

# Planning for the Development of Danau Biru Geotourism in North Kolaka

Taslim Fait<sup>1</sup>, Irbiah<sup>1</sup>, Juslan Badia<sup>1</sup>, Anis Ribcalia Septiana<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Public Administration Study Program, Faculty of Social Sciences and Economics, Sembilan Belas, November Kolaka University, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Taslim Fait

Email: [Taslimfaitsipmsi@gmail.com](mailto:Taslimfaitsipmsi@gmail.com)

**Abstract.** *This article analyzes the local government's planning in the development of Danau Biru Geotourism in Walasiho Village, North Kolaka Regency, as an effort to realize sustainable tourism destinations based on local potential. Using qualitative methods, data was obtained through in-depth interviews, field observations, and focus group discussions with informants from local governments, village governments, business actors, and visitors, supplemented by secondary data from official documents and related publications. The analysis was carried out using the managerial planning framework of George R. Terry (2008) which includes goal setting, condition evaluation, identification of supporting and inhibiting factors, and preparation of development plans. The results of the study show that the planning has accommodated the needs and available resources, such as the uniqueness of the Danau Biru, community support, and development master plan. However, implementation is constrained by limited infrastructure, funding, and management capacity. Supporting factors include natural attraction, adequate accessibility, and increasing trend of visits, while inhibiting factors include lack of facilities, lack of promotion, and lack of optimal private partnerships. The management of Danau Biru has been carried out through an annual cooperation agreement between the North Kolaka Tourism Office and the Walasiho Village Joint Enterprise. The conclusion of the study emphasizes the need for a sustainable strategy that combines the development of basic facilities, institutional strengthening through the formation of tourism awareness groups, integrated promotion, and cross-sectoral collaboration, as well as integration with surrounding destinations to increase the attractiveness and economic contribution of the destination.*

**Keywords:** *Planning, Geotourism, Sustainable Tourism, North Kolaka, Danau Biru*

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## INTRODUCTION

President Prabowo Subianto emphasized the importance of development from villages to encourage economic growth and equity through Asta Cita number 6. In line with this, the tourism sector is the government's concern as a driver of national development, including through research and community service. One form of sustainable tourism is the development of tourist destinations in villages which are considered to be able to improve the local economy (Zhang et al., 2021). However, the development of village tourism still faces obstacles, such as suboptimal management, the pandemic, the role of stakeholders and tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis) who are constrained by budget and lack of awareness (Falahuddin et al., 2020; Sabaruddin et al., 2023; Salouw & Pramono, 2023).

Danau Biru in Walasiho Village, Wawo District, North Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi is one of the region's priority tourist destinations, which is jointly managed by the North Kolaka Regency Government and the Walasiho Village Government through Village-Owned Enterprises

(Unga & Wahbi , 2024). Despite having adequate attractiveness and accessibility, the management of the Danau Biru has not been optimal due to limited infrastructure, lack of promotion, and weak capacity of the management organization (Mahmud et al., 2024). Preliminary studies show that the planning aspect in the management of Danau Biru has not been maximized.

The problems in this study are formulated as follows: what are the planning aspects by the local government in the development of Danau Biru Geotourism in North Kolaka Regency? This research is important to provide an overview of planning in the management of village-based tourist destinations, especially in the context of sustainable tourism development in the region. Optimizing the management of Danau Biru destinations not only contributes to improving the local economy and local income, but also strengthens the role of community groups, such as Bumdes in regional development. In addition, the results of this research are expected to be considered for local governments in formulating policies and strategic programs for tourism development based on local potential.

### **Problem-Solving Approach**

Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Number 9 of 2021 about the Sustainable Tourism Destination Guidelines emphasizing the importance of sustainable development of tourist attractions through strategic partnerships between local governments, villages, and communities. One of the tourist destinations managed through a cooperation agreement between the local government and the village government is the Danau Biru in Walasiho Village, Wowo District, North Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. In order for management to be more effective, it is necessary to implement management functions, including planning aspects (Terry & Rue, 2019). Planning, aims to design short, medium, and long-term development directions and goals based on local potential. This managerial approach is expected not only to increase the effectiveness of destination management, but also to strengthen the competitiveness of Danau Biru tourism as part of the development of sustainable tourism villages. With more professional and participatory management, starting from the planning stage, this destination is expected to encourage an increase in tourist visits, drive the local economy, and make a real contribution to the overall economic growth of North Kolaka Regency.

