

Formulating Principles and Criteria of Turtle-Based Ecotourism Based On the Balinese Philosophy of the Trihita Karana

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ABSTRACT

This article was written with an objective to formulate principles and criteria of turtle-based ecotourism that is in line with the Balinese philosophy of the Trihita Karana (THK). This article was written based on output of an FGD followed by a workshop conducted at TCEC Serangan, Bali in 2000-2001. Output of the FGD and workshop showed that the principles and criteria of turtle-based ecotourism that is in line with the Balinese philosophy of the Trihita Karana are as follows: (1) Sustainability principles; (2) providing appropriate interpretation; (3) empowerment of local communities; (4) respect to local culture / religion; (5) abide to law / regulations; (6) development supported by local communities; (7) provide satisfaction to tourists; (8) responsible marketing; (9) manajemen system in line with THK; (10) principles of self-protections; (11) empowerment of knowledge and local wisdom; and (12) implementation of CHSE protocols.

KEY WORDS: ecotourism, criteria, Trihita Karana, TCEC, Bali.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian Ecotourism Society which is locally known as Masyarakat Ekowisata Indonesia (MEI), defines ecotourism as operational of responsible tourism activities in a natural sites such as forests and in other areas that set naturally, that support efforts on conservation of nature and culture and improve welfare of local communities (Anon., 1997; Sudarto, 1999; Dalem, 2002; Dalem, 2022).

Ecotourism is a popular business activities since the 20th or year 2000. Many references that involving people, organizaions, institutions have different definision, and criteria on ecotourism even though in fact it should be the same.

The Indonesian Ecotourism Society (MEI) was launched the definision, principles and criteria of ecotourism that was made to be suitable for Indonesia in 1996. A workshop had been carried out to formulate the principles and criteria of ecotourism that fit with Balinese philosophy or the Trihita Karana (THK) in Sanur, Bali in 2002, the output of activity of which consist of 9 principles with 24 criteria.

This article is written to formulate principles and criteria of ecotourism that was specifically appropriate for turtle-based ecotourism that is in line with the Balinese philosophy of the THK. As a result, these can be used as references for the industries to formulate turtle-based ecotourism products that are unique for Bali.

II. LITERATUR REVIEW

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as a responsible travel to natural areas that protect the environment and improve the welfare of the local communities (Western, 1993). Indonesian Ecotourism Society or Masyarakat Ekowisata Indonesia (MEI), also released a similar definition about ecotourism, which is responsible tourism activities on a natural areas or on an area of which naturally managed, support conservation of environment (nature and culture) as well as improving welfare of local communities (Anon., 1997; Sudarto, 1999; Dalem, 2002).

On International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN's) document (1996), ecotourism defined as a responsible environmental journey and a visit to relatively undisturbed natural areas to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any connected equipment cultural, historic and current), a trip that promotes conservation, minimizes the negative impact of visitors and stimulate the involvement of the local population in the sharing of socio-economic benefits (Nicosia and Perini, 2016).

Ecotourism criteria according to Indonesian Ecotourism Society or Masyarakat Ekowisata Indonesia (MEI) 1996 is as follows (Anonim, 1997): On principle 1 (Concern, take responsibility and commitment on

nature conservation), its criteria are: (a) Pay attention on carrying capacity of tourism resort; (b) Controlling number of visitor (visitor management), facilities / infrastructure to fit with carrying capacity of tourist attractions and destinations; (c) Improve awareness and appreciation of ecotour operations on environment (nature and culture); (d) Operational of ecotourism activities must utilized local resources in a sustainable way; (e) Minimalized its negative impacts; (f) Environmentally friendly and the guarantee for the sustainability of ecotourism businesses. For principle 2 (Development must be based on deliberation and approval of the local community), its criteria are as follows: (a) Building partnership relationships with the community in the ecotourism planning and management processes; (b) Clearly and correctly informing the direction of the development of the area to the local community; (c) Free to the community to accept or reject ecotourism development. Principle 3 (Providing benefits to local communities), the criteria are: (a) Opening opportunities for local communities to become economic actors in ecotourism activities, both actively and passively; (b) Provide assistance and empowerment to local communities in an effort to improve socio-economic welfare; (c) Improvement of local community skills. Principle 4 (Be sensitive to and respect socio-cultural values and religious traditions adopted by the local community), the criteria are: (a) A code of ethics for tourists must be introduced to the management and tourists; (b) Together with the community, develop a code of conducts for tourists in accordance with the socio-cultural values and religious traditions of the local community. Principle 5 (Obey the laws and regulations in the environmental and tourism sectors), the criteria are: Pay attention and consistently implementing the laws and regulations (a) Law Number 4 year 1982 concerning Principles of Environmental Management (which has been updated with Law Number 32 year 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management); (b) Law Number 5 year 1990 concerning Conservation of Biological Natural Resources and Their Ecosystems; (c) Law Number 24 year 1992 concerning Spatial Planning (which has now been updated into Law Number 26 year 2007 concerning Spatial Planning); (d) Presidential Decree Number 32 year 1990 concerning Protected Areas; (e) Law No. 9 year 1990 on Tourism (updated by Law No. 10 year 2009 on tourism); and (f) other related regulations.

