



# From Devolution to Private Enterprise: The Dynamics of Ecotourism Governance in Gunung Halimun National Park

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**Gayatri Kusumastuti**

Department of Communication and Community Development Sciences, IPB University, Indonesia.

[kusumastuti.gayatri@gmail.com](mailto:kusumastuti.gayatri@gmail.com)

**Mohamad Shohibuddin**

Department of Communication and Community Development Sciences, IPB University, Indonesia.

[m-shohib@ipb.ac.id](mailto:m-shohib@ipb.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

This article examines changes of governance regime in the Curug Nangka ecotourism area, Bogor. Initially a production forest managed by Perum Perhutani (state-owned company), it later became a conservation forest under the management of the Gunung Halimun Salak National Park Agency, and is now managed by a private company. These shifts in governance regimes have significantly impacted community involvement in managing the ecotourism area. A survey of 32 respondents, supported by in-depth interviews, revealed that Perhutani's governance regime scored highest in legitimacy, voice, strategic vision, and equity indicators, followed by the National Park Agency, with the private company ranking lowest. However, the private company performs better management and revenue-sharing with local communities and village authorities. As a result, in terms of performance and accountability indicators, most respondents ranked the private company higher than the other two regimes. By comparing these three governance regimes, this article contributes to identifying key aspects in the governance of ecotourism area that ensure community participation and explores community responses to these changes of governance regime.

*Keywords: Ecotourism; Community Involvement; National Park; Regimes of Governance*

## ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membahas dinamika perubahan tata kelola pada kawasan ekowisata Curug Nangka, Bogor. Kawasan ini semula adalah hutan produksi yang dikelola Perum Perhutani (Badan Usaha Milik Negara), dan kemudian dikelola oleh Balai Taman Nasional Gunung Halimun Salak ketika menjadi hutan konservasi, dan kini dikelola oleh perusahaan swasta. Seiring perubahan rezim tata kelola ini, keterlibatan masyarakat dalam pengelolaan kawasan ekowisata mengalami pasang surut. Hasil survei dengan 32 responden yang diperkuat dengan wawancara mendalam dengan informan menunjukkan bahwa ditinjau dari indikator legitimasi, suara dan visi strategis serta aspek kesetaraan, rezim tata kelola Perhutani dinilai berada pada kategori tinggi, disusul rezim Balai Taman Nasional, sementara rezim swasta di posisi paling bawah. Meskipun demikian, perusahaan menjalankan manajemen dan skema bagi hasil yang lebih jelas dengan masyarakat dan pemerintah desa. Oleh karena itu, dari indikator kinerja dan akuntabilitas, rezim swasta dinilai mayoritas responden berada pada posisi paling atas dibanding dua rezim yang lain.

Corresponding Author

Name : Gayatri Kusumastuti

Email : [kusumastuti.gayatri@gmail.com](mailto:kusumastuti.gayatri@gmail.com)

Melalui perbandingan tiga rezim tata kelola ekowisata, studi ini berkontribusi pada identifikasi aspek-aspek kunci dalam tata kelola kawasan ekowisata yang bakal menjamin keterlibatan masyarakat dan bagaimana respons masyarakat terhadap perubahan rezim tata kelola.

*Kata Kunci: Ekowisata; Keterlibatan Masyarakat; Rezim Tata Kelola; Taman Nasional*

## 1. Introduction

Ecotourism refers to responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of local communities, and involves education for both visitors and hosts. It emphasizes low-impact, nature-based experiences that contribute to conservation efforts and foster socio-economic benefits for indigenous or local populations. This form of economic activity is distinguished by its focus on ecological sustainability, cultural respect, and active community participation. As such, ecotourism goes beyond conventional nature tourism by integrating environmental ethics with principles of equity and education (Arida, 2017; Honey, 2008; Weaver, 2008).

However, when ecotourism expands on a large scale, particularly into remote areas deemed “natural,” such expectations frequently encounter a multitude of conflicting interests. In practice, reconciling the ideal objectives of ecotourism proves to be far from straightforward. It is therefore unsurprising that strong demands have emerged in recent years for ecotourism development to balance its economic goals with environmental conservation, environmental education, and the well-being of local communities (Goodwin, 1996; Wall, 2000).

