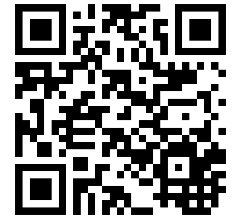


## Stakeholder Collaboration in Sustainable Tourism Development in Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia: Efforts to Improve Tourist Visits



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**ABSTRACT:** The primary objective of this study is to assess the impact of stakeholder collaboration, implementation of sustainable tourism principles, supportive policies, and regulations on the enhancement of tourist visitation in Tana Toraja. Data was collected from 290 respondents from government institutions, local community groups, the private sector, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations and mass media.

Respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique. Structural equation modeling the data was subjected to analysis. The findings of this investigation demonstrate the following: 1) Enhanced collaboration among stakeholders yields a favorable and noteworthy impact on the rise in tourist arrivals,

2) The execution of sustainable tourism principles leads to a beneficial and notable rise in tourist visits,

3) The endorsement of policies and regulations exerts a favorable and notable sway on the increase in tourist visits. This research recommends 1) Collaboration and coordination between governmental authorities and key players in the tourism sector are crucial in enhancing the overall tourism experience for visitors. 2) Enhancements in the implementation of sustainable tourism practices, including environmental conservation, community engagement, and preservation of local traditions, are essential for sustaining the appeal of tourist destinations and elevating visitor satisfaction levels. 3) The formulation of policies and regulatory frameworks by the government is imperative to bolster tourism growth, encompassing strategies such as promotional activities, infrastructure enhancements, adherence to quality benchmarks, and financial incentives to allure a larger influx of tourists.

**KEYWORDS:** collaboration, stakeholders, tourism principles, regulations.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a very important sector for the Indonesian economy, including in the Tana Toraja region. The natural beauty and cultural richness of Tana Toraja is the main attraction for tourists, both domestic and foreign. However, uncontrolled tourism development can threaten the sustainability of the local environment and culture (Damanik & Weber, 2006). Therefore, a sustainable tourism approach is very important to implement.

The concept of sustainable tourism integrates economic, social and environmental aspects in its development (Mowforth & Munt, 2015). This aims to maximize the benefits of tourism for local communities, minimize negative impacts on the environment, and preserve cultural heritage (Liburd & Edwards, 2010). To achieve this goal, close collaboration is needed between various parties or stakeholders involved in the tourism industry.

Several previous studies have examined the importance of stakeholder collaboration in the development of sustainable tourism. The research results of Jiaying Liu et al., (2018); Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah et al., (2018); I Gede Ardika et al., (2019); Pitiporn Payakpate et al., (2019); Zuzana Okřeglicka et al., (2020) show that effective collaboration between various stakeholders, such as government, the tourism industry, local communities, and non-profit organizations, has a significant influence on increasing tourist visits to a tourist destination. Jamal and Stronza's (2009) research emphasizes that effective collaboration between government, the tourism industry, local communities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can help achieve sustainable tourism goals. Meanwhile,

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Grimwood et al. (2015) explored challenges in developing effective collaboration, such as differences in interests and power between stakeholders.

In the context of Tana Toraja, several studies have been carried out regarding tourism development and stakeholder involvement. Research by Mallo et al. (2018) analyzed the role of government and local communities in tourism development in Tana Toraja. The research results show that local communities have not been fully involved in the decision-making process and fair distribution of benefits. Meanwhile, the study by Mantra et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of preserving the culture and natural environment of Tana Toraja in tourism development.

However, in this case it turns out that there are still inconsistencies in research results, several other studies show different results. Research by Suartana, IW (2020) did not find significant evidence that stakeholder collaboration and sustainable tourism development had a direct influence on increasing tourist visits. These findings imply that other factors such as tourism promotion, accessibility, and infrastructure may be more influential in attracting tourists to Bali.