The literature review on ecotourism in Indonesia made by Dalem (2002) published by the Asian Productivity Organization (Japan) did not touch in detail about the synergy with THK values in the development of ecotourism destinations. Other publications on ecotourism, among others, were written by Avenzora (2003) about evaluating the concept of ecotourism; Manurung (2002) about ecotourism in Indonesia which places more emphasis on action plans, and ecotourism practices, especially regarding product development, improvement efforts, marketing, funding, monitoring and evaluation.

Pratomo (2006) wrote the formulation of ecotourism development strategies in Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park. Other ecotourism research includes Dalem et al, 2012 who studied birds as ecotourism attractions in the Nusa Dua Tourist Resort, ecotourism in Pemuteran (Adnyani, 2012).

The application of ecotourism in urban areas is a relatively new concept, but it has been shown to provide environmental benefits, for example in several cities of Kenya, including Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu (Okay-ch, 2009).

Wiranatha and Dalem (2010) wrote "implementation of local knowledge "Trihita Karana" on ecotourism management in Bali", but the discussion on his writings did not focus on turtles, but focuses on Macaca ecotourism in Bali (Alas Kedaton, Sangeh and Monkey Forest Ubud).

Other studies that have been conducted related to THK include Sari and Dalem (2012) in an accommodation that can also act as a retreat center in Mambal-Badung, research and publications for hotels in Bali by Dalem (2014) and so on. These two types of publications targeted tourist accommodation.

According to the results of the regional Bali ecotourism workshop in Sanur (2002), it was stated that the principles of ecotourism in the Bali region are: (1) Having concern, commitment and responsibility for the conservation of nature and cultural heritage; (2) providing interpretations that provide opportunities for tourists to enjoy nature and increase their appreciation to nature; (3) continuously contribute to the local community and empower the local community; (4) be sensitive and respect to the socio-cultural values and religious traditions of the local community; (5) comply with the prevailing laws and regulations, (6) its development must be based on deliberation and with the approval of the local community; (7) consistently provide satisfaction to consumers; (8) marketed and promoted honestly and accurately so that it meets expectations (responsible marketing); (9) a harmonious and balanced management system in accordance with the THK concept (Dalem, 2004).

The criteria for the principles of ecotourism in Bali (Dalem, 2004) can be described as follows: Principles (1) Having concern, commitment and responsibility for the conservation of nature and cultural heritage, the criteria are: (a) Achieving a balance of land use; (b) Use of environmentally friendly technology; (c) the use of cultural heritage sites as ecotourism attractions must take consideration to the carrying capacity; (d) Conserving biodiversity and cultural heritage; (e) Pay attention to the existence of endemicity. Principle (2) Provide interpretations that provide opportunities for tourists to enjoy nature and increase their appreciation to nature, with criteria as follows: (a) Provide professional and licensed tour guides; (b) Providing supporting