Indonesian national regulations reinforce these concerns. Government Regulation No. 6 of 2007, for instance, stipulates that forest management and utilization plans, including through ecotourism, must strive to ensure the fair and optimal distribution of forest resource benefits for local communities. In this context, community empowerment initiatives are to be pursued through capacity building and improved access to forest resources, including through various social forestry schemes. Consistently, the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 33 of 2009 emphasizes that ecotourism development must be conducted responsibly, incorporating educational components, awareness-raising, and support for the conservation of natural resources alongside improved livelihoods for local populations.

The extent to which these expectations for ecotourism can be realized depends significantly, among other factors, on the governance models adopted by stakeholders in managing ecotourism areas. Governance becomes especially critical when ecotourism sites are situated within state forest areas, which are legally classified into different categories: namely production forest, protected forest, and conservation forest. National regulations clearly define ecotourism activities in each of these zones, with ecotourism in conservation forests subject to the most stringent utilization rules. Law No. 5 of 1990 on the Conservation of Biological Natural Resources and Their Ecosystems allows ecotourism as an environmental service activity in conservation forests only within designated utilization zones of national parks and specific use blocks of nature tourism parks.

Nevertheless, a considerable gap often persists between such legal provision and actual conditions on the ground. From a governance perspective, the root of this discrepancy frequently lies in the government’s inconsistent policies concerning forest area status, which have resulted in changes in its functions over time. These changes frequently conflict with the tenure systems and livelihoods of local communities (Adiwibowo et al., 2009). Shifts in the designation of state forest areas not only affect the governing regimes overseeing these areas but also directly impact community access to forest resources and their participation in ecotourism activities.

A case in point is the Curug Nangka ecotourism site in Bogor Regency, West Java, which serves as the focal point of this article. This site has experienced significant shifts in governance in

tandem with successive changes in its forest designation. Initially classified as production and protected forest under the management of *Perum Perhutani*—a state-owned enterprise—the area was later reclassified as conservation forest following the expansion of the Gunung Halimun Salak National Park (Taman Nasional Gunung Halimun Salak, TNGHS). With this change, the management authority transferred to the central government agency, namely the Gunung Halimun Salak National Park Authority. More recently, the government appointed a private commercial company (rather than the local community) to manage and develop the Curug Nangka ecotourism area. Consequently, from a governance standpoint, the area has been subjected to three distinct governance regimes over time, each characterized by a different model: the parastatal model, the “golden era of national parks” model, and the public-private profit-oriented model (Eagles, 2008, 2009). Each regime change has shaped the degree to which local communities are involved in the governance process, not only as beneficiaries but also as decision-makers, implementers, and stewards of the ecotourism landscape.

For this reason, the historical trajectory of changes in the status of state forest areas must be examined in order to understand the shifts in governance regimes and the evolving patterns of community involvement within each regime. Drawing from Graham et al. (2003), governance can be assessed through multiple dimensions—legitimacy, voice and participation, strategic vision, performance, accountability, and fairness—which are essential in understanding the outcomes and equity of governance transformation.

Such a focus remains underexplored in existing ecotourism studies on conservation areas (Dhalyana & Adiwibowo, 2015; Y. Ginting et al., 2010; N. Ginting et al., 2019; Mangngi Tiga et al., 2019), including those specifically addressing ecotourism in Gunung Halimun Salak National Park (Ayuningtyas & Dharmawan, 2015; Ekayani et al., 2014). This article, therefore, seeks to analyze the transformation of state forest governance regimes in the Curug Nangka ecotourism area, as well as the governance dynamics under successive regimes. Specifically, it addresses three research questions as follows: (1) How have policy changes regarding the status and function of the forest in the Curug Nangka ecotourism area, including the Curug Nangka and Kalimati Pine Forest zones, unfolded over time? (2) How has community-based management of the ecotourism area fluctuated in response to these policy changes, and what patterns have emerged? (3) What are the dynamics of governance implementation under the three regimes—*Perhutani*, the National Park Office, and private sector—and what implications have these had for local community participation?