Research by Samantha J. Smith (2019), the magnitude of collaboration among various stakeholders, including governmental bodies, tourism entrepreneurs, and local communities, exhibits no substantial impact on the volume of tourist influx in coastal regions. A study by Aisha Ahmed (2021) scrutinized data from multiple tourist sites in developing nations and revealed an absence of a noteworthy association between stakeholder collaboration and tourist numbers. Meanwhile, Leila Mosayeb's study (2020) acknowledges the significance of stakeholder collaboration in the realm of tourism development. Nonetheless, the investigation failed to identify a significant link between the degree of collaboration and tourist visitation at the surveyed tourist spots. Despite numerous research endeavors, a discernible knowledge gap persists regarding the comprehensive comprehension of stakeholder collaboration, particularly within the domain of sustainable tourism in Tana Toraja. This study endeavors to delve into the intricacies of collaboration involving governmental entities, the tourism sector, local communities, and non-governmental organizations with the aim of augmenting tourist footfall while upholding the sustainability of Tana Toraja's environment and cultural heritage. The significance of this research is underscored by the fact that in the year 2022, the tourist traffic to Tana Toraja, encompassing both domestic and international visitors, is projected to remain relatively modest, standing at 480,631 tourists, in stark comparison to Bali's 10,570,381 tourists.

Indonesia's 1.22 billion tourists.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Level of collaboration between stakeholders**

Sustainable tourism development requires involvement and collaboration from various parties or stakeholders, such as the government, tourism industry, local communities, and non-government organizations (NGOs). To achieve effective collaboration, high intensity communication and coordination between stakeholders (HH) is required. Good communication and coordination enable the exchange of information, unification of vision and goals, as well as synergy in implementing sustainable tourism strategies and policies.

The research carried out by Grybovych and Hafermann (2010) underscores the significance of effective communication and coordination among stakeholders within the realm of tourism advancement in rural regions. Their study demonstrates that inadequate levels of communication and coordination among government entities, the tourism sector, and local communities can result in conflicting interests and barriers to attaining sustainable tourism objectives. This deficiency in communication and coordination has the potential to create discrepancies in the priorities and objectives of tourism development, thereby impeding the realization of sustainable tourism that encompasses economic, social, and environmental dimensions. The following is an explanation in 1000 words about the intensity of communication and coordination between stakeholders in tourism development, accompanied by citations and references.

Sustainable tourism development requires involvement and collaboration from various parties or stakeholders, such as the government, tourism industry, local communities, and non-government organizations (NGOs). To achieve effective collaboration, high intensity communication and coordination between stakeholders is required (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). Good communication and coordination enable the exchange of information, unification of vision and goals, as well as synergy in implementing sustainable tourism strategies and policies.

Furthermore, research carried out by Yüksel et al. (2005) highlighted the significance of communication and coordination in the context of tourism development within natural conservation areas. This investigation revealed that insufficient communication and coordination among area management authorities, tourism operators, and local communities may lead to environmental degradation and conflicts of interest. Inadequate communication and coordination among relevant parties result in a lack of cohesion in the management of sustainable tourism, consequently impacting environmental degradation and conflicts of interest in resource utilization. Conversely, effective communication and coordination among stakeholders can yield substantial

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advantages in the advancement of sustainable tourism. A study conducted by Zapata and Hall (2012) in Spain demonstrated that efficient communication and coordination among government entities, the tourism sector, local communities, and NGOs facilitate improved information sharing, goal alignment, and more collaborative decision-making processes. This aids in addressing challenges like conflicts of interest and ensuring that tourism development aligns with sustainability principles.

Research conducted by Timur and Getz (2009) in Turkey also emphasized the significance of effective communication and coordination among stakeholders in the advancement of sustainable tourism. Their study revealed that enhanced communication and coordination among government entities, tourism operators, and local communities played a crucial role in recognizing and addressing various challenges including environmental degradation, cultural exploitation, and unequal distribution of economic benefits. The establishment of good communication and coordination mechanisms facilitates a shared comprehension of sustainable tourism objectives and enables collaborative endeavors towards their achievement.

Although the intensity of communication and coordination between stakeholders is very important, actual practice often faces challenges and obstacles. Conflicts of interest, power differences, and lack of trust between stakeholders can become obstacles in achieving effective communication and coordination (Jamal & Stronza, 2009). Therefore, consistent and continuous efforts are needed to build trust, bridge differences, and facilitate better communication and coordination between stakeholders in sustainable tourism development.

