Review

Community based ecotourism in “Tomohon” as a new comparative and competitive advantage to bring north sulawesi becoming gate for mice industry in east asia and pacific region

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North Sulawesi Province, located in northern part in East Indonesia, popular with it’s name “ the land of smilling people” and the “ spice Islands”, has an important enrollement in order to improve the regional, national and international economic by joining the regional cooperation with the other Province in East Indonesia and or with the countrie such as: bimp-eaga. One of the most attractive potency also only in North sulawesi is its natural land and marine trasure. It place North Sulawesi as one of the developing province as a gateway to East Indonesia, East Asia and Pacific region as well. Growing as a compmparative and competitive advantage area because of its rich of biodiversity which is uncommpared with other places in the world cause of the position in the Wallace Line, and supported by this potencies, North Sulawesi would open the community based ecotourism opportunities as a comparative and competitive advantage up to the value chain not only local or national, but also international range as well. Tomohon, the city is located about 25 km from Manado, has a lot of amazing places of interest. It keeps also a unique traditional culture and magnificent view of mount Lokon and Mahawu. The role and effort of Masarang village community to conserve the forest in mount Mahawu for secure the spring of water for the people life in Tomohon City and the agrotourism area at Rurukan village, cause the rare of Minahasan endemic bushy plant called Osmoxylon masarangansis can sustainable. Also, the presence of Tomohon Botanical Garden in Kakaskasen village, with the concept of balance of nature spirit making the community surounded the city involved to conserve the fauna and flora colection as a part of community based ecotourism attraction. The geo-position of North Sulawesi to Pacific Rim has made it moving forwards and the potency of Nature Based Ecoturism especially the CBET as charm to bring this province as a gateway to East Asia and Pacific Region

Keyword: community based, ecotourism, value chain, gateway

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUD

North Sulawesi Province with its capital city is Manado, is the one of the tourist destination areas in Indonesia that has been enriched with is beautiful nature. Popular with it’s name “ The land of smilling People “ and “The Spice Island”, this province is Located at North, only 1° from equator line, i.e 0°30’ – 5° 35’ North latitude and beetwen 123°70’ – 127° 00’ East Longitude. The Nothen most island as the outermost border of the Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of the Phillipines is the situated in this Province. In the North, is bordering with the Philipine and in the East with the Pacific Ocean. It consist of 11 regencies and 4 cities i.e: Bolaang Mongondow, North Bolmong, Minahasa, South Minahasa, Southeast Minahasa, Sangihe islands, Talauad islands and Sitaro islands, Bitung City, Manado City, Kotamobaqu City, Tomohon City, East Bolmeng and South Bolmeng. Each region has its own specific and unique art and culture to be discovered.

The geo-position of North Sulawesi has made it moving forwards and the potency bring this province as a gate to
East Asia and Pacific Region. From the geostrategic perspective, North Sulawesi has an important enrollment in order to improve the regional, national and international economic by joining the regional cooperation such as Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippine — East Asean Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA). The geo-position has supported by the natural resources of North Sulawesi such as, agriculture, plantation, marine and fishing, mining and tourism potencies.

One of the most attractive potency also only in North Sulawesi is its natural land and marine treasure. It placed North Sulawesi as one of the developing province as a gate of East Indonesia, East Asia and Pacific region as well. The successful of hosting the international events, World Ocean Conference (WOC), Choral Triangle Initiative (CTI) Summit, and Sail Bunaken at the year of 2009, is making the province known in the world. North Sulawesi is growing as a comparative and competitive advantage area because its reach of biodiversity which is uncompared with other places in the world cause of the position North sulawesi in Wallace Line. Supported by this potencies, North Sulawesi would open the Community based Ecotourism opportunities up to the value chain not only local or national but also international range as well.