### **State of The Art and Novelty**

This article offers a new approach to the development of village-based tourist destinations by emphasizing the planning aspect as part of an important managerial stage (Terry & Rue, 2019), as well as prioritizing strategic partnerships between local governments, village governments, and communities (Nurdin et al., 2023). Different from previous research that emphasized the allocation of village budgets for tourism, halal tourism, culinary tourism, Digitization of Tourism in Suburban Areas, or the role of the community in tourism development (Fikri & Septiawan, 2020; Hendrarti et al., 2024; Musthofa et al., 2023; Prihantoro et al., 2022; Purnomo, 2023; Rini, 2019; Triaji et al., 2023). This research focuses on the role of the North Kolaka Regency Government and the Walasiho Village Government in developing Danau Biru as a sustainable tourist destination. *Novelty* or the novelty of this research lies in the thorough exploration of planning aspects that have not been touched much in the context of Walasiho Village, as well as strengthening the role of the Village Government as the main actor.

This approach is expected to be a solution to the limitations of facilities, innovative activities, and the capacity of local managers (Mahmud et al., 2024), as well as a policy recommendation for regions that are trying to improve the economy through the tourism sector, such as North Kolaka Regency (Septiana et al., 2024), which still faces a fairly high poverty rate. As an industry, tourism receives great attention in development discussions and in development planning in the developing southern hemisphere (Scheyvens & Laeis, 2019). This research utilizes the planning approach as one of the managerial aspects, in addition to organizing, actuating, and controlling as developed by George R. Terry. This analysis is used to assess the extent to which the local government has designed strategic planning in the development of Danau Biru

Geotourism. Through this approach, the strengths and weaknesses of local governments can be systematically identified, especially the ability to formulate work programs. The results of the analysis will be the basis for formulating concrete and actionable recommendations. Thus, this *planning approach* not only explains the current managerial condition of the local government in North Kolaka Regency, but also provides strategic direction for strengthening their role in building partnerships that support the sustainability of Danau Biru geotourism destinations.

## METHODS

This type of research is qualitative to understand the social situation including sources of information, places, and activities on the object or subject of research (Fadli, 2021). The research location is in Walasiho Village, Wowo District, North Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. Preparations for research, data collection and analysis will be carried out in January-August 2025. Data collection was carried out in a triangulation manner sourced from primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained from the results of in-depth interviews, containing informant explanations regarding the planning for the development of Danau Biru tourist destinations in North Kolaka Regency. The research informants are determined by *Purposive*, i.e. the selected research subject is considered to represent the characteristics and objectives of the research (Darmalaksana, 2020). There are 4 types of informants in this research: (1) Head of Marketing of the North Kolaka Tourism Office; (2) the Head of Walasiho Village; (3) business actors in Danau Biru; and (4) visitors. The data is complemented by observations at the research site and sharpened with *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) with employees in the field of marketing, human resources, and destinations at the North Kolaka Tourism Office office. The secondary data comes from scientific articles, books, mass media, government regulations, and related agency reports. This study uses analysis *Planning* (planning) as one of the managerial aspects developed by Terry & Rue, (2019), to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the management of Danau Biru as a sustainable tourist destination. To support the depth of analysis, data analysis techniques are used including *condensation* (condensation) i.e. data is sorted based on relevant information, *Data Display* or data is presented, and continues on *conclusion drawing and verification* or drawing conclusions and verifications. By integrating the framework *Planning* Terry & Rue, (2019), into the analytical work system of Samoilenko & Osei-Bryson et al (2023), this study ensures that the qualitative data obtained is not only thematically organized, but also critically analyzed and solution-oriented.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Potential of Blue Lake Tourist Destinations