Based on this description, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H1: The level of collaboration between stakeholders has a positive and significant effect on increased tourist visits

### **Application of sustainable tourism principles**

Sustainable tourism has become an increasingly important concept in the global tourism industry. This concept emphasizes the balance between economic, social and environmental aspects in tourism development. The application of sustainable tourism principles aims to maximize economic benefits for local communities, minimize negative impacts on the natural and cultural environment, and ensure the sustainability of resources for future generations (UNWTO, 2005).

One of the main principles of sustainable tourism is the involvement of local communities in the planning and decision-making process. Research conducted by Byrd et al. (2009) in the United States found that the involvement of local communities in tourism development can increase their awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage and encourage environmental conservation efforts. This ultimately contributes to the sustainability of tourism in the region.

Furthermore, another crucial principle in sustainable tourism entails the effective and environmentally conscious utilization of resources. A research study carried out by Chia et al. (2016) in Malaysia investigated the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices within the hotel sector. The researchers discovered that the incorporation of strategies such as energy conservation, waste management, and the utilization of eco-friendly products can lead to enduring financial advantages for these establishments, all while reducing adverse effects on the environment.

Another crucial principle within the realm of sustainable tourism pertains to the conservation of cultural heritage and indigenous customs. A study carried out by Salazar (2012) in Indonesia delved into the impact of tourism on safeguarding the cultural identity of local populations. The research revealed that engagement of local communities in tourism initiatives, coupled with deriving economic advantages from such activities, enhances their inclination to safeguard their cultural legacy as an attraction for tourists. However, implementing sustainable tourism principles often faces challenges and obstacles. Research conducted by Khairat and Maher (2012) in Egypt identified several main challenges, such as lack of awareness and education about sustainable tourism among local communities, lack of incentives and regulations from the government, and limited resources and funds for implementing sustainable tourism practices. To overcome these challenges, collaborative efforts are needed from various stakeholders, such as the government, the tourism industry, local communities, and non-government organizations (NGOs). Research conducted by Waligo et al. (2013) in Kenya emphasized the importance of collaboration between stakeholders in implementing sustainable tourism. This study found that effective collaboration can facilitate information exchange, resource sharing, and more inclusive decision making, thereby helping to achieve sustainable tourism goals.

Overall, implementing sustainable tourism principles in tourism development requires commitment and cooperation from various parties, including the government, the tourism industry, local communities and non-governmental organizations. Through coordinated and collaborative efforts, challenges in implementing sustainable tourism can be overcome, so that the economic, social and environmental benefits of tourism can be realized optimally and sustainably. Based on this description, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H2: The application of sustainable tourism principles has a positive and significant effect on increased tourist visits

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## Supporting policies and regulations

Sustainable and responsible tourism development requires support from appropriate policies and regulations. These policies and regulations aim to ensure that tourism provides economic benefits for local communities, preserves the natural and cultural environment, and reduces the negative impacts of tourism activities (UNWTO, 2018).

One important aspect of tourism policy is integrated planning and management. Research conducted by Inskip (1994) emphasized the importance of comprehensive and integrated tourism planning, involving various stakeholders such as government, the tourism industry, local communities, and non-government organizations (NGOs). This integrated planning enables tourism development that is aligned with overall sustainable development goals.

Apart from that, policies and regulations also need to ensure protection of the natural environment and cultural heritage. A study conducted by Buckley (2012) explored various policy and regulatory instruments that can be used to protect the natural environment in the context of tourism, such as limiting the number of visits, setting conservation zones, and imposing environmental fees. Such policies and regulations can help minimize the negative impacts of tourism on the natural environment. Research carried out by Nuryanti (1996) delved into the examination of policies and regulations aimed at conserving cultural heritage within the framework of tourism in Indonesia. This study emphasizes the importance of involving local communities in the process of policy formulation and cultural heritage management, as well as providing incentives for the preservation of local culture and traditions.

Apart from policies and regulations related to the environment and culture, tourism development also requires supportive economic policies. The study performed by Lee and Brahmasrene (2013) examined the repercussions of economic measures, including taxation, fiscal inducements, and infrastructure expenditure, on the progression of tourism in Thailand. Their analysis revealed that well-suited economic strategies have the capacity to allure investments and stimulate the expansion of the tourism sector, thereby yielding economic advantages for the indigenous populace.