In many ways, North Sulawesi in Indonesia is an ideal site for tourism development. The physical landscape is picturesque and its full of natural marvels. The people are friendly and engaging. It is rich in history and culture. The seas that surounded it are plentiful with fish, marine mammals, coral, and other marine-life. The deep of the water, the exchanges of fauna bettwen North sulawesi and mainland Asia, and geological transformations have made the marine environment of North Sulawesi one of the most unique in the world-enough for it to be nominated as a world Heritage Site for UNESCO’s consideration. The rainforests for North Sulawesi contains a hugely diverse group of mammals and bird-many of them unique to the Island, and some to the region. Picturesque villages with white picket fences are set along a backdrop of lovely clove and coconut plantation, hot springs, and volcanoes.

The culture of North Sulawesi reflect it colourful and rich history, combining local traditions as well as Europeans customs. Local handicrafts and customs show the heart of North Sulawesi cultures. The story of North Sulawesi includes the turbulence experience during the Portugese’ occupation, and intriguing relationship with the Dutch during independence movement, and caves occupied by Japanese soldiers during World War II. It is centrally located within the Indonesia archipelago, serving as a transport hub. Finally, there appears to be a concensus that North Sulawesi is prime for a strong nature/community based eco-tourism program.

Community based ecotourism

In general, Community Based Eco-Tourism (CBET) is tourism that is managed by the community for the tourist destinations. With general tourism, tourist visits are often marketed and organised by private travel companies and government protected areas and the bulk of the profits go to the private companies and government enterprises. In contrast, CBET is managed and run by the community itself, management decisions are made by local people and profits directly go to the community.

CBET itself, is a part of sustainable tourism development, because it meets the needs of the present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing the opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled, while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems (World Tourism Organisation in Bhoj Raj K Hanal, 2007)

In order for community based ecotourism to be successful (sustainable), there are many questions that need to be asked and answered in the planning process through implementation stages. One problem of participatory approaches must be pointed out - what defines “community” and “local” in terms of participation?

Communities are not free of conflict, nor they are homogeneous. This fact can complicate any development plans for local communities — communities must agree on representatives for decision-making.

According to the Quebec Declaration on ecotourism, ecotourism embraces the principles of sustainable tourism. The following principles distinguish it from the wider concept of sustainable tourism: 1) Contributes actively to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage; 2) Includes local and indigenous communities in its planning, development and operation contributing to their well-being; 3) Interprets the natural and cultural heritage of the destination to the visitor; and 4) lends itself better to independent travellers, as well as organises tours for small sized groups.

In connection with the theory about CBET and Sustainable tourism that has been telling above, let us follow the stories from the field bellow.

Stories from the field: CBET in Tomohon, North Sulawesi province

Tomohon is a city that located on North Sulawesi Province. It’s 25 km from Manado and reachable by car, taxi or bus. It has a lot of amazing places of interest, but it keeps also unique traditional culture. Magnificent view of Mt.Lokon: active vulcano (1.579.6 m) and Mahawu
Tatawiran coffee plantation, agrotourism, Aracea. planted some of the trees system in 1 hectare area. The village Taro (Colocasia esculenta) as a benefit value for the people already have given results such asduce around 600 m deep is the symbol of Tomohon, cool and breezy highland resort center just an hour’s drive away from Manado. Tomohon offers some of variety of tourist activities i.e: Buddhist temple, handicraft village, and numerous clove and coffe plantation, agrotourism, trek/climb to vulcanoes, color-changing sulfuric lake, white water ratting, Botanical Garden also Pilgrim area and Out bound area.

The efforts of the Masarang Community in forest reserve in Mount Mahawu and Masarang Hill as the source of the water catchment field of Rurukan as the agrotourism area

Mount Mahawu and Masarang Hill known as beautiful areas that rich of unique and natural resources. Both areas functioned to provide water and mineral to support the agricultural places such Rurukan village and Masarang as well. Beside Mount Mahawu with its green scenery, at Masarang Hill lies a lake, called Little Linow which cover around 1 ha. It could be one of the tourism objects in Tomohon, North Sulawesi. The most important issue here is the efforts of the local community to rehabilitate the forest in order reserve the both areas for the water catchment field for the people and the agricultural activity around the places. In 2009, the people had plant more than 20 thousand trees; the activity had been done for 8 years by the local people. The conservation area covers around 300 hectares in Masarang that divided into 100 hectares as the forest reserve and rest as the local estate crops. One of the settlers in Masarang Hill is Masarang Village. In community territories, Masarang village entered the district of Minahasa (holding area before Tomohon dimekarkan). Administratively, it has 5 local district that has around 300 people of each district. The people cultivate the land by using the agroforestry system and the local people work together with the Non Government Organisation (NGO).