Blue Lake in Walasiho Village, Wowo District, North Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi is a geotourism object with unique characteristics in the form of brackish blue water, a depth of up to 11 meters, and a hydrological connection through rock cavities that flow into the sea (Figure 1). This uniqueness makes Blue Lake a geosite that represents a typical geological phenomenon of the coastal area. Relatively easy accessibility because it is on the Trans Sulawesi route and only about 50 km from the district capital, increases the potential of this natural tourism. Initial management through basic facilities such as parking areas, public toilets, gazebos, and selfie points provided by BUMDes Walasiho shows that there is community participation in destination management, which is in line with the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) approach (Amin et al., 2022; Widaningsih et al., 2024).

The use of Lake Biru as a tourist area has been carried out since the expansion of North Kolaka Regency in 2003, and on February 23, 2023, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy classified Lake Biru as a developing tourism village. North Kolaka Regency itself has a fairly diverse portfolio of destinations (natural, marine, religious, artificial, and culinary tourism) with the support of facilities such as hotels, lodging, restaurants, and transportation (Dinas Pariwisata Kolaka Utara dan Pusat Informasi Data Investasi Indonesia, 2018). However, as explained in studies on geotourism in Indonesia and other developing countries, natural potential does not automatically guarantee development success if it is not supported by collaborative

governance, strong institutional capacity, and structured community participation mechanisms (Hadian et al., 2025; Yanes et al., 2019).

According to Terry & Rue (2019), planning is the determination of goals and steps that must be taken to achieve them in the future. Planning is divided into several types based on the process, namely policy planning (focusing on policy making), program planning (details of policy implementation), and operational planning (efficient work arrangement). Meanwhile, in the organization, planning includes four main stages, namely (1) setting goals according to needs and resources; (2) evaluation of current conditions; (3) identification of supporting and inhibiting factors; and (4) the preparation of a clear plan, including alternative solutions to overcome implementation obstacles. Planning, both at the strategic and operational levels, is presented as a vital basic element in achieving organizational goals. Strategic planning is seen as a comprehensive long-term plan and is the basis for operational planning in realizing organizational goals. Strategic planning even serves as a starting point to assess the overall managerial and organizational activities (Tavo & Rasmus, 2024; Ugboro et al., 2011; Maleka, 2014; Brycson, 2012).

From the perspective of sustainable tourism planning, the strength of the geological potential that the Blue Lake has is the initial capital, but destination management must be built on the principles of conservation, cross-actor coordination, and strengthening local institutions (Novianty et al., 2025). Without a critical reading of governance structures and implementation gaps, the development of tourist destinations such as Blue Lake has the potential to be trapped in unsustainable "potential-based tourism". The geotourism literature shows that the success of geosite development is greatly influenced by the *collaborative governance system*, especially in the division of roles, government-community-private coordination, and management accountability (Sipatan et al., 2023).

