|------------|------|
| | 2023 | 2024 | 2023 | 2024 |
| Domestic | 1,064 | 8,343 | 4% | 22% |
| International | 24,467 | 30,163 | 96% | 78% |

Source: Department of Youth, Sports, Tourism and Creative Economy of Southwest Papua Province, 2025

The table above shows an increase in tourist visits, both domestic and international. Domestic tourist visits experienced a significant increase, as indicated by a percentage increase from 4% to 22%. Meanwhile, international tourists continued to dominate the number of visits, increasing from 24,467 to 30,163.

The contribution analysis was conducted by comparing the value of each sector to the total Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) of Southwest Papua Province at current prices over the past three years. This approach was used to demonstrate the extent of the tourism sector's role in the regional economy and how its contribution dynamics compare to other sectors. Based on this, the following table presents the contribution of the tourism sector and its supporting sectors to the GRDP of Southwest Papua Province.

Table 5. Gross Regional Domestic Product of Southwest Papua 2024-2025

| Year | Accommodation + Food and Drink (M) | Transportation (M) | Total GRDP (M) | % Tourist | % Transportation |
|------|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|
| 2023 | 417.22 | 1,482.44 | 36,104,570 | 1.16% | 4.10% |
| 2024 | 466.26 | 1,585.05 | 37,040,340 | 1.26% | 4.28% |
| 2025 | 503.78 | 1,737.58 | 39,219,640 | 1.28% | 4.43% |

Source: processed author data, 2026

The analysis of the tourism sector's contribution to the GRDP of Southwest Papua Province shows that although there has been a gradual increase in value and contribution, its proportion is still relatively small in the regional economic structure. This condition indicates that the impact of the implementation of multistakeholder partnership in tourism development has not been fully reflected in a significant increase in service coverage or service quality.

In relation to dimensions impact on service coverage and quality The low contribution of the accommodation and food and beverage sector indicates that core tourism services have not developed optimally to reach a wider market potential. This reflects that the increase in tourism activity has not been followed by an even expansion of services, both in terms of quantity, accessibility, and quality of services provided to tourists. On the other hand, the relatively higher contribution of the transportation sector indicates that an increase in tourist mobility has occurred, but has not been fully matched by a strengthening of the core tourism services sector. This condition indicates an imbalance in the tourism service chain, where the accessibility aspect is developing faster than the provision of tourism experience services itself.

Based on this explanation, the findings indicate that the impact of multi-stakeholder partnerships in tourism development tends to be partial and has not yet produced an integrated effect on improving the scope and quality of services. This leads to the conclusion that although various actors have been involved in tourism development, the synergy formed has not been able to drive comprehensive service improvements. Institutionally, the provincial government carries out the functions of coaching, supervision, and evaluation of district/city governments that have direct authority over the tourist destinations being developed. This approach reflects multilevel governance, where the West Papua Province acts as a policy coordinator and capacity booster for subordinate institutions. The main focus of provincial government intervention lies in strengthening human resources through ecotourism training, tour guide certification, and Training of Trainers (TOT) that is tiered from district to ministry.

Efforts to strengthen conservation governance are also evident through the formation of a geosite guard group tasked with safeguarding and managing the geopark area in Raja Ampat. The government not only provides technical training but also facilitates comparative studies in other regions to learn about community-based management practices. Furthermore, collaborations with various NGOs such as Konservasi Indonesia, YKAN, FFI, and the Anak Laut Foundation have strengthened conservation-based governance. The government positions itself as a facilitator and strategic partner in synchronizing programs for area conservation, coral reef restoration, and economic empowerment of communities surrounding the destination. Although not all partnerships have been formalized in provincial-level MoUs, substantial synergy has been established in program implementation on the ground.

Furthermore, the clan-based benefit-sharing policy in Raja Ampat, including the development of homestays, demonstrates the integration of customary values into the destination management system. This strategy aims to prevent internal conflict and foster a sense of community ownership of tourism as a shared source of income. This strengthens the social dimension of conservation governance. However, the government still faces crucial obstacles in implementing this policy, such as budget constraints, suboptimal synergy between regional

government agencies (OPD), and the need for more structured coordination with NGOs to prevent program overlap. Nevertheless, a commitment to strengthening joint planning, ongoing evaluation, and community capacity building is a crucial foundation for building conservation-based tourism governance. Another factor supporting the effectiveness of conservation policies is the still communal economic system of rural communities, known as the "give economy." In this system, the results of hunting or gathering are not consumed individually for personal gain but are shared among community members. Values of togetherness and social solidarity prevail over an orientation toward financial gain. Money is not the primary measure of well-being, but rather the sustainability of shared life and access to natural resources. This economic pattern differs from a market economy based on wages or equivalent exchange of value, so the pressure to exploit resources on a large scale is relatively smaller.

These socio-cultural conditions create a strong foundation for conservation policies. Communities support protection regulations not solely based on long-term economic benefits, but also because they feel protected from the threat of land loss and impaired access to natural resources. As long as the government ensures that customary territories are not seized and that communities can continue to utilize resources for their livelihoods, support for conservation policies will remain strong.

In this context, the role of NGOs is highly strategic as a bridge between government policy and community-level practice. NGOs play a crucial role in strengthening community capacity through mentoring, conservation education, and strengthening local institutions. They help communities understand the importance of ecosystem protection and support village- or clan-based planning. Furthermore, NGOs often provide technical support and funding for conservation programs, such as coral reef restoration, wildlife habitat protection, and community-based ecotourism development. Furthermore, NGOs serve as mediators, ensuring that conservation policy implementation respects the rights of indigenous communities. In some cases, they help align the interests of government, communities, and businesses to prevent land conflicts or overexploitation in both Raja Ampat and other parts of Southwest Papua. The participatory approach employed by NGOs allows communities to actively participate in decision-making, ensuring that conservation policies are not viewed as unilateral instructions but as mutual agreements.