facilities and adequate information related to ecotourism attractions; (c) Involve local customary institutions. Principle (3) Continuously contribute to the local community and empower the local community, the criteria are: (a) Prioritizing the use of local workers according to their expertise; (b) Prioritizing the use of local products for the operation of ecotourism attractions; (c) Involve local customary institutions. Principle (4) Be sensitive to and respect to socio-cultural values and religious traditions of the local community, the criteria are: (a) development and operations are adjusted to local norms and local wisdom; (b) The existence and activities of ecotourism do not interfere with the religious activities of the local community. Principle (5) Complying with the prevailing laws and regulations, the criteria are: (a) Obeying the law and other related regulations; (b) Obey the local village *awig-awig*. Principle (6) The development must be based on deliberation and with the approval of the local community, the criteria are: (a) Development needs to be approved by the community and local customary institutions; (b) establish communication and coordination with local communities and customary institutions in the development of tourist attractions. Principle (7) Consistently provide satisfaction to consumers, the criteria: (a) Provide facilities and provide excellent and satisfactory service to consumers; (b) Provide a medium to obtain feedback from consumers. Principle (8) Marketed and promoted honestly and accurately so that it is in line with expectations (responsible marketing), the criteria: (a) Marketing materials must be accurate, clear and of high quality; (b) Marketing materials that are honest and must be in accordance with reality. Principle (9) a harmonious and balanced management system in accordance with the Trihita Karana concept, the criteria: (a) Paying attention to the harmonious relationships between humans and God (*parhyangan*); (b) Paying attention to harmonious relationships between humans and humans (*pawongan*); (c) Paying attention to harmonious relationships between humans and the environment (*palemahan*) (Dalem (2004).

Krummeck et al (2020) researched "Tourists' behavioral intention towards ecotourism in Bali under consideration of issue-related knowledge". This research was conducted at Monkey Forest Ubud, Jatiluwih Tourist Attraction, and West Bali National Park, which is different from what was carried out in this study which focused on turtle ecotourism research based on Trihita Karana (THK).

Research by Dalem (2011) shows that in THK's research in the hospitality sector with the title "Achievements and Challenges of Implementation of "Trihita Karana" for Creating Sustainable Tourism in Bali-Indonesia: A Case Study in Hotel Sectors", using 24 samples of participating hotels The THK Awards in Bali found that the implementation of THK in the *parhyangan* aspects was the weakest or lowest in their performance with a score of 62 out of a maximum score of 100. The highest was the *pawongan* aspects with a score of 73, and *palemahan* which was between the second with a score of 72.

A study conducted by Tisdell and Wilson (2003) on "Does Ecotourism Contribute to Sea Turtle Conservation? Is the Flagship Status of Turtle Advantageous?" This study discusses the doubts that sea turtles are the prominent species for tourism that uses wild life as attractions. In some cases, this turns out to be a responsibility for turtle conservation, but in other cases where for example turtle ecotourism has been developed, it has made a positive contribution to turtle conservation. Examples of both cases have been given. Particular attention was paid to the development of turtle-based ecotourism at Mon Repos Beach near Bundaberg, Australia. These developments are set in their historical context and their contribution to conservation is discussed. The headstart project for turtles in Sri Lanka is a tourist attraction. While they are promoted to have positive conservation consequences and surveys show that visitors are overall convinced of this, the effect on turtle conservation is uncertain. Turtle farming provides the basis for tourism and can contribute to turtle conservation in the ways outlined. It is said that less attention has been paid to the legends, culture and history associated with turtles in promoting turtle-based tourism. This is supported by evidence in Australia. Inadequate use of Australian native turtles with sea turtles in turtle-based tourism. Beneficial scope exists for developing the relationship between humans and turtles further than this currently found in promoting turtle-based tourism. This could add to the role of turtle-based tourism in promoting turtle conservation.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This article was written based on output of an FGD followed by a workshop conducted at TCEC Serangan Denpasar in 2000-2001. Fifteen stakeholders representing academics, businessmen, committee, government, and mass media and representing who are expert in the field of *parhyangan* (culture/spirituality), *pawongan* (community) and *palemahan* (environment) participated joining the FGD. Output of the FGD and workshop were principles and criteria of turtle-based ecotourism that is in line with the Balinese philosophy of the Trihita Karana (THK).

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results of this research showed that there were 12 principles with 48 criteria confirmed as principles and criteria of turtle-based ecotourism that is in line with the Balinese philosophy of the THK, as can be described as follows:

Principle 1: Sustainability principles, care of, committed to, and has a responsibility on nature. The criteria are: (a) Achieving a balance of land use; (b) Use of appropriate and environmentally friendly technology; (c) Utilization of cultural heritage as a tourist attraction that is adjusted to the carrying capacity; (d) Conserving nature, including biodiversity and cultural heritage; (e) Taking into account the existence of endemicity; (f) Spatial arrangement according to conservation needs (eg maintaining a good location for turtle breeding) and services to visitors (tourists).

