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## Research Article

### PROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF GEOPARK TOURISM OF CILETUH-PALABUHANRATU WEST JAVA INDONESIA

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#### ABSTRACT

Ciletuh Geopark area in Palabuhan Ratu West Java, is the National Geopark area, which is in the filing stage to FAO to become an international Geopark. This region is known to have unique geological potential, as well as having an outstanding natural beauty. The development of this area into a conservation-based tourism area, suggests the importance of studies related to the prospective analysis for the sustainable tourism development aspect of the region, so that the geological richness of the region is maintained. This prospective analytical study aims to identify key determinants that influence the development of sustainable geopark tourism and develop development strategies. The method used for this prospective analysis is the Forum Group Discussion (FGD) to identify key variables, and structural analysis to see the influence / dependence of each variable with another variable, using a consensual valuation approach using MICMAC software. The results of the study show that the most influential variables in the development of this area are tourism security, local tourist potential, road infrastructure, local community support, Geopark tourism, Geopark promotion and governance / institutional, and local and central government support. The study shows the actual condition in the pessimistic scenario, thus it needs to be encouraged by some determinant variable so that in the future can be produced optimistic scenario.

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## INTRODUCTION

Ciletuh, an area located in Sukabumi District of West Java, has geological wealth of exceptional and beautiful old rocks, from pre-tertiary to tertiary times (Rosana *et al.*, 2006). This area is also characterized by the importance of geology in terms of scarcity of rocks, the value of its beauty, the function of archeology, its educational function, perhaps even its historical and cultural value. Furthermore, the region is also rich with biodiversity from its conservation area, as well as its unique cultural wealth.

Ciletuh is claimed to have the potential that can be developed into a global categorized geopark region, which is an area that has an internationally significant geological wealth (FAO, 2014). Geopark Ciletuh also has characteristics as global geopark as defined by Krsak *et al.* (2015), which is an area that can promote awareness of the danger of geological disasters, including earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, so it can be used as input for disaster mitigation strategies policy. Furthermore, Eder (2008) stated that this geopark is a discourse to use the heritage prosperity as a tool for sustainable economic and cultural development.

Geoparks such as Ciletuh basically also have a history of climate change in the past, which can be a valuable knowledge

for the future of mitigation, and can also be a learning ground for the best approach in utilizing renewable energy as well as sustainable tourism as one of the characteristics of a global-scale geopark, according to UNESCO (2014). In addition, Ciletuh Geopark is also claimed to be a global geopark because it is considered to have a rich diversity of geological resources, in addition to the diversity of other natural resources as well as the cultural richness of the region (Darsiharjo *et al.*, 2016), as defined by McKeever (2010).

To develop this area into a global geopark becomes an obsession of West Java local government, since thus this region has socio-economic development potentials for local communities by making this area a tourist attraction. In addition, the determination of this region as a global geopark can be a way to preserve this region in a sustainable manner. Some researches indicate that geopark development has a positive social impact through local community empowerment, educational function, as well as economic benefits for community welfare (Shander, 2014; UNWETO, 2004; Härtling and Meier, 2010).

On the other hand, some scholars argue that the geopark area development as a tourism site also often causes impacts that can disrupt the environment, geological resources, and other natural resources such as conservation forests located in this area if a

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