This collaboration between the government, indigenous communities, and NGOs is what strengthens conservation governance in Papua. The government provides the regulatory framework and legal protection, communities provide social legitimacy and commitment to land preservation, while NGOs strengthen technical capacity and provide field assistance. The synergy between these three actors creates a relatively stable and effective governance system for preserving forests, marine areas, and tourism ecosystems.

Despite the increase in visits, several governance challenges remain that could potentially impact the sustainability of this growth. One major issue is unbalanced business competition. The presence of operators who fail to comply with licensing and tax requirements creates disparities in tour package prices. Tourists who don't understand these cost structures tend to choose lower prices without considering legal aspects and established service standards. If this situation is not addressed, the stability of the tourism industry could be disrupted and the overall quality of service could be reduced.

Furthermore, the unintegrated and multi-channel retribution payment system creates administrative inefficiencies. Payment mechanisms to multiple agencies and contributions to indigenous communities create system ambiguity and potentially create opportunities for leakage. Therefore, system simplification through a transparent and accountable single-channel integration is needed to improve business efficiency and provide certainty for industry players.

Social stability is also a crucial factor in maintaining visitor trends. Customary conflicts that lead to the closure of tourist attractions directly impact a destination's reputation. Sudden closures can undermine tourist confidence and negatively impact its long-term image. Therefore, a swift and structured mechanism for resolving customary conflicts is a crucial element of destination governance. Waste management issues also impact the tourism experience. Marine and coastal environments polluted by waste can damage tourists' perceptions of a destination's quality. Given the cross-sectoral nature of tourism, waste management requires inter-agency coordination and is not solely the responsibility of the tourism sector.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the quality of human resources is a key factor in maintaining increased visitation. While the hospitality of local communities is a strong social asset, improving competency in foreign languages, risk management, and international service standards is still needed. Continuous and structured training will increase tourist satisfaction, encourage repeat visits, and strengthen the destination's competitiveness in the global market. Overall, the increase in tourist visits is the result of a combination of successful government conservation policies supported by the community, the active role of NGOs in maintaining the ecosystem, and the role of business actors in highlighting the economic potential of tourism in Southwest Papua Province. However, to maintain the stability and sustainability of the tourism ecosystem, improvements in business governance, a transparent retribution system, prompt resolution of customary conflicts, better environmental management, and strengthening human resource capacity are needed to compete in the tourism sector.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of research and discussion regarding multistakeholder partnership in the tourism governance of Southwest Papua Province, it can be concluded that the multi-party partnerships that have been formed have shown progress towards the better, but have not yet fully achieved optimal conditions as an integrated, inclusive and sustainable governance system.

From the aspect domain of activities the partnership has a relatively clear direction, with marine conservation, tourism village development, human resource capacity building, and promotion as the primary focus. This domain

reflects a collective awareness among actors of the importance of integrating economic, social, and environmental aspects in tourism development. However, the activity domains still tend to be concentrated in specific areas, thus not fully reflecting equitable spatial distribution of tourism development.

In this aspectpartnership typeThe partnerships formed are hybrid, combining formal and informal forms that operate in parallel. Governments and NGOs tend to operate within a formal framework based on programs and regulations, while the private sector and communities operate more in flexible, informal patterns. This situation indicates that the partnerships have not been integrated into a coherent institutional design, leaving each actor still operating based on its own logic and interests.

From the sideactorsThis study shows that the diversity of actors has been a strength in tourism development, as each brings different resources and capacities. However, relations between actors still show inequality, particularly in terms of the distribution of power and access to decision-making. Local communities, despite their direct proximity to resources, do not yet have a fully equal position with other actors, so their role tends to be that of implementers rather than decision-makers.

In this aspectprocess factorsPartnerships demonstrate that the collaborative process has not been running optimally. Coordination between actors still faces obstacles such as sectoral egos, unstructured communication, and the absence of a formal mechanism capable of integrating diverse interests within a shared framework. The ongoing process still relies heavily on informal relationships and individual initiative, making the sustainability of collaboration vulnerable.

Meanwhile, in terms of aspectsvalue adding mechanismsPartnerships have generated tangible added value across multiple dimensions, including improving community economic outcomes, strengthening local capacity, and enhancing environmental sustainability. However, this added value has not been distributed evenly, resulting in partnerships benefiting more from specific regions and actors with greater access to resources and networks.

In this aspectimpactMulti-stakeholder partnerships have contributed to improving the quality of tourism services, growing local economies, and strengthening destination attractiveness. However, these impacts remain unequal in distribution, thus not fully reflecting inclusive and equitable tourism governance. Furthermore, the resulting impacts also demonstrate that partnerships are still in their infancy, with sustainability and system integration being key challenges going forward.

The conclusion of this study shows thatmultistakeholder partnershipTourism governance in Southwest Papua Province has emerged as a promising collaborative practice, yet it still faces various obstacles. These findings indicate that the success of partnerships is not solely determined by the presence of actors and their activities, but also depends heavily on the quality of relationships, process mechanisms, and the ability to distribute benefits equitably. However, future partnership strengthening needs to be directed at establishing a more integrated governance system, enhancing the role and position of local communities, and developing more inclusive and sustainable collaboration mechanisms.

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