Palm tree from the family of Arenga Pinata or Aren (in Indonesia or SEHO in local name)

The local community use this trees for rehabilitate the forest to conserve the water catchment surrounding Masarang Hills and Mount Mahawu who is the source of water for most of the spring in Tomohon city and the agriculture and agrotourism area in Rurukan. Seho/Aren was chosen because it is a multi-purpose trees system (MPTS), ranging from roots, stems, leaves and sap (local wine and as a raw material for brown sugar, bio fuel/ethanol and vinegar): it almost the same as the coconut is called the tree of life, the different is from the age of 4 years Seho already have given results such as fibre, while coconut plantations will produce after over 10 years old. The local community was cultivated it since the year of 2004: already in the planting of approximately 20 thousand Seho trees, until now the effort is continuing with preparing the seedlings for planting in other areas for reforesting and rehabilitation the rain forest area in Masarang Hills approximately 300 ha. The community using the land among the trees for planting the Taro plant as a part of agroforestry program.

Taro cultivation among the Seho trees

Planting Taro, as part of Agroforestry has been conducted since 2007, a joint efforts of local communities or individual businesses. The community planted Taro, Colocasia esculenta from the family Aracea. Taro (English) the local name is Bete’ or Talas in Indonesian, has a benefit value for the people because it could be one of the food sources, and to support the National food security program. Taro plants chosen, because he does not need a full solar radiation, but only about 60-75 percent, and only needed two treatments since grown to the age of 7 months ready for harvest.

Data showed that, by using the planting system for 3 years the people could plant 800s Talas in 1 hectare area. On the seventh month, the people could gather around 1 case or 60 kilograms of Talas, that sold 40.000 Rupiahs. Which means, one hectare area could produce around 800: 8 trees = 100 cases x 40.000 Rupiah = 4.000.000 (four million Rupiahs) every 8 moths. It showed that Talas could be a new commodity to help the people to increase their income.

To conserve the forests, the people work by their own initiative and working together for one purpose to secure the springs in Tomohon City liked Mu’ung spring, Ma’laleni Spring, Sineleyan and Kalimpesan springs. The springs make important roles in providing the water for the city and the agricultural activities. The interested one is the participation of the local people; whenever they found somebody destroys the forests, the people report it to the government. Beside its main role as the water catchment areas, these area has rich many kinds of fauna and flora. Unidentified species and can not be found in other places like Osmoxylon marangansis is the rare Minahasan endemic bushy plant which can be found only in Mahawu-Masarang and Tampusu; another unique species is an animal named Kodo ba tandu.

The efforts of the local people shows a good impact not only for the local people but for the whole city life. Springs...
keep providing the water and people do not find any difficulties to draw a well. The effort has help the people to run their daily life.

Tomohon botanical garden

Displaying a beatiful panorama with the view of two activities volcanoes Lokon (1,579,0 m) and Mahawu (1,311 m) that fertilized the land, Kakaskasen is the closer village nearby awaiting for you all. Kakaskasen is the point of view Tomohon City, it is a beautiful place to relax after diving and to explore the highland of North Sulawesi and its absolutely the right place. You could have a nice walk in the morning or afternoon to see and enjoy the variety of lovely flowers that local people plant and sell in the stalls along the sidewalk, or the main road of the city. Or you could do some tracking in the vicinity of the city to see the colourful lakes, waterfalls, famous traditional markets and an array of other events.