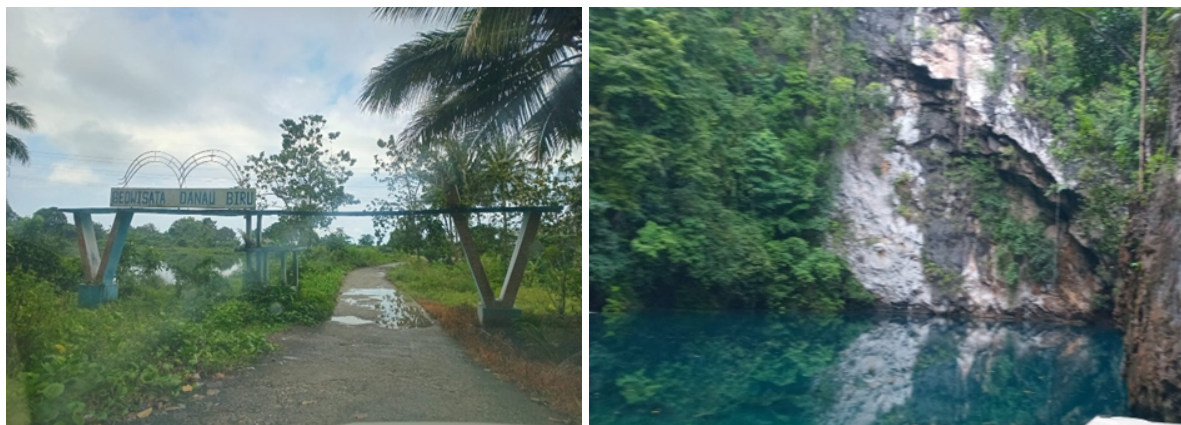


Figure 1. Blue Gate and Lake  
Source: Researcher Documentation

In addition, the increase in tourist visits without a carrying capacity management mechanism has the potential to put pressure on the environment, as found in the study of Baluran and several other geosite areas in Indonesia (Siswanto & Rahayu, 2025). Therefore, although Lake Biru has been classified as a developing tourism village, long-term sustainability is highly dependent on strengthening the capacity of BUMDes, establishing Pokdarwis, preparing destination conservation plans, and integrating tourist routes with other destinations in North Kolaka and Kolaka (Tamborasi, Tinukari, Berova). This article reviews planning from the aspect of setting goals according to needs and resources, evaluating current conditions, identifying supporting and inhibiting factors, and preparing a clear plan, including alternative solutions to overcome implementation barriers.

### Blue Lake Development Objectives

Blue Lake in Walasiho Village, North Kolaka, is one of the geotourism potentials with unique geomorphological and hydrological characteristics. Located in a coastal area, this lake has bluish bluish water, cool temperatures, and natural cave structures that connect it to the sea. The landscape creates an integration between natural, marine, and mountainous tourism (Dinas Pariwisata Kolaka Utara dan Pusat Informasi Data Investasi Indonesia, 2018). The Head of Walasiho Village, TI (54), emphasized that this uniqueness makes Blue Lake one of the best natural panoramas in Southeast Sulawesi.

From an institutional perspective, the North Kolaka Tourism Office through the Tourism Marketing Division has prepared a *master plan* for the development of Blue Lake Geotourism as a basis for planning. The preparation of the master plan is an important step to ensure the direction of sustainable destination development, maintain environmental sustainability, and increase economic benefits for local communities. The status of land that has belonged to the local government strengthens the certainty of the legality of development. The aspirations of the community and the village government have also been entered through the Development Planning Musyarwarah forum (Musrenbang), showing the existence of social legitimacy in the planning process. The village government's commitment was stated by the Head of Walasiho Village who emphasized the importance of providing basic facilities such as road access, prayer rooms, clean water, and lighting as a prerequisite for increasing tourist comfort (Interview, July 23, 2025).

Referring to interviews with the village government and the Tourism Office, the objectives of the development of the Blue Lake include three main aspects: (1) sustainable destination development, (2) increased economic benefits for local communities, and (3) improvement of basic facilities and tourist comfort. Conceptually, the direction of this goal is in line with the planning principles according to Terry & Rue (2019) regarding the suitability between goals, needs, and available resources. Given the distinctive natural potential of Blue Lake, the development orientation that emphasizes conservation, sustainable use, and improving community welfare has been on track.

However, the analysis of these goals is still normative and needs to be critically linked to implementation constraints. In the context of *tourism governance*, the international literature emphasizes that the success of geotourism development is greatly influenced by institutional capacity, coordination mechanisms between stakeholders, and the availability of long-term financing schemes (Boley et al., 2017; Hsu et al., 2013). Although the existence of the *master plan* is an important instrument in providing development direction, the planning document has not fully addressed structural challenges at the regional level, such as funding limitations that still depend on central budget allocations, weak managerial capacity of local governments in destination management, and lack of incentives to attract private investment.

