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## ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL ATTRACTION OF ECO-KARST TOURISM OF MARON RIVER, DERSONO VILLAGE, PRINGKUKU DISTRICT PACITAN REGENCY

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### ABSTRACT

*Tourism is one of the ways for residents at the village to gain income and aslo a contributor to the national economy. The tourism that is found in every village nowadays favors the potential of the surrounding nature. Pacitan Regency is known to have tourism potential related to the advantages of its karst landscape. Pacitan also got the nickname "1000 Goa" because there are many karst caves found there. Villages in Pacitan Regency have developed a lot of eco-karst tourism. Dersono Village is a village located in Pringkuku District, Pacitan Regency. There is one leading eco-karst tourism in the village that is currently being managed, namely the Maron River. Although it has similarities with other tourism in Pacitan Regency, which is the same theme of eco-karst, however Maron River certainly has its own attraction which made tourists who come to Pacitan Regency decided to visit the Maron River This study aims to analyze the potential for tourism attraction of Maron River based on the 4A tourism components. The method used in this study is descriptive research with data collection through observation and interviews. Based on the results of the study, the study found that the tourism attraction of Maron River based on 4A has met the parameters. However, it still needs to be developed so that the number of tourist visits continues to increase and can be expanded with new eco-karst attractions.*

**Keywords:** *Potential, Tourism, Eco-Karst*

### A. INTRODUCTION

Development in tourism can be regarded as a breakthrough for a country or region to increase its revenue. The right step is to make tourism as an industry and as an object of attracting growth in the region. Industry in the tourism sector is economically important for the country's development (Buongiorno, Alessandron and Intini, 2021), because the development of the tourism sector can lead to increase the country's revenue and employment

opportunities for the people (Lee dan Chang, 2008)

One of the component that is currently being the focus of tourism management is environmentally friendly tourism by prioritizing conservation, socio-economic empowerment for the community and community participation, known as ecotourism. Various regions take advantage of the nature in their regions to serve as an attraction to invite tourists to come. Tourism managers in the strategy of

bringing in tourists, really consider the motivation of people traveling. What drives people to travel and visit new destinations, and what are the barriers which hinder them to travel, are among the most important questions in tourism research. There are numerous reasons why people travel. Some travel to gain new knowledge (Chiang, Wang, Lee, & Chen, 2015), some are on a quest for a new, authentic experience (Jovicic, 2016); some crave escape from everyday life, rest and relaxation faraway from home (Yousefi & Marzuki, 2015) and for some of them, travel is just in their job description (Tsui & Fung, 2016). Understanding what motivates, but also what hinders people from travelling has important practical implications, as it helps better understand and predict travel decisions and consumption behavior of tourists.

Pacitan Regency has many natural tourist attractions that is good for karst tourism. This is because some areas of Pacitan Regency are karst landscapes and many karst caves are found to the point that Pacitan Regency also has a nickname "1000 Goa". Karst area is defined as rocky dry land, as a result of the dissolving process and has underground drainage (Haryono, 2001; Milanovic, 1991 as cited in Juanda,

2006). The existence of a closed basin, the scarcity of surface drainage characterizes the karst area. The karst area has plenty subsurface drainage because of weathering of karst rocks (Ford & Williams, 2007). Natural tourism in the karst area can also be referred to as Eco-karst tourism.

One of eco-karst tourisms that is available in Pacitan Regency is Maron River, specifically at Dersono Village, Pringkuku District. Eco-karst tourism Maron River become the only river tourism in Pacitan Regency. The reason is, as already explained, according to the definition of a karst area, the difficult nature to find rivers above the surface of the karst area. Maron River eco-karst tourism which has been managed by Pokdarwis Dersono Village. The number of visitors is unpredictable. Most visits are on weekends or holidays. Based on initial interviews, the number of tourist visits on weekends can reach 250 people. However, this amount is far behind when compared with other Eco-karst tourism in Pacitan Regency such as its Caves or its Beaches.

This significant difference in visits can be caused by several factors, because the various reason of tourists to visit tourist spots. Factors that influence the motivation of tourists to visit and

revisit, one of which relates to tourism Attraction which is detailed based on the 4A tourism components by Cooper, et al (1993).