## 2. Models of Natural Resource Governance and their Operational Elements

The notion of governance as used in this article refers to the definition provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which conceptualizes governance as a set of values, policies, and institutions through which a society manages its economic and political affairs via interactions within and between the state, civil society, and the private sector (Sudders & Nahem, 2004). When applied to the context of natural resources and the environment—referred to as resource and environmental governance—governance denotes the institutionalized forms of social organization through which collectively binding rules are negotiated and implemented regarding the use of specific natural resources, their environmental implications, and the equitable provision of collective environmental benefits (Hamann et al., 2018).

To address the three research questions as outlined earlier, this article first adopts the categorization of conservation area management models as developed by Eagles (2008, 2009). Furthermore, in assessing the governance dynamics of ecotourism within conservation areas, the article draws selectively on governance elements formulated by Graham et al. (2003) as evaluative indicators. According to Eagles (2009), conservation area management models can be differentiated based on three key elements: (1) ownership of natural resources, (2) sources of revenue to fund management, and (3) the agency responsible for management. Based on these

elements, Eagles identifies seven distinct governance models for conservation areas: (1) the “golden age of national parks” model, (2) the parastatal model, (3) the non-profit organization model, (4) the ecolodge model, (5) the profit-oriented public-private partnership model, (6) the non-profit public-private partnership model, and (7) the indigenous ownership with government management model (Eagles, 2008).

Furthermore, to evaluate the governance dynamics of the Curug Nangka ecotourism area and the nature of community participation in light of shifting governance regimes, this article selectively applies key governance indicators proposed by Graham et al. (2003). These indicators are grouped into three analytical categories as follows: (1) legitimacy, voice, and strategic vision; (2) performance and accountability; and (3) equity. The conceptual framework of this study is thus constructed based on the theoretical foundations developed by Eagles and Graham et al.

**Figure 1.** Theoretical Framework

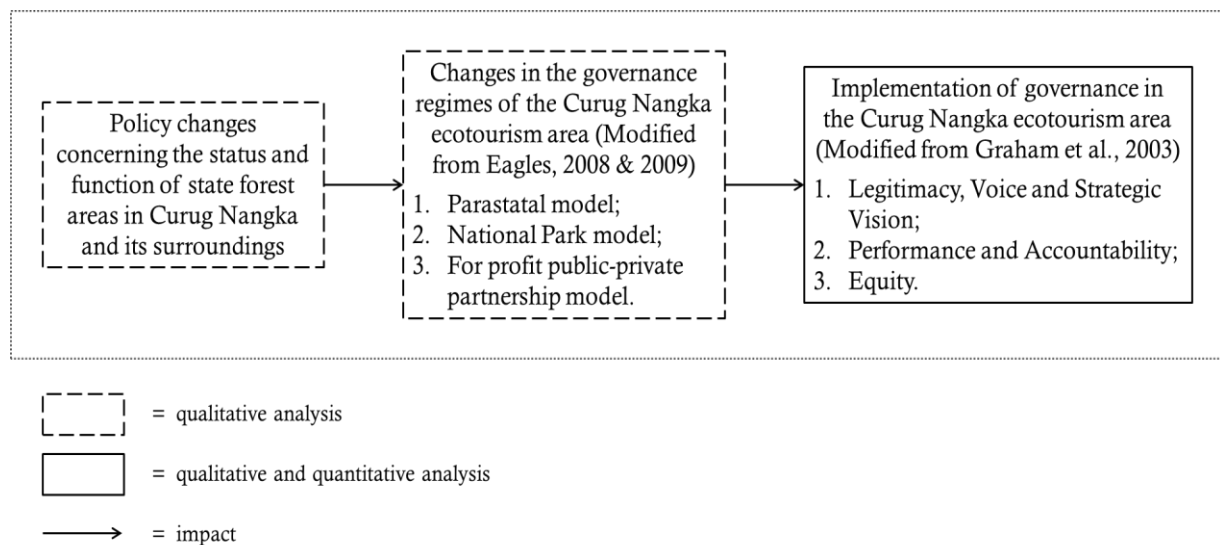


Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between changes in forest area status, the resulting shifts in governance regimes and the implication for community participation in ecotourism management. This framework integrates the structural dimensions of conservation governance as categorized by Eagles (2008, 2009) with the evaluative dimensions of governance quality as proposed by Graham et al. (2003).