Globally, geotourism studies confirm that destination sustainability is highly dependent on *collaborative governance* involving governments, local communities, business actors, and expert groups (Dowling & Newsome, 2018). Without solid coordination between sectors, sustainable development goals have the potential to be unattainable despite the high geological potential and natural attractiveness. In addition, innovative financing models, such as public private partnerships (PPP), conservation funds, or community investment schemes, are key factors in the development of geotourism in various countries (Buhalis et al., 2023), but until now it has not been seen in the Blue Lake development plan.

Thus, there is a gap between the normative goals of Blue Lake development and institutional readiness in realizing it. Previous research has emphasized the importance of a master plan that not only serves as a technical guideline, but also integrates aspects of institutional capacity, sustainable financing strategies, as well as a spirit of place-based approach that puts local identity at the heart of development (Chapagain, 2017; Utami et al., 2023). Therefore, the development of the Blue Lake requires strengthening the dimensions of governance implementation, including funding, institutional coordination, and multi-stakeholder

collaboration, so that the formulated goals can be achieved realistically, measurably, and sustainably.

### Condition Evaluation

The second aspect of the planning process is an assessment of *current situation* to map the gap between goals and realisation on the ground ( Terry & Rue, 2019). Based on the information of the Head of Walasiho Village, Tl, there was high enthusiasm from visitors to Blue Lake, including tourists from regional officials to ministries. This finding is in line with data from the North Kolaka Regency Tourism Office which shows a total of 197,898 visits in three years (2022–2024), with a significant growth trend every year. A total of 23,351 visitors in 2022, increased to 82,290 in 2023, and reached 92,257 in 2024. If sorted by the origin of tourists, the number of local tourists reached 116,796 people (59.02%) and Indonesian tourists 81,102 people (40.98%).

Table 1. Visitors in Danau Biru Walasiho Village 2022-2024

Yes	Year	Foreign	Local	Nusantara	Visitors
1	2022	-	13.744 (58,85%)	9.607 (41,15%)	23.351
2	2023	-	44.889 (54,55%)	37.401 (45,45%)	82.290
3	2024	-	58.163 (63,04%)	34.094 (36,96%)	92.257
	Total	-	116.796 (59,02%)	81.102 (40,98%)	197.898

Source: North Kolaka Regency Tourism Office

**Based on the Results of Interviews and Observations in the Field, the Evaluation of the Current Conditions in Lake, Biru is Described as Follows:**

#### ***Evaluate the Suitability Between Potential and Planning Objectives***

Potentially, data shows that Blue Lake has a growing tourist market. The master plan document has set the goals of sustainable development, environmental conservation, and increased economic benefits for the community. Thus, there is a match between the potential and the direction of planning. However, tourism growth without adequate regulation has the potential to increase ecological risks, as affirmed in the sustainable tourism literature (Buckley, 2012; Budeanu et al., 2016; Saarinen, 2006). The increase in the number of tourists to nearly 200 thousand people in three years can have an impact on the pressure on ecological carrying capacity, increased waste, sedimentation, vegetation damage, disturbances to the geological structure of the lake, and a decrease in the comfort of the local community. Thus, tourism growth cannot be considered a single indicator of success, but must be accompanied by adequate regulation and mitigation.

#### ***Limited Budget Support and Lack of Execution***

The high demand for tourism in Blue Lake has not been followed by adequate budget support, both from the local government, access to banking financing, and funding support from the central government. The Head of Marketing of the North Kolaka Tourism Office, SR, stated that one of the expected solutions is the involvement of the private sector in the provision of villas, homestays, and tourist attractions. The very limited regional budget capacity allows for investment from outside parties to strengthen the attractiveness and amenities of the Blue Lake area. Field facts show that the construction of amenities such as homestays, villas, recreational rides, and basic facilities has not been implemented. Although the planning has been prepared through various documents and deliberations, its implementation has stagnated due to limited funding.

Further analysis found a number of gaps between planning and execution. First, the master plan does not have a measurable implementation roadmap, including performance indicators, timelines, and role sharing among stakeholders. Second, the annual BUMDes cooperation contract causes a short-term orientation, thus hindering the entry of long-term investment. Third, there is no visitor management plan that includes ecotourism zoning, daily visit quotas, and

capacity-based ticketing systems. Fourth, a long-term funding scheme and formal partnership model with the private sector or financing institutions have not been formulated. This is in line with the findings of *the tourism governance literature* that the main challenges in destination development are weak coordination between actors and the unavailability of long-term financing models (Sharpley, 2023; Velasco, 2018).