The 4A tourism components according to Cooper, et al. (1993) are attraction, amenity, accessibility dan anciliary become a core component in attracting tourists to visit. Each tourist spot always has a different attraction that determine the tourist spot become a tourist favorite or not. As mentioned on the background described previously, this study will Analyze the Potential Attraction of Eco-Karst Tourism in

Maron River, Dersono Village, Pringkuku District, Pacitan Regency.

**B. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research was conducted in Maron River, Dersono Village, Pringkuku District, Pacitan Regency. This research falls under descriptive research. Data used in this research is related to Attraction, Accessibility, Amenity dan Ancillary of Eco-karst tourism Maron River. The data is obtained through observation, interviews and document review.

**Table 1.** Criteria for Assessment of Natural Tourism Objects and Attractions

<b>Criteria for Assessment of Attraction (Heaviness 6)</b>						
No	Element/Sub Elements	Score				
1.	The uniqueness of natural resources: Cliff, Flora, Fauna, Culture and River	5 30	4 25	3 20	2 15	1 10
2.	Main types of natural resources: Rock, River, Culture, Water and Natural symptoms	5 30	4 25	3 20	2 15	1 10
3.	Nature tourism activities to do: Enjoy the beauty of nature, See flora and fauna, Playing water, Photo spots and Camping	5 30	4 25	3 20	2 15	1 10
4.	Cleanliness of tourist attraction locations, there is no influence from: Industry, Crowded Road, Settlements, Trash and Vandalism	5 30	4 25	3 20	2 15	1 10
5.	Comfort: Clean and cool air, Free from annoying odors, Noise free, No annoying traffic and Good service to visitors	There are 5 30	There are 4 25	There are 3 20	There are 2 15	There are 1 10
<b>Criteria for Assessment of Accessibility (Heaviness 5)</b>						
1	Road conditoin	Good (30)	Sufficient (25)	Medium (20)	Bad (15)	
2	Distance from city center	<5 km (30)	5-10km (25)	10-15km (20)	>15km (10)	

3	Travel time from city center	1-2 hour 30	2-3 hour 25	3-4 hour 20	>= 5 hour 15
4	Distance from other attractions	<5 km 30	5-10km 25	10-15km 20	>15km 10
5	Travel time from other attractions	1-2 hour 30	2-3 hour 25	3-4 hour 20	>= 5 hour 15

**Criteria for Assessment of Facilities and Infrastructure (Heaviness 3)**

1	Facilities Roadside stall, Bank, Market, Souvenir shop and Restaurant	>= 4 50	3 40	2 30	1 20	nothing 10
2	Infrastructure Post office, Public health center, Drinking water network, Electric network, Phone network and Pokdarwis	>= 4 50	3 40	2 30	1 20	nothing 10

Source: Modification of Guidelines for Analysis of Operational Areas and Tourist Attractions of the Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation in 2003.

**C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The economic condition of the people of Dersono Village based on livelihoods, there are 1713 people working as farmers, 214 people working as merchant, 48 people as civil servant and 67 people as worker. Converting it to percentage, 80% of the population are farmers. These jobs do not have a significant impact on the economic condition of the community due to the difficulty of cultivating an agricultural land on the thin soil solum that is difficult to retain water. This has also been written in Medium Term Development Plan, Dersono Village. This condition is related to the geological structure of Dersono Village which is in the area of the Wonosari karst formation.

The karst area is a dry and barren area because the irrigation system in the karst area is different for other area. Karst rock cannot retain water, the rainwater is not absorbed optimally by the soil. Karst is defined as a landscape with a unique hydrological system due to easily dissolved rock with good secondary porosity. (Bakalowicz, 2005; Ford & Williams, 2007). Due to this fact, the concentration of water is below the surface which forms small waterway, which then slowly turns into underground rivers (Jauhari, 2002; Adji & Haryono, 2017). This makes it harder to find clean water for farming purposes.

But on the other hand, the karst area has the potential for the beauty of

beautiful and unique natural appearances. That potential is in the form of caves, cliffs and waters that appear on the surface. Dersono Village also has the potential for the beauty of the natural appearance of the karst area which is then managed as eco-karst tourism. The potential for eco-karst tourism is the Maron River

As eco-karst tourism, Maron River has its own charm like other eco-karst tourism in Pacitan Regency. These attractions are included in 4A tourism components from Cooper, et al (1993) which are included in the table as follows.