### 3. Method

This study was conducted in the Curug Nangka ecotourism area, which forms part of the utilization zone within the Gunung Halimun Salak National Park, located in Bogor Regency, West Java. Data collection was carried out from March to September 2022, during which time tourism activities remained limited due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, resulting in relatively low visitor traffic.

This research employed an *exploratory mixed-methods* design, in which data collection began with a qualitative approach and was subsequently followed by quantitative methods (Wu, 2012). The qualitative phase involved field observations, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) aimed at capturing a general understanding of the issues at hand and providing contextual insights to inform questionnaire development and respondent selection. The selection of key informants in the qualitative phase was conducted through a non-probability sampling technique using the snowball method, which continued until no new information was obtained. A total of nine key informants were interviewed, comprising individuals who were currently or had previously been involved in managing the Curug Nangka and Kalimati Pine Forest ecotourism areas, under the management of Perhutani and the National Park Authority.

The quantitative phase consisted of a structured questionnaire survey administered to 32 community members selected based on their involvement in ecotourism activities across different governance regimes. Respondents were chosen purposively (non-probability sampling) to reflect their experiential knowledge and participation in the management of the ecotourism area. Of the 32 respondents interviewed, 18 were involved under the management of Company X (a large external enterprise), with 10 serving as company employees and 8 as contractual partners. Additionally, 14 respondents were involved under Company Y (a business entity established by local community members), with 6 serving as non-permanent staff and 8 as partners. All respondents were currently involved in managing the ecotourism area under the prevailing private sector regime, while a majority had also participated in previous governance regimes, as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Respondents Involvement in Different Governance Regimes, 1997-2022

Respondents Involvement	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
- Perhutani, TNGHS Authority and PT X	2	6.3
- Perhutani, TNGHS Authority and CV Y	8	25
- Perhutani and CV Y	1	3.2
- TNGHS Authority and PT X	7	21.8
- TNGHS Authority and CV Y	4	12.5
- Only PT X	9	28
- Only CV Y	1	3.2

*Source: Processed From Primary Data*

The data obtained from respondent interviews were processed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS version 25. The analysis carried out to see the significance of differences in the management of ecotourism areas under the three governance regimes according to the views of the respondents involved in it, including based on several indicators related to the level of community involvement, so that a comparison of the level of community involvement in each governance regime emerged. The analysis of the qualitative data obtained was not only used as the basis for designing the questionnaire, but also for determining the respondents. In addition, it was also used to strengthen the interpretation of the statistical test results. This was accomplished through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and data verification and summarization.

## 4. Results And Discussion

### 4.1. Changes in the Forest Status and Its Governance

Administratively, the Curug Nangka ecotourism area spans two villages within Bogor Regency: Sukajadi in Tamansari District and Gunung Malang in Tenjolaya District. Positioned at an elevation of approximately 760 meters above sea level, the area is predominantly covered by pine forest vegetation. The most common observed wildlife species in this area is the long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*).

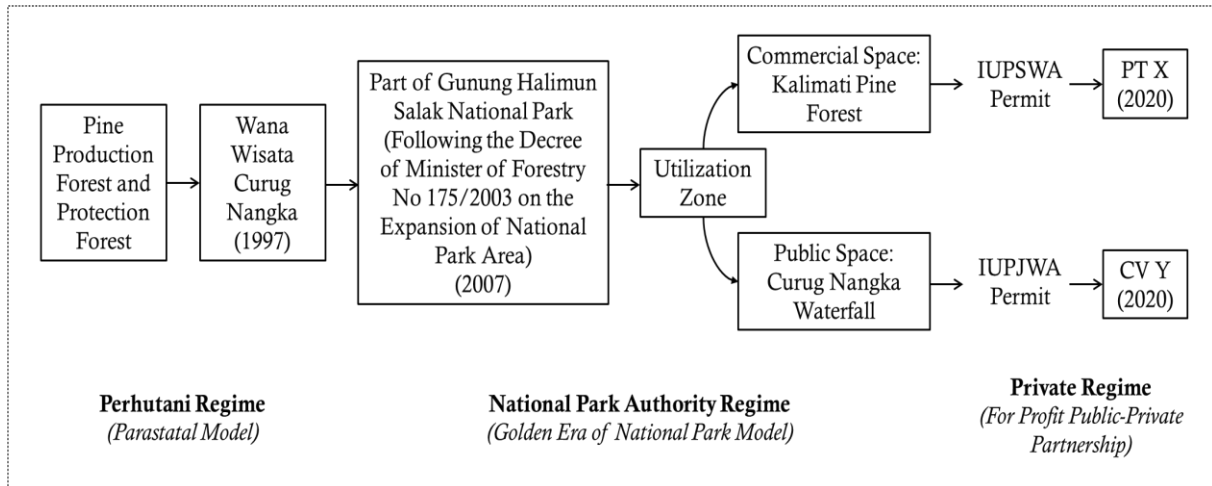
The whole area of Curug Nangka ecotourism is entirely integrated into the Gunung Halimun Salak National Park, encompasses a total of 72.25 hectares. Of this, 12.15 hectares are designated as public space, while the remaining 60 hectares are allocated for commercial space. The area comprises two primary attractions: the Curug Nangka waterfall, classified as water tourism and located within the public space, and a camping ground in the Kalimati pine forest, located within the commercial space.