Without an analysis of the ecological, social, and governance implications, planning evaluations have the potential to become a purely technical inventory, rather than an academic contribution. Research shows that the evaluation of tourism village planning requires an assessment of aspects of land use, community economic conditions, potential attractions, basic infrastructure, accessibility, village institutional capacity, and socio-economic impact. Strengthening human resources based on local wisdom is also needed to ensure the sustainability of destinations (Pradnyana, 2024; Batubara et al., 2024; Pangga et al., 2025).

### ***Utilization of Natural and Social Resources***

Blue Lake has unique geotourism characteristics, such as blue brackish water, its location close to the sea, and the existence of rock cavities that connect the lake with marine waters. Within the framework of *geotourism*, these peculiarities can be developed as geology-based educational attractions (Dowling & Newsome, 2018). From the social side, the community and the village government show support for tourism development, but institutions such as Pokdarwis have not been formed. Evaluations show that natural and social resources are available, but their management is not yet structured. Investor engagement plans need to be accompanied by a clear partnership design so as not to neglect the interests of local communities. The literature on *collaborative governance* in tourism states that the sustainability of destinations can be improved through multi-stakeholder collaboration that has clarity of rights, roles, and benefit-sharing mechanisms (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2016; Sharpley, 2023). Without this, investment has the potential to create conflicts or inequality in the distribution of benefits.

### ***Supporting and Inhibiting Factors***

The third aspect of the planning process according to Terry & Rue (2019) emphasizes the importance of systematically identifying *supporting factors* and *constraints*. In the context of the development of the Blue Lake destination, this analysis shows that although the area has a unique geological attraction and relatively good accessibility, its management has not been optimally carried out due to various structural and technical constraints (Mahmud et al., 2024). SWOT analysis and 4A (Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, and Ancillary Services) framework show that Blue Lake has *strengths* in the form of natural beauty, distinctive geological formations, and community support; *weaknesses* in the form of lack of innovation, limited facilities, and weak organizational capacity; *opportunities* in the form of potential government support and increased tourist interest; and *threats* in the form of potential land conflicts and the risk of policy change (Andrianto & Sugiyama, 2016; Mahmud et al., 2024). At the same time, the 4A-based tourism evaluation shows that Blue Lake excels in terms of attractions and accessibility, but still lags behind in the provision of additional facilities and services.

In line with the field findings, the Walasiho Village Government together with the North Kolaka Regency Government have planned to improve facilities, including road access, lighting, clean water, prayer rooms, and lodging. Various additional proposals such as repairs to guardrails, changing rooms, and shelters were also submitted by diving service providers (Interview, July 14, 2025). However, the realization of these facilities is still highly dependent on APBD/APBN funds and has not been supported by a collaborative financing model with the private sector. When associated with the third aspect of planning, the supporting factors of Blue Lake include: (1) the geological uniqueness of blue brackish water and hydrological connection to the sea; (2) community and village government support, including commitment to preserve the area; (3) relatively good accessibility; (4) tourist enthusiasm demonstrated by 197,898 visitors in the last three years; and (5) the existence of BUMDes as an initial management institution. On the other hand, structural inhibiting factors include: (1) limited regional budgets;

(2) the annual contract mechanism of BUMDes that creates uncertainty; (3) the lack of tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis) as an indicator of weak community capacity; (4) lack of service innovation; (5) the absence of private investment schemes; and (6) environmental risks due to increased visits.