**Attraction**

**Tabel 2.** Data Processing of Attraction Assessment

Element/Sub Elements	Description	Heaviness	Value	Total Score
The uniqueness of natural resources	Cliff and River	6	15	90
Main types of natural resources	Rocks, Rivers, Water and Natural Symptoms	6	20	120
Nature tourism activities to do	Enjoy the beauty of nature, Playing water dan Photo spot	6	20	120
Cleanliness of tourist attraction locations, there is no influence from	Industry, Crowdes road, Trash dan vandalism	6	25	150
Confort	Clean and cool air, Free from annoying odors, Noise free, No annoying traffic and good service to visitors	6	30	180
Attraction Score			110	660

Source: Researchers

After processing the data, in the attraction section, it is reported that the uniqueness of the natural resources has the the lowest score of 90. This is because there are only 2 attractions that tourists can enjoy. Attractions should consist of what first makes tourists interested in visiting a tourist area

(Shafira dan Tri, 2020), so that tourists lack alternative choices. The result of Alfitriani, et al (2021) state that tourist attractions have a significant effect on the interest of returning tourists. Meanwhile, Eco-karst tourism Maron River's confort got the highest score of 180 because all aspect that became the

benchmark for comfort are found in the Eco-karst tourism Maron River.

According to Karyono (1997), attractions or tourist attractions are related to the concepts of what to see and what to do. Eco-karst tourism Maron River is a very unique tourism in Pacitan Regency, because it is the only tourism that is in a river. Nevertheless, attractions should consist of various types of rides that first attract tourists to visit an area (Chaerunnisa and Yuniningsih, 2020). Tourists can enjoy the beauty of the Maron River where the water is bluish green and towering trees and karst cliffs along the river, so that tourists feel as if they are on the

Amazon River. The length of the river route by boat is about 500m, to the estuary which is on Ngibroboyo Beach.



**Figure 1.** The view on Maron River  
Source: Researcher

While boating along the Maron River, tourists can also take selfies at several photo spots along the river. Those photo spots include swings, karst cliffs and togog rock.



**Figure 2.** Maron River Photo Spot  
Source: Researcher

The uniqueness of the attraction is the main reason for tourists to visit tourist attractions because it gives an impression to tourists (Chaerunnisa and Yuniningsih, 2020). Besides that,

attraction is the most important product element because it is the core reason for visitors why they are willing to sacrifice to visit a tourist destination. For example, what was done in Wonolopo

Tourism Village is developing Omah Ampiran. The concept will be to sell souvenirs along with products produced

by local MSMEs (Chaerunnisa and Yuniningsih, 2020).



**Figure 3.** Maron River from the above  
 Source: @sungaimaronofficial

The environment around the Maron River eco-karst tourism is comfortable. The location is far from industrial activities and the surrounding streets are not crowded. Because of that

the air in the environment is still clean, chill and does not smell. Tourists are also not disturbed by traffic noise so they can really enjoy the beautiful atmosphere around them.

**Accessibility**

**Table 3.** Accessibility Assessment Criteria Data Processing

Element/Sub Elements	Deskription	Heaviness	Value	Total Score
Road conditions	Cukup	5	25	125
Distance from city center	>15 km	5	10	50
Travel time from city center	1-2 hour	5	30	150
Distance from other attractions	5-10 km	5	25	125
Travel time from other attractions	1-2 hour	5	30	150
Accessibility Score			120	600

Source: Researcher

After processing the data, the accessibility, Because of the distance of Maron River location from the city center, their accessibility has the lowest score of 50. This low score is because the distance is more than 15 km. However, the travel time is still less than 1 hour because the roads are quite smooth and not crowded. There are no traffic lights along the way so the trip is does not have stops. Thus, making the

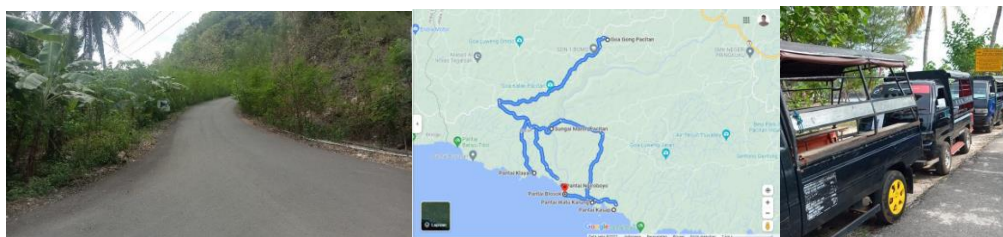
travel time score the highest score of 150.