For almost three decades (1997-2020), the Curug Nangka forest area has been subject to shifting government policies. These policy changes have not only altered the designated functions of the forest area but have also led to corresponding transformations in its governance model. A chronological overview of these changes is presented in Figure 2.

Initially, the Curug Nangka area, which includes both the Kalimati Forest and Curug Nangka Forest, was designated respectively as limited production forest and protected forest. The entire area fell under the management of Perhutani Unit III West Java and Banten, a state-owned

enterprise (Badan Usaha Milik Negara or BUMN). According to Eagles' (2008) typology, this governance regime corresponds to *the parastatal model*, which is characterized by state ownership of natural resources, revenue generation through user fees, and operational management by a government agency.

**Figure 2.** Forest Status Change and Trajectory of Governance Regime in Curug Nangka Ecotourism Area, 1997-2020



Source: Processed from primary data

Beginning in the late 1980s, parts of the Curug Nangka area began to be used for ecotourism activities, initiated by local communities who constructed rudimentary access paths and offered basic services to visitors. In 1994, the Bogor District Tourism Office formally designated the area as an ecotourism site through Decree No. 556.4/746/SIUP/DIP, dated 21 December 1994. It was not until 1997 that Perhutani itself officially designated the site as Wana Wisata Curug Nangka (Curug Nangka Forest Tourism) and began charging entrance fees (Rahayu, 2006). However, this decision was met with strong opposition from the local community, which felt excluded from the management process. In response, Perhutani issued Decree No. 136/KPTS/DIR/2001, allowing for community involvement in the management of Wana Wisata Curug Nangka through the Joint Forest Management (*Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat*, or PHBM) scheme.

Ironically, just two years later, the Ministry of Forestry issued Decree No. 175/Kpts-II/2003, dated 10 June 2003, expanding the Gunung Halimun National Park from approximately 40,000 hectares to 113,357 hectares. This expansion involved the reclassification of state forest areas in Gunung Salak and Gunung Endut: from protected and limited production forests to conservation forests. The reclassification also encompassed the Curug Nangka Waterfall area, the Kalimati Pine Forest, and the Makati Elok Pine Forest. With this expansion, the entire conservation zone was renamed Gunung Halimun Salak National Park (Taman Nasional Gunung Halimun Salak, or TNGHS), and its management was transferred to the Gunung Halimun Salak National Park Authority (Balai TNGHS).

According to Eagles' (2008) typology, this policy shift introduced a new governance regime under TNGHS Authority, representing *the golden age of national parks model*, characterized by state ownership of natural resources, tax-based revenue, and state agency management. However, due to the magnitude of the transition, the transfer of management authority from Perhutani to TNGHS Authority was not completed until 2007.

Despite its designation as a conservation forest, the Curug Nangka area has continued to operate as an ecotourism site, consistent with its classification as a utilization zone within the

national park zoning system. Under national park management regulations, a utilization zone refers to areas suitable for nature-based tourism and other environmental services, such as education, research, and cultural activities. Within this zoning framework, the Curug Nangka ecotourism area is governed by a spatial division into two categories: a public space, where the construction of permanent structures is strictly prohibited, and a commercial space, where limited development is permitted up to 10% of the licensed area.