However, when it comes to the implementation of tourism policies and regulations, challenges and obstacles are frequently encountered. A study carried out by Qian et al. (2016) in China highlighted a number of challenges, including insufficient coordination among government entities, limited resources and capabilities for execution, and inadequate involvement of local communities in the policy development process. Addressing these challenges necessitates strong coordination among different government bodies, the private sector, and local communities when formulating and executing tourism policies. Another study by Ruhanen (2013) stresses the significance of enhancing capacity and fostering collaborative networks among stakeholders in the implementation of sustainable tourism policies.

Overall, appropriate policies and regulations are key factors in the development of sustainable and responsible tourism. These policies and regulations must cover environmental, socio-cultural and economic aspects, and involve various stakeholders in the formulation and implementation process. Through effective policies and regulations, tourism benefits can be maximized, negative impacts can be minimized, and resource sustainability can be maintained for future generations.

Based on this description, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Supporting policies and regulations have a positive and significant effect on increased tourist visits

## 3. RESEARCH DATA

The research was carried out in the period January to June 2023. The total research sample was 290 respondents who came from:

1. Government: a) Tana Toraja Tourism Service, b) Tana Toraja Culture Service, c) Tana Toraja Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), d) South Sulawesi Provincial Government, e) Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy;
2. Local Communities: a) Toraja Indigenous Community Groups, b) Tourism Awareness Groups, c) Traditional Craftsmen and Artists, d) Tourism Service Providers (Guides, Homestays,);
3. Private Sector: a) Travel Bureau, b) Hotel and Restaurant Association, c) Tourism Entrepreneurs Association, d) Tourism Investors and Developers
4. Educational Institutions: a) Universities in Tana Toraja, b) Tourism Research and Development Institute.
5. Non-Governmental Organizations: a) Environmental NGOs, b) Community Empowerment NGOs, c) Cultural Preservation NGOs;
6. Mass Media: a) Local Print Media, b) Online Media, c) Local Television Stations;
7. Tourists: a) Domestic Tourists, b) Foreign Tourists

Of the 350 questionnaires distributed, 310 were returned for a response rate of 89%. After evaluation, only 290 respondents' data met the requirements for statistical analysis.

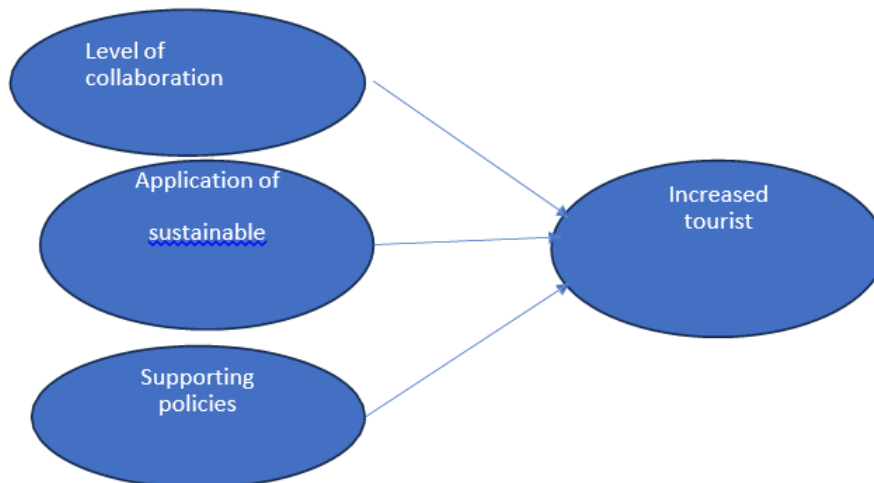
To measure the variable level of collaboration between stakeholders using indicators: a) Intensity of communication and

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coordination between stakeholders, b) Clarity of division of roles and responsibilities, c) Level of participation in decision making .

To measure the variable Implementation of sustainable tourism principles using indicators: a) cultural sustainability, b) Empowerment of local communities, c) Economic

### Reliability Test



### Reliability Test

The reliability test results show that all construct reliability values are greater than 0.7. This shows that all research constructs have reliable status.