Based on Principle 1, sustainability is a key point in turtle-based ecotourism. This may have relationships with balanced use of resources, consideration to carrying capacity, endemicity, and conservation of biodiversity as well as cultural heritage. The principles of sustainability have been reported on some articles or publications, such as NEAP (2000) and Dalem (2004).

Principle 2: Provide interpretations that give tourists the opportunity to enjoy nature and increase their appreciation to nature. The criteria are as follows: (a) Provide professional and licensed tour guides who are competent on turtles in various aspects (conservation, culture/religion, etc.); (b) Provide supporting facilities and adequate information related to tourist attractions; (c) Interaction with nature/experience with nature (experiencing natural areas) which is unique/distinctive and memorable; (d) Comparative study to different model facilities to standardize service model effectiveness, convenience, completeness.

Principle 2: education is an important element of ecotourism. The activity of interpretation is an example of education activity. Jenkins (2009) wrote that interpretation may be in several types and may needs specific tools as well.

Principle 3: Continually contribute to the local community and empower the local community. The criteria are: (a) Development of local human resources for turtle ecotourism (guides, managers, etc.) towards professional staffs; (b) Prioritizing the use of local workers based on their expertise; (c) Prioritizing the use of local products for tourist attraction operations; (d) Involving local customary institutions; (e) There is an income sharing to the traditional village, and the traditional village gets a clear contribution and in a fair proportion.

Principle 4: Be sensitive to and respect the socio-cultural values and religious traditions of the local community. The criteria are: (a) Development and operations are adjusted to etiquette, local norms and local wisdom; (b) The existence and activities of ecotourism do not interfere with the religious activities of the local community; (c) Maintain / respect local wisdom, customs and sacred values.

On Principle 4, it is mentioned that tourists must respect to local culture and traditions as well as religious values. Aims for these were to minimize conflicts between the company and the local community.

Principle 5: Obey the applicable laws and regulations. Its criteria are: (a) Comply with laws and other regulatory instruments related to ecotourism; (b) Obey the *awig-awig* of the local village and the *awig-awig* of the traditional Balinese village in general; (c) Ecotourism arrangements in accordance with the local village *pararem*. For any products sold to the tourists, they must obey the law or regulations, *awig-awig* and *perarem* available on the tourist attractions.

Principle 6: Development should be based on deliberation and with the approval from the local community. The criteria are: (a) Development needs to be approved by the local community and customary institutions; (b) Establish communication and coordination with local communities and customary institutions in the development (and operation of) tourist attractions.

Principle 6 has a connection with community based tourism. The principle is that the local must know and customary institutions, such as *desa adat*, must approve the proposed development.

Principle 7: Consistently provide satisfaction to consumers. The criteria are: (a) Provide facilities (including experimental media) as well as provide excellent and satisfactory service to consumers; (b) Provide media for obtaining feedback from consumers; (c) The existence of officers, facilities and infrastructure, ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and response mechanisms to feedback from consumers or tourists quickly and satisfactorily; (d) To update information, and evaluate; (e) Comparative studies with similar other facilities.

Principle 7 involves a key issue to satisfaction. When the tourists satisfied with the product of services provided, there will be a possibility that those tourists will recommend the products to others. Satisfaction may be influenced by many factors, but one thing that can be expected is that the operator of business needs some feed back for consideration in the evaluation about perception of tourists on the product sold.

Principle 8: Marketed and promoted honestly and accurately so that it meets expectations (responsible marketing). The criteria are as follows: (a) Marketing materials must be accurate, clear and of a good quality; (b) Marketing materials that are honest and must be true to reality; (c) Utilization of digital technology (including applications), to facilitate access and expand networking with organizations at local, national and international levels; (d) Establish positive communication between related institutions, both in local, national and international levels so that it can be globally recognized; (e) One-stop coordinated marketing process by developing branches; (f) Having a unique Balinese branding souvenir as an icon that can be memorable for tourists.

Principle 8 contains the point of responsible marketing. The main idea for this principle is the tourists must be given an accurate, clear and of a good quality of information, so it is fit with what is being expected.

