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Kumpulan Makalah 论文集

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Eco and Cultural Tourism Industry of Bangka Island: Challenges and Potentials

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Introduction

Bangka is an island about 10 km from the east coast of Sumatra and under the regional province of Bangka Belitung with a population of about 1 million. It is the 9th largest island in Indonesia. The provincial capital, Pangkal Pinang, lies on the island. The name “Bangka” means “old”; it is literally old since it has a long history. Bangka was once under the authority of Kesultanan Palembang (Kingdom of Palembang) and well known as one of the biggest tin deposit in the world and is part of Indonesian tin belt which span for around 800 km from Bangka Island until the west part of Kalimantan.ⁱ (Gusnelly, 2016) At the beginning of 17th Century, Kesultanan Palembang brought in a large number of Chinese immigrants and their mining technology to Bangka to process tin. Majority came from several district of Guangdong Province such as Meixian, Huizhou, and Chaozhou. Most of them were Minnan Chinese minority that most Indonesian knows as Hokkien people. Therefore, Anthony Reid (1996) in his book “Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast China and the Chinese” explained that the Chinese population in Bangka is one of the largest in Indonesia after Java, Riau, Sumatera and west Kalimantan.

Bangka is also known for its white pepper, palm oil, rubber plantations and fisheries. In addition to the Europeans that came to Bangka for the rich natural resources and plantations, the Chinese and Malay origins played important role in the economy of Bangka. Over the years, some Chinese gained political clout as they were appointed by the Dutch authority to become leaders of the Chinese community and given responsibilities for the mining activities. One of the most well-known is Mayor Tjoeng A Tiam who resided in Muntok, West Bangka. From his position as a Mayor, he was able to develop his economic power in the region and built a fortune that was considered exception for that period.



Pic 1. Mayor Tjoeng A Tiam in his royal uniform

Other parts of Bangka have also some history of the existence of the Chinese. Toboali, the capital of South Bangka Regency was said as one of the first entry points of the Chinese Hakka to Bangka Island. A section of Toboali town is a Chinatown that has a lot of history to discover and to be preserved. In the northern tip of Bangka Island lies the town of Belinyu that has a unique community of Hakka-speaking Chinese who live in old Chinese style houses.

Strong interrelation of Chinese Hakka in Bangka with the Malay and Dutch cultures was found in terms of arts, culinary, and even language. Bangka is perhaps one of the few localities in Indonesia in the modern time where the Chinese and non-Chinese have harmonious relationships until now, despite the different ethnicities, language, and religions. To make the history of Bangka more important is that the Dutch colonial government had brought Indonesian political prisoners, including the first President of Indonesia, Soekarno, in exile in Bangka. The history of Indonesian independence is not complete without the mentioning Bangka.

Ecologically, Bangka has also wonderful potentials for tourism especially coastal areas, such as Pasir Padi Beach, Parai Tenggiri Beach, Tikus Beach, Tanjung Pesona Beach, Tanjung Kalian Beach, and many other beaches. World Trade Organization (2004)ⁱⁱ stated that almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of all tourism destination in the world are in coastal areas. For example, the Tanjung Pesona Beach is the most popular tourism destination in Bangka Island. It is a very unique beach with large white sand overlays with some large granite stones. But due to massive tin mining in Bangka, most of the beaches are facing some ecological issues. The tin mining may cause the land quality decrease and some damage in terms of natural vegetation and landscapes.ⁱⁱⁱ (Sitorus et al. 2008).



Pic 2. Tanjung Pesona beach of Bangka

Another tourism potential instead of coastal and beaches are cultural tourism potentials. Bangka also have some cultural and religious tourism potentials such as Guan Yin Temple, St. Mary Cave in Belinyu, and also heritage Chinese village: Gedong Village and old historical cities such as Muntok. Bangka is also famous for its culinary culture and even they have an annual festival of 1000 traditional cakes and dishes of Bangka that become an interesting tourist attraction.

This paper aims to explore some issues of challenges and opportunities of both ecological and cultural tourism potentials of Bangka. This paper also suggests some strategic recommendations of how to improve the tourism of Bangka Island as an insight for stakeholders and other tourism practitioners that may find it useful.