Tomohon Botanical Garden (TBG) is the first private botanical garden in Indonesia, which is located in Kakaskasen Dua District, North Tomohon, Tomohon City. It founded based on 1). Agenda 21. 2) Developmental Planning to set the botanical garden in Indonesia by Indonesian Precident, on August 11, 2004 while celebrating The HARKITNAS. 3) The letter of Indonesian Research and Technology Minister dated on August 23, 2004 about building the Botanical Garden in Indonesia no. 77/M/VIII/04. 4) Letter of Governor of North Sulawesi to support the efforts to set the Tomohon Botanical Garden. 5) Letter of LIPI-Bogor Botanical Garden No. 27/IPH.3/KS/2000 about a recommendation to set Manado Botanical Garden. 6). Tomohon Governmental Regulation No. 02/KPTS/HUT-LH/2007 a deal of the concept of balance of nature and spirit and based on its own mission, to make TBG as the centre of excellence and seed bank.

TBG lies along 75 hectares with height, 820-1020 dpl and contains some unique biodiversity, especially endemic species in Wallace line. The list below show some of biodiversity that found at TBG:

A. Flora
1. Alstonia sp
2. Arenga sp
3. Ailanthus malabarica
4. Elmerillia ovalis
5. Ficus benjamina
6. Macaranga sp
7. Palaquium sp
8. Areca catechu
9. Switenia mahogany
10. Mangifera sp
11. Eugenia cumini
12. Ochrosia sp
13. Durio zibethinus
14. Azolla pinnata
15. Hydrilla verticillata
16. Monochoria vaginalis
17. Najas indica
18. Chara vulgaris
19. Ficus septica
20. Trema tomentos

B. Fauna (most of them is bird)
1. Zosterops sp
2. Nectarinia jugularis
3. Halcyon chloris
4. Loriculus stigmatus
5. Trichastoma celebense
6. Dicaeum celebicum
7. Dicaeum nehrkornii
8. Macropygia amboinensis
9. Centropus bengalensis
10. Pandion haliaetus
11. Collocalia esculenta
12. Hirundo tahitica
13. Lonchura malaca
14. Dicaeum aureolimbatum

TBG fasilitated by natural and religious tourism: Mahawu Pilgrim (Jalan salib Mahawu), Mahawu Outbond, Alamanda Reat-treat and Kelong Garden. The local people that live around it has important role to keep the balance of environment. Besides, the people cultivated the land by planting the floricultural commodity that enrich the area. Tomohon Botanical Garden employed the local people who are living around the area. Totally, amount 51 worker divided into some responsibilities. But most of them placed onto manage the field. All the workers are trained to be a skillful loving and caring workers. The presence of Tomohon Botanical Garden could attract the local and foreign tourists. It is a commitment that every visitor or tourist could enjoy the encredible scenery but invite them to keep the existance of the species. Another advantage is the opportunity in bussiness has growing. It is marked by many resorts, homestays and restaurant emerge to support the tourism. Tomohon Botanical Garden has improved the multiplier effect for the local community socio-economic impact.

Another natural – based ecotourism objects in north sulawesi

Tangkoko nature reserve-lembeh strait in bitung

The Tangkoko – Duasudara area has been famous since the time of Wallacea, a British naturalist who visited Sulawesi in the 1850s, for its abundant and unusual wildlife (i.e., the black helmented megapode, maleo bird). In 1919 the Dutch colonial government declared Tangkoko a nature monument and has remained protected by the
Government of Indonesia to this day. The reserve contains the highest densities of Black Macaques (aka. Black Apes), Red-Knobbed Hornbills, and Spectral tarisers in North Sulawesi. The reserve also has the highest densities of fig trees in Sulawesi providing abundant supply of food for fruit-eating animals.

Lembeh straits bordering Tangkoko-Duasudara Nature Reserve, is 12 km long stretch of water separating Lembeh island and the mainland. Bitung is actually the half way point along the shores of Lembeh Straits. This pristine section of water in North Sulawesi is home to many unique sea animals which include the pygmy seahorse, mimic octopus, ghost pipefish, as well as other large species. It is a fantastic dive area for underwater photographers and the diversity of smaller creatures ensures many memorable photo opportunities. There are several undeveloped beaches on the shoreline of Lembeh Strait which are excellent for swimming and snorkeling.