Principle 9: A harmonious and balanced management system in accordance with the THK concept. The criteria are (a) Have a good governance; (b) Paying attention to the harmony of the relationship between humans and the God (*parhyangan*); (c) Paying attention to the harmony of the relationship between humans and humans (*pawongan*); (d) Pay attention to the harmony of the relationship between humans and the environment (*palemahan*).

Principle 9 provides unique points on the turtle-based ecotourism principles and criteria formulated here. The term of Trihita Karana or THK which has been adopted from a wisdom of local Bali, actually its spirit has been recognized nationally in Indonesia, because its spirit has been adopted on the description of Indonesian regulation, Law number 10/2009, on Tourism, especially in Chapter III Article 5.a. it is mentioned that “Kepariwisatahan diselenggarakan dengan prinsip menjunjung tinggi norma agama dan nilai budaya sebagai pengejawantahan dari konsep hidup dalam keseimbangan hubungan antara manusia dan Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, hubungan antara manusia dan sesama manusia, dan hubungan antara manusia dan lingkungan” (tourism is operated within the principles of respect to the religious norms and cultural values as embodiment of living concept in balanced of relationships between humans and the God, between humans and other human beings, and between humans and the environment). The principles of THK has been adopted on principles and criteria of ecotourism for Bali province as they can be seen on principles and criteria of ecotourism for Bali province in 2002 (Dalem, 2004), but these principles and criteria are for a general ecotourism not for turtle-based ecotourism. The other difference between the two is that the newly formulated principles are supported by 4 criteria, while the older one with 3 criteria only.

Principle 10: The principle of self-protection/protection. The criteria are (a) Limitation of direct contact with animals (turtles); (b). Hygienic behavior.

Principle 10, may well related to the risk that may possible when tourist and management of TCEC to interact with the turtles (including turtle eggs, hatchlings, mature adult turtles, sick turtles, etc.). Many diseases related to bacteria, parasites etc might become a risk for visitors or for employees who are interact with the turtles.

Principle 11: Strengthening knowledge and local wisdom as a forum for community-based learning. The criteria are: (a) Knowledge and local wisdom are well identified and recorded; (b) There is a process of communication and learning together with various methods between tourism managers and visitors; (c) Involving school children in the turtle tourism.

For Principle 11, knowledge and local wisdom have been key words that need attention as stressed out by participants of the workshop. This is likely related to the uniqueness of tourism product sold.

TCEC has been recommended to get these data, because no record available in detail about local wisdom kept by TCEC management. For example, for these principles and criteria, many local values might be available at TCEC but have not been recorded formally by management of TCEC.

Principle 12: Application of the CHSE protocol (Cleanliness/Cleanliness, Health/Health, Safety/Safety, Environment Sustainability/Environmental Sustainability). The criteria are: (a) Have a good CHSE protocol plan; (b) Availability of adequate and well-maintained CHSE supporting facilities; (c) Proper implementation of the CHSE protocol; (d) Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the CHSE protocol; and (e) Review the CHSE management protocol periodically for continuous improvement.

Principles 12 emerged on the FGD and workshop was likely because this activity was undertaken during pandemic era. Implementation of the CHSE protocols have been intensively informed to public in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19 viruses. In operational, wearing masker, keeping distance at least 1,8 m, and get rid of crowds are among things that frequently disseminated to public. This accompanied by vaccination, testing, tracing and protection programs in order to improve achievements, before herd heredity can be achieved.

V. CONCLUSIONS

There were 12 principles and 48 criteria of turtle-based ecotourism that is in line with the Balinese philosophy of the THK. The principles are as follows: Principle 1: Sustainability principles, care of, committed to, and has a responsibility on nature; Principle 2: Provide interpretations that give tourists the opportunity to enjoy nature and increase their love of nature; Principle 3: Continually contribute to the local community and empower the local community; Principle 4: Be sensitive to and respect the socio-cultural values and religious traditions of the local community; Principle 5: Obey the applicable laws and regulations; Principle 6: Development should be based on deliberation and with the consent of the local community; Principle 7: Consistently provide satisfaction to consumers; Principle 8: Marketed and promoted honestly and accurately so that it meets expectations (responsible marketing); Principle 9: A harmonious and balanced management system in accordance with the THK concept. Principle 10: The principle of self-protection/protection; Principle 11:

Strengthening knowledge and local wisdom as a forum for community-based learning; Principle 12: Application of the CHSE protocol.

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