Tourists who want to enjoy the Maron River eco-karst tourism attraction can use either private or public transport. The road is adequate but not for large buses. Because while the road is well paved, it is not wide enough for buses (Figure 4). Only motorcycles, cars and small buses can pass through it. Road access should be widened, such as in the

Trowulan site area, which has improved other accessibility such as roads that have been casted to resemble toll roads so that tourist vehicles, whether large buses, elves, or private vehicles, can easily go to the Trowulan site area (Khotimah et al, 2017).

Eco-karst tourism Maron River also close to other eco-karst tourism such as Goa Gong that become geopark UNESCO, Ngiroboyo Beach, Seruni Beach, Blosok Beach, Watu Karung Beach, Kasap Beach and Klayar Beach (Figure 4). Tourists who come to Pacitan

Regency using large buses, can continue the journey to the Maron River using public transportation in the Goa Gong area or Klayar Beach at a rate of 15 thousand rupiah per person. (Figur 4). Access to the Maron River is only one way with these tours. In fact, to make it easier for tourists, they need access that can be reached from various directions (Chaerunnisa and Yuniningsih, 2020). Although accessibility is stated that accessibility has no significant effect on the interest of returning tourists (Alfitriani et al, 2021).



**Figure 4.** Conditions of the road to Maron River

Source: Researcher

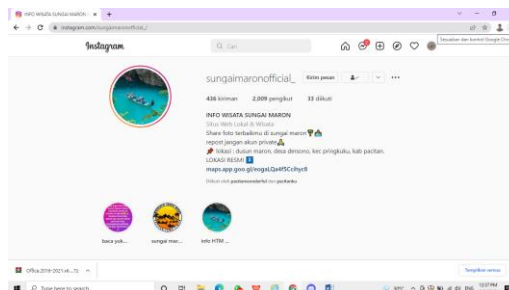
Regarding other ease of access, information about eco-karst tourism in the Maron River can be obtained from the Instagram account @sungaimaronofficial (figure 5). In addition to the information, tourists can also share their moments of happiness when enjoying the Maron River attraction on that account. Tourism communication through social media is directed at the purpose of persuading tourism promotion (Oktavia, 2015). Through social media, people or groups

can share pictures, comments and others that can be used to share with family, friends and even with people they do not know (Martinez et al, 2014). The only problem related to accessibility on the Maron River is the telephone signal which is very difficult to get. However, this problem was slightly alleviated by the wifi router located at the boat dock. Tourists only need to buy a voucher for only 5 thousand to be able to access the internet through the wifi router. The ability of social media is to attract



tourists, because they upload personal photos. That way other social media users who enter into friendship will be interested (Nurjanah, 2018). With the

role of social media, increasing the number of visitors to tourist objects must also be accompanied by awareness to protect the environment.



**Figure 5.** Maron River Social Media Account  
 Source: Researcher

**Amenity**

**Table 4.** the Assessment of Supporting Facilities and Infrastructure

Element/Sub Elements	Deskription	Heaviness	Value	Total Score
Facilities	Roadside stall, Market, Souvenir Shop dan Restaurant	3	50	150
Infrastructure	Public Health Center, Drinking Water Network, Electricity Network, Telephone Network and Pokdarwis	3	50	150
Facilities and Infrastructure Score			100	300

Source: Researcher

After processing the data, in the amenity and ancillary section, both of the have the same score of 150. This is because in the Maron River both sub-elements are complete.