This obstacle is not only a technical problem, but mainly a governance issue. The *collaborative governance* framework demands a clear distribution of authority, the building of trust between actors, long-term commitment, and a consensus process in decision-making (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012). However, in practice, the relationship between the local government and BUMDes-the community in the Blue Lake is still contractual and administrative, not collaborative-structural. This condition causes destination management to not reflect participatory, coordinated, and sustainability-oriented principles as suggested in the literature on geotourism management and tourism governance. Previous research has strengthened the finding that the success of village tourism destinations is highly determined by natural potential, social capital, capacity of management institutions, digital promotion, community-based planning, and cross-actor coordination. In addition, village funds can serve as strategic instruments to strengthen tourism infrastructure, but their effectiveness depends on local governance and institutional capacity (Hafiz et al., 2026). Thus, strengthening collaborative governance is the main prerequisite for the Blue Lake master plan to be implemented optimally and sustainably.

### **Development Plan Preparation**

The fourth aspect of planning according to Terry & Rue (2019) emphasizes the importance of *establishing a clear plan*. In this context, the management of Blue Lake was handed over by the North Kolaka Regency Tourism Office to the Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) Joint Enterprises, Walasiho Village. Based on official documents, the latest cooperation agreement is outlined in Number: 100.3.7/167/DISPAR/XII/2024 and Number 007/BUMDES/2024 concerning the Management of Blue Lake Tourist Attractions for the period January 1–December 31, 2025. The agreement was made on December 27, 2024, signed by the Head of the North Kolaka Tourism Office and the Chairman of BUMDes Walasiho, and witnessed by the Wawo Sub-district Head and the Head of Walasiho Village. The cooperation agreement contains the handover of management rights to BUMDes, including facility maintenance, cleanliness, regional security, and the collection of levies and visitor taxes. The Tourism Office has the responsibility of providing land and basic facilities, providing legality, and providing administrative support.

Meanwhile, BUMDes is responsible for daily operations, promotion, marketing, and the development of tourism service facilities and innovations. Based on the agreement, BUMDes are obliged to deposit Regional Original Revenue (PAD) of IDR 50,000,000 per year, paid monthly through the Treasurer of the North Kolaka Tourism Office. The Head of Walasiho Village, TI emphasized that large capital is needed to develop Blue Lake, especially because access to roads, electricity, and clean water is still not ideal. With the current conditions, BUMDes only get around IDR 500,000 on Sundays and IDR 100,000 on weekdays from parking and entrance ticket levies. On the other hand, the Tourism Office emphasizes the importance of increasing the capacity of human resources (HR) managers and encouraging the formation of Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis). However, the village government argues that the formation of Pokdarwis is waiting for the availability of more complete facilities.

From the perspective of regional development, the North Kolaka Tourism Office also suggested the integration of Blue Lake with other destinations, such as the shortest river Tamborasi managed by Kolaka Regency, rafting in Tinukari, Berova Beach, and local culinary potential. Local business actors also support the short, medium, and long-term development plans by the Walasiho Village Government. Planning must have clear objectives, measurable operational steps, division of responsibilities, sufficient resources, a definite schedule, and monitoring mechanisms. Based on field data, the planning conditions of the Blue Lake can be summarized in the following table.

Table 2. Planning Elements and Conditions in Blue Lake

Planning Elements	Conditions in Blue Lake
Clear goals	It is written in the contract, which is to improve the quality of management and the number of tourist visits
Concrete steps	Division of duties between the Tourism Office (basic facilities, legality) and Bumdes (operational, promotion, service development)
Responsibility division	Obviously, listed in articles 4 and 5 of the contact
Time frame and stages	Annual contract, no multi-year roadmap yet
Resource considerations	The need for capital is mentioned, human resources have not been strengthened, Pokdarwis have not been formed
Monitoring	It has been running since 2020, optimal since 2023, but is constrained by facilities.

Source: Research Primary Data

The results of the study show that although the cooperation contract contains the basic components of management, the document still does not meet the strategic planning standards according to planning theory. These criticisms include the absence of success indicators (output and outcomes), the absence of a *timeline* for the development of priority facilities, the absence of a long-term funding mechanism and fiscal sustainability, and the absence of a strategy to strengthen human resources. In addition, it does not contain an environmental risk analysis, including the impact of increasing the number of visitors, and does not integrate connectivity with other destinations in North Kolaka and Kolaka.