From 2007 to 2020, management of the Curug Nangka ecotourism area remained directly under TNGHS Authority, with local communities engaged only as individual volunteers rather than as organized groups, as had been the case under the PHBM scheme. In late 2020, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry granted management rights to private entities through two forms of licensing: a License for the Provision of Nature Tourism Facilities (Izin Usaha Penyediaan Sarana Wisata Alam, IUPSWA) was issued to Company X for the commercial space in the Kalimati Forest area, and a License for the Provision of Nature Tourism Services (Izin Usaha Penyediaan Jasa Wisata Alam, IUPJWA) was issued to Company Y for the public space in the Curug Nangka Waterfall. These licenses were granted under the framework of Government Regulation No. 36 of 2010 and Ministerial Regulation No. P.8/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/3/2019, which regulate ecotourism operations in wildlife reserves, national parks, grand forest parks (Taman Hutan Raya), and nature tourism parks.

The granting of these licenses to private operators marked yet another shift in the governance of the Curug Nangka ecotourism area. In line with Eagles' (2008) classification, the current governance regime corresponds to *a public-private partnership model for profit*. Under this model, the state retains ownership of the natural resources, but management is undertaken by private entities, and revenues are primarily generated through user fees.

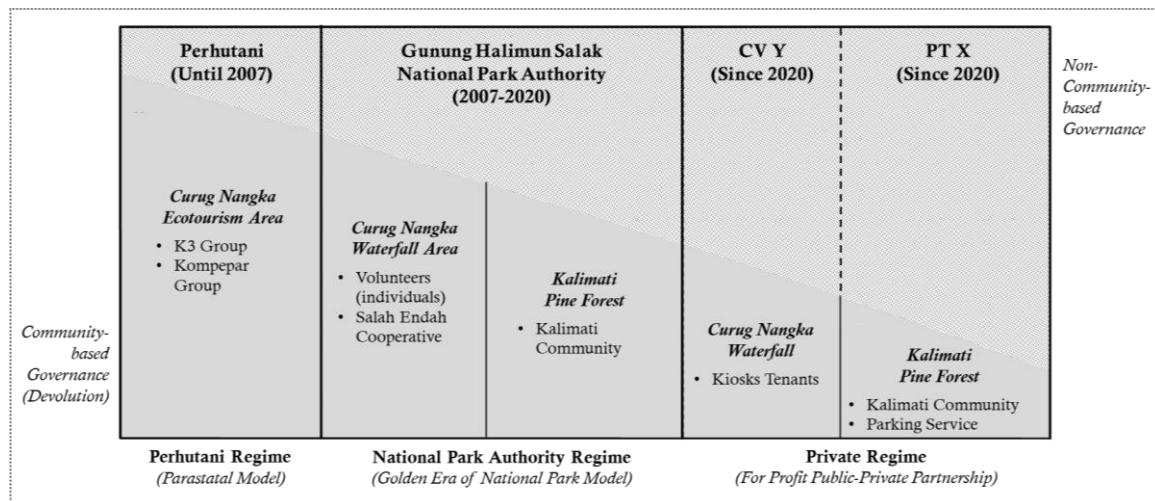
#### 4.2. The Rise and Decline of Community-Based Ecotourism Management

As previously mentioned, the development of ecotourism in the Curug Nangka area was initially initiated by local communities through self-driven efforts. The ecotourism potential developed by the community included a camping ground and Curug Nangka waterfalls (consist of Curug Nangka, Curug Daun, and Curug Kawung waterfalls). The collection of entrance fees from visitors began in the late 1980s by residents of Gunung Malang Village and was followed by residents of Sukajadi Village in the early 1990s. Youth from both villages, who first opened access routes to the tourist sites, formed a group known as K3 (an acronym for *Keamanan, Keselamatan, dan Kebersihan*, or Security, Safety, and Cleanliness). This group assumed responsibilities for managing the site, maintaining security, managing parking areas, and ensuring cleanliness (Widyanti, 2019). It was also this group that was later granted formal management authority when devolution policies were implemented through the Joint Forest Management (PHBM) scheme.