Ecological Challenges and Tourism Opportunities

Ex tin mining land is dominated by silica sand which has high acidity, lack of nitrogen and other organic ingredients, unable to hold water and has very limited amount of microorganism. Since the tin is limited in the ground of Bangka, by the last decades of the 20th century, tin mining has begun to move and grow intensively offshore in the seabed of Bangka. The same ecological issues happen in coastal areas and surrounding seabed, where the tin mining caused sea and beach pollution and massive degradation of the marine ecosystem. This condition required instant respond to regenerate and repaired or the ecosystem will lose its availability as cultivated land for hundreds of years.^{iv}



Pic 3. Turmoil in the water caused by offshore tin mining

The offshore tin mining has a great impact to the condition on the coral reefs in the seabed around Bangka Island. Prior research found that there are only 8-60% seabed around Bangka Island that covered by living coral reef. The tin mining activities create turmoil in the water and also sedimentation due to physical impact and chemical pollution.^v Generally the coral reef condition in the east Bangka is better than in the west and south where the offshore tin mining is larger in quantity using large suction ships.^{vi}

Based on US Geological Survey (2006), Indonesia's measurable reserve of tin is about 800.000 to 900.000 tons and Bangka Belitung is the largest tin reservoir. Bangka and Belitung produces 60.000-90.000 tons per year and will probably last for 10-12 years which is in 2017-2019.^{vii} Today, Bangka's glorious tin mining period has come to an end, leaving environmental degradation problems that need to be seriously addressed. Since 2014, tin industry had longer becoming the largest contributor to the regional gross domestic income as in previous years.^{viii} In addition, Bangka is challenged to find alternatives to economic sources of income as the mining industry is in the downturn. Tourism has been identified as one of the potential alternatives given the rich history that Bangka has.

Tourism sector has potentials in improving the economy of the community if it is well managed by harnessing the natural and cultural potentials of the local. In terms of Bangka, the large ex tin mining is a good potential to improve tourism development by transforming the mines into tourist destination. There are several prior examples of how they transform a tin mining into a tourist destination such as Grevor and Cornwall tin mining in England, Sungai Lembing tin mining in Malaysia, and the island of Phuket that used to be a tin mining also.^{ix} Although some sporadically effort has been done, such as transforming the old office of the tin company into a tin museum open for public, further research and planning needs to be comprehensively conducted to transformed the ex-tin mining of Bangka into a prospective tourist destination.



Pic 4. Tin mining Museum in Muntok, Bangka

Another ecological potential for tourism development is utilization of forest and natural environment as green tourism object through community empowerment. The spirit of green tourism is encouraging tourists to do direct interaction with the natural environment (particularly forestry in Bangka), enjoying the nature and all the ecosystem through the awareness of the valuable natural resources, social and community existence. Green tourism includes tourism programs that minimize all negative aspects of conventional tourism to the natural environment and also protects local cultural resources from the negative impact of globalization.^x It also covers natural and cultural conservation, education and also development of local economic potentials such as traditional crafts and local culinary tourism. Natural activities such as outbound training, hiking and trekking, bird watching, and even camping is possible to be held especially in Pelawan Forrest at Central Bangka and Pesanggrahan Menumbing at West Bangka.

Cultural Tourism Potentials and Challenges

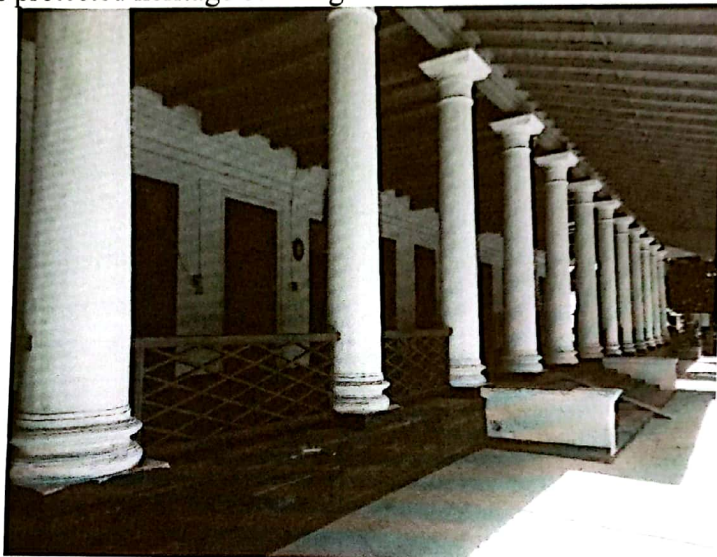
The island of Bangka is one of the island that shows unique diversity of cultures. People of Bangka are dominated by Chinese and Malays. For centuries they live in harmony with strong interaction one and another. In Bangka there are several old heritage cities including Muntok and Belinyu. These old cities played an important historical role in the establishment of Bangka Island. Each of these old cities has its own characteristics and uniqueness both in terms of history, region, culture and language. Therefore, based on these potentials there is an opportunity to develop history-and heritage-based tourism in Bangka.

