


# Chapter 1

# A Framework to Understand the Role of Operative Sustainable Tourism Policy for Achieving Sustainable Tourism Development

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## ABSTRACT

*Integrating operative sustainable tourism policies with local economic development strategies can maximize benefits by fostering economic growth, preserving cultural and natural resources, and enhancing community well-being. Sustainable tourism serves as a catalyst for regional development, particularly in remote or economically depressed areas, by leveraging local assets and fostering community involvement. The chapter addresses the fundamental problem of aligning sustainable tourism and governance through policies to achieve sustainable tourism development. It calls for action to create a shift from control-oriented models for more trust-based and pluralistic approaches. Through empirical analysis the chapter provides insights on the role of government beyond the performative symbolism of policy announcement to taking active steps in the implementation and monitoring of the policies. Based on the premise that sustainable tourism offers significant potential for local economic development, it is important to recognize the challenges and limitations associated with policy implementation.*

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## INTRODUCTION

With the current tourism growth, it is estimated that global tourists are expected to be around 1.8 billion by the year 2030, according to projections. According to the projection, sustainability is positioned to become a critical issue for governments worldwide. There was a 7% increase in the amount of money spent by tourists in the Asia Pacific area, which attracted over 25% of all visitors worldwide and accounted for 30% of all travel worldwide. The number of tourists from other countries traveling to Southeast Asia climbed by 7% in 2018, while the region's tourism revenue increased by 5%. In addition, Malaysia, which is well-known for its coastline and islands, was listed as the third-largest nation in the world in 2018. This was because tourism is a significant component of the country's economy. The COVID-19 epidemic that is currently affecting the world as a whole has a substantial impact on travel across international borders. Therefore, cooperative economies strongly depend on programs geared toward the environment (Cucculelli, 2016).

The COVID-19 virus has hurt the economics and livelihoods of people worldwide. Many critical aspects covering social processes, the overall progress of the nation and economy, and other events have been disrupted due to the outbreak. Many specialists have stressed the importance of thoroughly investigating COVID-19 and its social and economic repercussions. Therefore, addressing sustainable tourism is of the utmost importance since managing the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic is an essential component of attempts to achieve sustainability (Pranita, 2023). Previous studies have demonstrated that several sustainable tourism solutions depend on an awareness of shared costs and benefits through the critical eyes of sustainability. Even though tourism improves local communities, it negatively affects the environment, society, and culture (Kilipiri, 2023). Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to research methods that can reduce the adverse effects of tourism on the locations hosting tourists. A large amount of significance is placed on the travel industry regarding corporate social responsibility (CSR). When it comes to protecting natural resources, culture, ecology, and the economic well-being of local people, as well as achieving sustainable development of destinations, the behaviour of socially responsible corporations is of the utmost importance (Ahmed, 2021). The local communities in tourist areas view tourism as the conclusion of all stakeholders' measures. Following this, it states that "destination social responsibility (DSR) encompasses stakeholder initiatives that safeguard and enhance the social and environmental interests of an entire destination, alongside the economic interests of individual organizations." (Stylidis, 2020). When it comes to the management and growth of tourism, the functions that destination management organizations (DMOs) play are essential. Previous studies highlighted that management and planning possess overall growth in the desired locations. As an additional step toward achieving

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