**Bunaken national park in manado**

Bunaken national Park (BNP) lies at the epicenter of global marine biodiversity. Located in the center of the Coral Triangle, comprising Indonesia, the Philippines and eastwest to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Island. BNP is home to some of the richest marine biodiversity in the world. The 89,095 hectares park provides habitats for at least 1000 species of coral reef fish from 175 families (BNPMP,1996), and approximately 400 species of scleractinian hard coral representing 63 genera and 15 families (Turak and DeVantier, 2003 in Rob Lee et all: 2005).

**Underwater active vulcano in Sangihe Island.**

Magnificent white sandy beaches with amazing coral gardens as well as underwater active vulcano and as a unique and attractive tourism object in Sangir Islands.

**Largest national park in Sulawesi, the Bogani Nani Wartabone National Park ( 193,600 ha), altitudes of 200 – 1,968 m in Bolaang Mongondow.**

It’s mountainous terrain and dense vegetation vegetation make it an ideal home for maleo birds, anoa, horn-biltracand als, wild pigs, tarsius spectrum and giant fruits bats. Giant fruit bats were a new species discovered in 1992. It contains the highest diversity of terrestrial plants and animals in all of Sulawesi.

**DISCUSSION**

Based on the stories telling about the efforts of the Masarang community in forest reserve in Mount Mahawu and Masarang Hill as the source of the water catchment field of Rurukan as the Agrotourism area, and story about the Tomohon Botanical Garden we can see that not all the terms of CBET is already imposed at both locations of ecotourism destination in Tomohon North Sulawesi. This is apparent on the role of public/local community that has not been thoroughly involved the management of natural resources as a tourist attraction, but because their management, especially mainly because the source of funds in the initial management comes from managing such as initiator or NGOs.

However, can be seen that local communities in both locations all have a similar and same spirit to build and conserve the natural resource as an integral part of their lives, and that is what led to the sustainability of the diversity can continue. It is interesting to note that, the concern of local communities to maintain and protect environment and natural resources around them because they are very confident that it is a heritage of natural resources that should be preserve for posterity and continuation of life and all living creatures of the earth.

Masarang villagers knew very well that the water for their life, the Rurukan farmers in and around the villages and the peole in Tomohon depends on the preservation of forest on Mount Mahawu. The same is also perceived by management and the community surrounding TBG, that TBG’s presence is a part of preserve uniqueness of biodiversity and seed bank as well as natural resources in Mount Mahawu. There for the presence of TBG for them there is nothing strange, but only a part of the arrangement of forest as will be a tourist attraction that has its own competitiveness.

That is why, the CBET in Tomohon City can become a locomotive to drive the beneficially activities of the local community socio-economic as well as tool for conserving forests. This may be because the people in Masarang village and Kakaskasen not make a mayor changes to the sorounding natural environment, they appreciate the nature, as well as strictly limiting the use of forest and limit the number of visitors at the certain time.

**CONCLUSION**

The Community Based Ecotourism could be a mainstay of competitive ecotourism. It could attract the tourists to visit North Sulawesi. CBET is excellent in local uniqueness. It stimulates the visitors to know more about the place. In other side it could increase the people and tourism stakeholders’ income.
The conserving efforts done by the local community in Masarang and Mahawu is a related activity with CBET in another places. It is so because the agricultural products could supply the needs in another places beside to fulfill the local needs. Tomohon Botanical Garden also plays an important role as locomotive to encourage a continued efforts to drive the socio-economic for local community.

Beside Tomohon, the CBET can be found in some areas such as, Manado city, Bitung City, Minahasa Regency and Bolaang Mongondow Regency which can be arranged as a one package competitive tourism product. Also, It could be a prime-mover for stimulating the development and driving the tourism forward in East Indonesia such, Maluku Province, North Maluku Province, Papua Province etc and the neighbour countries like BIMP-EAGA to bring North Sulawesi as the gate for East Asia and Pacific Region.

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