**Table 1: Data Reliability Test**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Std. Loading</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Reliability</i>
Level of collaboration between stakeholders	3,017	1,026	0.785
Application of sustainable tourism principles	3,162	0.998	0.814
Supporting policies and regulations	4,699	1,898	0.782
Increased visit traveler	4,296	1,765	0.794

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

### Model Data Suitability Assessment

Model testing was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a two step approach.

The results of the Feasibility Testing Index calculation, presented in Table 3, show that the measurement results have met the goodness-of-fit criteria, which means the model in this study is acceptable.

**Table 2: Structural Equation Modeling Feasibility Testing Index**

<i>No</i>	<i>Goodness of fit index</i>	<i>Cut of value</i>	<i>Analysis Results</i>	<i>Model evaluation</i>
1	$\chi^2$ - Chi-Square	< 108.78	99.82	Good
2	<i>Significance Probability</i>	<sup>3</sup> 0.05	0.067	Good
3	CMIN/DF	£2.00	1,978	Good
4	GFI	<sup>3</sup> 0.90	0.809	Marginal

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5	AGFI	<sup>3</sup> 0.90	0.916	Good
6	TLI	<sup>3</sup> 0.95	0.849	Marginal
7	CFI	<sup>3</sup> 0.95	0.963	Good
8	RMSEA	£0.08	0.079	Good

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

### RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Research Analysis Results

Each hypothesis is tested by comparing the critical ratio (CR) value and the t-table value at a certain degree of freedom (df). If the CR value is greater than the t-table value at a certain df then the relationship between the variables being tested can be declared significant at a certain level of

probability. Apart from that, it is also seen from the probability level that if  $p < 0.05$  the null hypothesis is rejected, and if  $p > 0.05$  the null hypothesis is accepted. The test results of the four proposed hypotheses are presented in Table 3

Table 3: Regression Weight Standardized Structural Equation Model

	Estimate	S.E	CR	P	Confirmation
Increase in tourist visits <--- Level collaboration between stakeholders	0.762	0.541	4,314	0.039	significant
Increase in tourist visits <--- Implementation principles of sustainable tourism	0.465	0.489	3,762	0.026	significant
Increase in tourist visits <--- Supporting policies and regulations	0.657	0.583	4,216	0.034	significant

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

Statistical analysis of hypothesis testing shows the following results:

Hypothesis 1: The level of collaboration between stakeholders has a positive and significant effect on increasing tourist visits, accepted. This can be seen from the Critical Ratio (CR) value of 4.314 which shows a higher value than the t-table value of 1.968 at a probability level of  $0.039 < 0.05$  with a beta value of 0.762. Based on the results of this analysis, it means accepting the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) which states that the level of collaboration between stakeholders has a positive and significant effect on increased visit traveler and reject the null hypothesis. These results show that the variable level of intensive collaboration between stakeholders can increase tourist visits in Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi.

Hypothesis 2: The application of sustainable tourism principles has a positive and significant effect on increasing tourist visits, accepted. This can be seen from the Critical Ratio (CR) value of 3.762 which shows a higher value than the t-table value of 1.968 at a probability level of  $0.026 < 0.05$  with a beta value of 0.465. Based on the results of this analysis, it means accepting the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) which states that the application of sustainable tourism principles has a positive and significant effect on increasing tourist visits and rejects the null hypothesis. These results show that variable T. Correct application of sustainable tourism principles can increase tourist visits in Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi.

Hypothesis 3: Supporting policies and regulations have a positive and significant effect on increasing tourist visits, accepted. This can be seen from the Critical Ratio (CR) value of 4.216. shows a higher value than the t-table value of 1.968 at a probability level of  $0.034 < 0.05$  with a beta value of 0.657. Based on the results of this analysis, it means accepting the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) which states that supporting policies and regulations have a positive and significant effect on increasing tourist visits and rejecting the null hypothesis. These results show that the variable existence of good supporting policies and regulations can increase tourist visits in Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi.