Muntok is an old city with a long history and rich of architectural heritage that consist of Chinese heritage architecture, European heritage architecture and Malayan heritage architecture. All gathers in one city and becoming a unique diversity that worth to be developed and promoted to the tourists. The large amount of heritage artefacts that

can be found in Muntok then make this city considered as one of the historical cities in Indonesia.

One of the most significant heritage in Muntok is “*Rumah Mayor*” or “Mayor Mansion” that was built in the 1863.^{xi} The significant existence of Chinese ethnic group in the 19th century forced the Dutch colonials to implement indirect government policy by appointing a public officer with a certain title such as Lieutenant, Captain or Mayor to lead the Chinese community administratively and economically.^{xii} One of the is Mayor Tjoeng A Tiam that mention before.

The mansion of Mayor Tjoeng A Tiam is a European style architecture that combined with some Chinese culture elements such as big lion statues in the front of the building and some Chinese style ornaments. The building is large enough to be a palace at that time with large terrace, plenty of rooms and grandeur design with large European pillars. This mansion is now becoming one of the tourist destination and considered as protected heritage building.



Pic 5. The mansion of Mayor Tjoeng A Tiam in Muntok, Bangka

Another significant city is Belinyu. Belinyu has a strong connection with the history of the Dutch colonial era at that time. Around Belinyu there are many significant historical places such as Benteng and Kuto Panji Temple, Gedong House, Fuk Tet Che Temple, Goa Maria, and many more heritage buildings that used to be the official houses of the tin mining company.^{xiii}

At the outer of Belinyu city, there is an old village where the residents are entirely Chinese descendant from the first wave of migrants at the period of Kesultanan Palembang. It is called Gedong village. This village in inhabited by approximately 50 families that used to be the tin miners. According to the people lived in the village, many of the houses were built at the early of the 17th century. The houses are built of *ulin* wood structures and the walls also from *ulin* planks which installed vertically. It

is very strong and last for a long time. Most of the houses are in the authentic original form. Realizing these buildings as potential heritage objects, in the year of 2001, the government declared the village as one of Bangka's tourism destination or *desa wisata*.^{xiv}



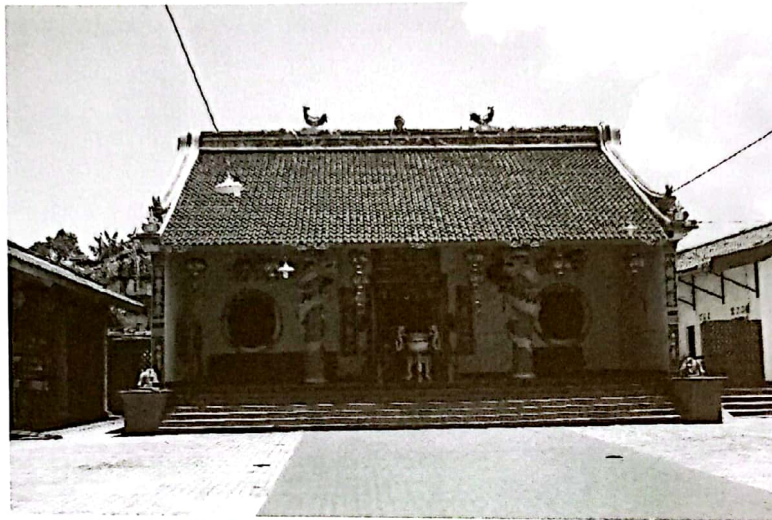
Pic 6. An old Chinese houses at Gedong village, Belinyu, Bangka

Beside the cultural artifacts, there are also some cultural activities in Bangka that may attract tourists. For instance, the annual culinary festival. Every year Bangka create a festival to promote and provide 1000 type of local cakes and dishes. This promotes many traditional local dishes to tourists and support the culinary home industry to gain economic advantage. Another festival is the *Qing Ming* festival or *Ceng Beng* In Hokkien dialect. In the *Qing Ming* festival family members gathered to give respect to their ancestors by coming to their tomb. During the festival, many families open their house for public and celebrate their meetings. In some villages, people doing down to the streets, doing the lion dance and make some attractions. These are only a few among many other cultural traditions in Bangka.

Another cultural potential is religious tourism. In Bangka there are many religious places that can become a tourist destination. For instance, the Kong Fuk Miao temple in Kampung Tanjung, Muntok, West Bangka. It is a Taoism and Confucianism temple that was built in the 1800 by the Chinese immigrants from Guangdong and Fujian. It is now still being used for religious activities and for practicing the lion dance.