Facilities have a function to serve the needs of tourists while at the tourist destinations they visit. One of the factors that encourage tourists to start tours is the availability of facilities that make tourists comfortable (Hendriawan et al., 2019). There are several facilities that is available for the tourists when visiting

the Maron River. Tourists who come using private vehicles ranging from motorbikes to small buses, can park their vehicles safely and comfortably there is a large enough parking space. Each destination has different facilities, but to serve the basic needs of tourists visiting the destination, complete it according to the characteristics of the destination (Chaerunnisa and Yuniningsih, 2020). For busses, however, the parking space only able to accommodate around 5 small buses (figure 8).



**Figure 6.** Maron River parking space  
Source: Researcher

Tourists who feel hungry, thirsty or just want to eat some snacks while enjoying the wind at the edge of the pier, there are several restaurants that provide several kinds of foods such as river fish

and several kinds of drinks (figure 7). Tourists who want to bring home souvenirs are also available shops selling agate (figure 7). Agate is a unique souvenir from Pacitan Regency because it was made from jasper, marble, chalcedony and feldspar procured from the area around the center or other hilly areas in Pacitan Regency.



**Figure 7.** Restaurants and agate souvenir  
Source: Researcher

Another amenity (facility) found on the Maron River is a shelter that can be used by tourists to wait in line to board a boat or just sit and rest. However, the shelters are still just a

simple shelter and there are not many of them. Even though these facilities are things that provide convenience to tourists so they would spend more time on Maron River (Figure 8).



**Figure 8.** Tourist Shelter  
Source: Researcher

Muslim tourists who want to pray when visiting Maron River, can use the

prayer room that was set up around the location. If tourists need to use a toilet,

there are several bathrooms located near the prayer room. There is still a lack of facilities such as banks and ATMs that are still difficult for tourists to reach (Khotimah et al, 2017). Facilities are quite complete in tourist villages such as in the Wonolopo Tourism Village area such as restaurants, banks, ATMs, clinics, worship facilities, supermarkets, traditional markets and so on (Chaerunnisa and Yuniningsih, 2020).

Ancillary covers the existence of organizations that facilitate and encourage tourism development and marketing. Maron River eco-karst tourism has existed since 2014, but has only been managed since 2018. This Pokdarwis is an institution that manages and develops eco-karst tourism in the

Maron River. Managing the is not done alone, but also involves synergies with village and youth organizations. Pokdarwis also plans to synergize with PKK for the development for improving MSME products. Assistance to Pokdarwis in the management and development of the Maron River eco-karst has been carried out by the Marine Service and the Pacitan Regency Tourism Office.

The there are no tourist agents around the Maron River. Tourism agents who bring in tourists or help tourists to visit the Maron River are still done by agents outside Pacitan Regency. Promotional media around Pacitan Regency only use billboards in the form of banners (figure 9).



**Figure 9.** Maron River Billboard  
 Source: Researcher

The overall assessment of the Maron River eco-karst nature tourism can be seen in table 5:

**Table 5.** Maron River Eligibility Rate

<b>Element</b>	<b>Heaviness</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Socre</b>	<b>Max Score</b>	<b>Index (%)</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Attraction	6	110	600	900	66.67%	Decent
Accessibility	5	120	600	750	80%	Decent
Facilities and infrastructure	3	100	300	300	100%	Decent
<b>Eligibility Level</b>					<b>82.22%</b>	<b>Decent</b>

Source: Researcher

Attraction has the lowest score of 66.67% and it has become a criteria that is considered in when developing the tourism in this region. Even though the minimum facilities and infrastructure have all been fulfilled, it is still necessary to conduct a review related to their quality. Because the indicators used are only related to quantity.

#### **D. CONCLUSIONS**

The potential of eco-karst tourism Maron River based on 4A tourism components is all fulfilled. Especially in relation being the only one attraction for tourist to visit Pacitan Regency. So that it can be used as an advantage to attract tourists to come. The minimum score for accessibility, amenity and ancillary components for have been met but the conditions are less than optimal both in terms of quantity and quality. Nevertheless, all of the 4A tourism components in the Maron River still have to be developed to reach its full potential. Adding of attractions along the river route, adding a wifi network and information sharing platform as well as expansion of parking lots, arrangement of facilities such as shelters that are decent and provide

shade so that tourists spend more of their time on the Maron River. Lastly, we recommend that Pokdarwis continue to provide assistance in the management and development of eco-karst tourism in the Maron River

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