In the perspective of Terry and strategic planning theory, the existence of indicators, *timelines*, financing, HR strategies, risk analysis, and regional integration are key components to ensure that plans can be implemented in a directional, measurable, and sustainable manner. The absence of these elements shows that the planning of the Blue Lake is still at the administrative level, not at the strategic level. The tourism literature shows that destination development plans should include aspects of sustainability, collaborative governance, community participation, risk analysis, and institutional strengthening strategies. Village tourism development also requires synergy between stakeholders, village governments, communities, business actors, traditional leaders, and youth, with a collective vision and a strong coordination mechanism.

However, previous research has shown that community participation in community-based tourism management is often low due to limited skills and access to capital (Singgih & Nirwana, 2016). In fact, *community-based tourism* (CBT) is the most effective model to ensure the sustainability of destinations and equitable distribution of economic benefits. The establishment of Pokdarwis as a local institution has been proven to strengthen community capacity and increase the sustainability of tourist villages (Widaningsih et al., 2024). In the case of Blue Lake, the absence of Pokdarwis, limited human resources, and lack of service innovation indicate that the development plan has not included a community-based institutional strategy, even though the strategy is highly recommended in the literature on sustainable tourism development. Thus, the Blue Lake development plan outlined in the cooperation contract has fulfilled the basic elements of administrative planning, but has not reached the standards of strategic and sustainable planning as stated by Terry and the international literature on destination governance and community-based tourism development.

### Comparative Analysis

As a geotourism destination, Blue Lake has strong potential through its unique morphology, combination of lakes, seas, and caves, and consistent increase in visits. However, regional development still faces the classic challenges of tourist village destinations, especially the lack of facilities, dependence on the APBD, and unstable management institutions. In the following analysis, the author makes a comparison related to Blue Lake compared to several destinations

that can be the main learning. First, the Tourism Village in Lamongan, which is often used as a *national best practice*. Its success is supported by strong Pokdarwis, carrying capacity-based zoning, and a community-government mixed investment scheme (Kusumaningtyas & Munir, 2022). This shows that the main foundation of sustainable destinations is a *solid* community institution.

Second, the Tourism Village in Tabanan Regency, which practices co-management between the government and residents, is supported by diversification of attractions and planning consistency. Of the 27 tourist villages in this district, there are six tourist villages that are visited by many tourists, namely Mengesta Village, Salak Village, Tista Village, Pinge Village, Nyambu Village and Jati Luwih Village. This model is in line with the theory of collaborative governance which emphasizes the importance of formal cooperation structures to achieve long-term sustainability. Third, Tamborasi and other destinations in Kolaka Regency, which shows the potential for the integration of cross-regional tourism routes to increase regional competitiveness. These findings support the literature that emphasizes the importance of destination networks and the integration of tourism products to extend the length of stay. The results of the comparison show that the Blue Lake challenge is not an isolated case, but rather a general pattern of community-based destinations without strong institutions, without a sustainable investment model, and without formal collaboration mechanisms. Thus, the development of the Blue Lake requires a change in strategy, not just the addition of physical facilities

## CONCLUSION

The Danau Biru in Walasiho Village, Wawo District, North Kolaka Regency, has great potential as a leading geotourism destination thanks to its unique panorama that combines lakes, seas, and caves and the high interest of tourists every year. Management through cooperation between the North Kolaka Tourism Office and the Walasiho Village Joint Business Bumdes has maintained operational sustainability, but the development has not been optimal due to limited infrastructure. Development planning has been contained in *the master plan* and annual cooperation contract, but requires consistent and collaborative implementatio.

## SUGGESTION

Based on these findings, the development of the Danau Biru requires a sustainable strategy that combines facility development, institutional strengthening, and partnerships with the private sector to reduce dependence on the APBD. The formation of tourism awareness groups is important to encourage community participation while preserving the environment. The integration of Lake Biru with surrounding tourist destinations has the potential to create integrated tour packages that can increase the length of stay and shopping of tourists.

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