### DISCUSSION

Referring to the proof of the first hypothesis, namely the level of collaboration between stakeholders has a positive and significant effect on increasing tourist visits, which means that the higher the intensity of the level of collaboration between stakeholders, the higher the level of tourist visits in Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi. This can be understood because in increasingly high levels



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of collaboration between stakeholders, there is: 1) communication and coordination between stakeholders is increasing, 2) clarity in the division of roles and responsibilities of each party is becoming more apparent, 3) the level of participation in decision making is increasing. . The findings of this research are in accordance with the research results of Amerta et al (2017) which stated that effective collaboration between the government, local communities, the private sector and other related parties is the main key in realizing sustainable tourism. This research also concludes that with strong collaboration, challenges in tourism development can be overcome more effectively. The results of this research also support the opinion of Bramwell & Lane, (2000) which states that sustainable tourism development requires involvement and collaboration from various parties or stakeholders, such as government, the tourism industry, local communities and non-governmental organizations. To achieve effective collaboration, communication intensity is required, and high coordination between stakeholders. Good communication and coordination allows for the exchange of information, unification of vision and goals, as well as synergy in implementing sustainable tourism strategies and policies. Good communication and coordination enable the exchange of information, unification of vision and goals, as well as synergy in implementing sustainable tourism strategies and policies.

The verification of the second hypothesis demonstrates that the utilization of sustainable tourism principles exerts a constructive and noteworthy impact on the augmentation of tourist arrivals. This outcome signifies that the greater the extent of application of sustainable tourism principles grounded in intellect, the higher the magnitude of tourist visits observed in Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi. The findings of this study align with the investigation conducted by Kim, J. et al (2020) on the repercussions of sustainable tourism practices on tourist engagement and allegiance towards the destination. The outcomes reveal that activities like the management of natural resources, engagement of local communities, and preservation of cultural heritage positively shape the tourists' experiences and their commitment to the destination. Moreover, the findings of this research are consistent with the study by Huang, S. et al (2019) that delved into the interconnection among sustainable tourism practices, destination competitiveness, and visitor loyalty. The results highlight that the execution of sustainable tourism practices, encompassing activities such as the management of natural resources and preservation of cultural heritage, bolsters destination competitiveness and manifests a positive correlation with visitor loyalty. The validation of this hypothesis is also fortified by the research conducted by Seetanah, B. et al (2022), which leverages panel data from various nations to scrutinize the nexus between sustainable tourism practices and tourist influx. The results evince that the adoption of measures such as environmental conservation tourism practices and tourist influx. The results evince that the adoption of measures such as environmental conservation.

### **CONCLUSION**

1. The level of collaboration between stakeholders has a positive and significant effect on increasing tourist visits. This can be seen from the estimated value of 0.762 with a CR (Critical Ratio) value of 4.314 and a p-value of 0.039 which is significant at the 95% confidence level.
2. The application of sustainable tourism principles also has a positive and significant effect on increasing tourist visits. The Estimated value is 0.465 with a CR value of 3.762 and a p-value of 0.026 which is significant at the 95% confidence level.
3. Supporting policies and regulations have a positive and significant influence on increasing tourist visits. This is shown by the estimated value of 0.657 with a CR value of 4.216 and a p-value of 0.034 which is significant at the 95% confidence level.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The government and tourism stakeholders need to increase collaboration and coordination between stakeholders to create a better and more attractive tourism experience for tourists.
2. The application of sustainable tourism principles, such as environmental preservation, involvement of local communities, and respect for local culture, needs to continue to be improved to maintain the attractiveness of tourist destinations and increase tourist satisfaction.
3. The government needs to develop policies and regulations that support tourism development, such as tourism promotion, infrastructure improvements, quality standards and investment incentives, to attract more tourists.

### **RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

1. This research only focuses on three main factors (collaboration between stakeholders, implementation of sustainable tourism principles, and supporting policies and regulations) that influence the increase in tourist visits. There are still other factors that may have an influence but were not considered in this study.
2. This research may be limited to tourist locations or destinations in Tana Toraja, so the results may not be generalized to all tourist destinations.

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3. This research uses a survey or questionnaire method which may have limitations in collecting data and measuring the variables studied.

4. For additional research endeavors, it is advised to broaden the range of factors under examination, extend the geographical scope or tourist sites investigated, and employ a wider array of research methodologies in order to achieve more thorough and widely applicable outcomes.

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