Next to the temple, a great Mosque was built in the 1883. The construction of the Mosque was strongly related to the development of the city of Muntok. Muntok

become the district capital of Bangka at that time was followed by the construction of the great Mosque during the reign of H. Abang Muhammad Ali from the Kingdom of Palembang. The uniqueness of this great Mosque is the pagoda shape tower in front of the Mosque. Its existence beside the Kong Fuk Miao temple shows a good religious harmony among the people of Bangka during the 19th century.



Pic 7. Kong Fuk Miao Temple, Muntok



Pic 8. The great Mosque of Muntok

Developing cultural tourism required more research about Chinese at Bangka and also presenting the information to the public, preservation of the heritage and artifacts, the arts and culture as well as the development of the heritages. Cultural tourism requires also some infrastructures planning and upgrading. This will include preservation of the heritage and artifacts, refuction of some establishments to become accommodations, restaurants, museum, café, shops, etc. that will need an

excellent planning as well as investment from the government, private sector as well as philanthropic organizations and individuals.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Placing tourism as the main priority development to push regional gross domestic income of Bangka required comprehensive strategy and policies from the government and other stake holders. Eco and cultural tourism shows some promising future due to the great natural resources potentials and the richness of the culture in Bangka that has not been optimally explored. So there are still many possibilities that can be explored further. However, eco and cultural tourism of Bangka needs to be supported by more comprehensive studies and programs that includes visioning stakeholders, human resources empowerment, tourism infrastructures, marketing and promotions and also community involvement to the whole process.

Therefore, some preliminary activities are recommended to initiate the idea of Eco and Cultural tourism development of Bangka:

- get exposure of the on-site situation of Bangka and have direct engagements with key stakeholders
- assess interests on potential work on research or studies and other related areas that can take place immediately (within a year), in medium-term (2-5 years) and longer term
- engage with stakeholders and potential partners (local university, community groups, resource persons, government champions)
- identify potential collaboration and the corresponding topics
- gathers community leaders and initiate community involvement in small actions

ⁱ Gusnelly, 2016, "History of Lead Management and Corporate Social Responsibility Tambang Timah in Bangka Belitung", *Jurnal Patrawidya*, Vol. 17, No. 3

ⁱⁱ WTO, 2004. *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook* ISBN 92-844-0726-5. Calle Capitán Haya, 42. 28020 Madrid, Spain.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sitorus, S. R. P., E. Kusumastuti, L. N. Badri, 2008. "Karakteristik dan Teknik Rehabilitasi Lahan Pasca Penambangan Timah di Pulau Bangka dan Singkep". *Jurnal Tanah dan Iklim* No 27, pp. 57 – 74.

^{iv} Ferry, Y., Balitri. 2011. "Inovasi Praktis Atasi Masalah Perkebunan Rakyat". *Jurnal Agro Inovasi* 3394, pp. 2

^v Zulkifli, H. Elizal, W. Endang, Z. Dahlan, Kannedy dan Harmida. 2000. "Kondisi terumbu karang di perairan Pulau Bangka, Propinsi Sumatra Selatan" in *Prosiding SEMIRATA 2000 Bidang MIPA BKS-PTN Wilayah Barat*, FMIPA Universitas Riau. Pekanbaru. 8-9 Mei 2000

^{vi} Ricoh Manogar Sirigoringo, Tri Aryono Hadi. 2013. "Kondisi dan Distribusi Karang Batu (Scleractinia Corals) di Perairan Bangka", *Jurnal Jurnal Ilmu dan Teknologi Kelautan Tropis*, Vol. 5, No. 2

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- ^{viii} Rulyanti Susi Wardhani, Devi Valeriani. 2016. "Green Tourism dalam Pengembangan Pariwisata Bangka Belitung". *Prosiding Seminar Nasional INDOCOMPAC*. Universitas Bakrie. Jakarta
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- ^x Rulyanti Susi Wardhani, Devi Valeriani. 2016. "Green Tourism dalam Pengembangan Pariwisata Bangka Belitung". *Prosiding Seminar Nasional INDOCOMPAC*. Universitas Bakrie. Jakarta
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- ^{xiii} Jamilah Chollilah, Herdiyanti, Nurvita Wijayanti, Novendra Hidayat. 2019. "Mapping The Potential of The Old City Tourism (Study of the History, Region and Cultural Value of the Old City on Bangka Island)". *Berumpun Journal: An International Journal of Social, Politics and Humanities Vol. 2 No. 1*
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