*"Tahun 90-an sudah menjadi area ekowisata tapi untuk penanganannya masih kurang ini, masih kurang bagus. Lalu memang kita diresmikannya pada tahun 90, baru kemudian dibangun berbagai fasilitas yang dapat menunjang kegiatan tersebut"*

*"In the 1990s, the area was already established as an ecotourism destination, but its management was still lacking, resulting in an unsatisfactory experience. Then indeed we inaugurated it in 90, only then were various facilities built that could support these activities" (AK, 45 years old).*

However, over time, this model of community-based ecotourism management gradually declined. This deterioration coincided with changes in the legal status of the forest area and the increasing involvement of external actors seeking to benefit from its economic potential. The schematic depiction of the diminishing role of local communities in the management of the Curug Nangka ecotourism area is presented in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3.** The Decline of Community-based Governance in Curug Nangka Ecotourism Area

Source: Processed from primary data

Initially, Perhutani utilized the Curug Nangka area, particularly the Kalimati Pine Forest, for pine resin production, which held considerable economic potential. It was only in 1997, after witnessing the growing success of community-initiated ecotourism activities, that Perhutani formally designated the area as Wana Wisata Curug Nangka and began commercial management by imposing entrance fees on visitors. However, as this decision was made without involving local communities, it faced strong resistance from the K3 Group, which had long managed the area, as well as from visitors who were subjected to dual entrance fees: one collected by K3 Group and another by Perhutani personnel (Rahayu, 2006; Widyanti, 2019).

In response to these protests, Perhutani eventually permitted community participation in managing Wana Wisata Curug Nangka through the Joint Forest Management (PHBM) scheme. As a result, what had previously functioned as *de facto* was formalized as *de jure* community-based management. Operationally, this was implemented through Cooperation Agreement Letter No. 52/KPTS/Bgr/III/2004, which established a new organization to replace the K3 Group; namely, the Community-Based Tourism Group (*Kelompok Penggerak Pariwisata, Kompepar*). This group assumed responsibility for managing ecotourism services, including operating a flying fox attraction, overseeing a small outbound area, managing sanitation facilities, and serving as parking attendants and cleaning staff. Entrance fees were collected by Perhutani, with revenue-sharing allocated among Kompepar Group, Sukajadi Village, and Gunung Malang Village (Widyanti, 2019). This period may be regarded as the golden era of community-based ecotourism management in Curug Nangka.

*"Kalo gak salah, dulu ada perjanjian antara pihak Perhutani dengan desa untuk bagi hasil, sekian persen, tapi saya lupa detailnya. sharing dari penjualan tiket masuk saat itu dibagi antara Perhutani, Kompepar, Desa Sukajadi dan Desa Gunung Malang. Karena kan Curug Nangka ini berada di antara dua desa dan dua kecamatan. Desa Sukajadi, Kecamatan Tamansari dan Desa Gunung Malang, kecamatan Tenjolaya"*

*"If I'm not mistaken, there was an agreement between Perhutani and the village for profit sharing, a percentage, but I forgot the details. The proceeds from the sale of entrance tickets at that time were divided among Perhutani, Kompepar, Sukajadi Village, and Gunung Malang Village, as Curug Nangka is situated between two villages and two sub-districts. Sukajadi Village, Tamansari District and Gunung Malang Village, Tenjolaya District"* (MA, 42 years old)

This arrangement changed significantly following the inclusion of the Curug Nangka area as part of the Gunung Halimun Salak National Park. Under the governance of the TNGHS



Authority, Kompepar Group was no longer recognized and therefore disbanded. Most of its former members sought employment elsewhere, including villa staff, wage laborers, or workers in other ecotourism areas. A small number remained involved in Curug Nangka ecotourism area under the new regulations imposed by TNGHS Authority. One of these policies involved limiting the number of street vendors allowed to operate within the ecotourism zone.

*"Kompepar tuh sebenarnya bisa dibilang tidak pernah bubar ya. Karena sejak Taman Nasional masuk, sekitar 2007 atau 2010, sebenarnya anggota Kompepar mulai pada mencar kalo saya sendiri pindah ke tempat wisata di sekitar sini, kalo pak A kerja di IR, ada yang kerja di pemandian air panas, ada juga yang buka wisata sendiri. Jadi sebenarnya mah bukannya bubar, cuma udah gak aktif lagi saja"*

"Actually, Kompepar can be said to have never disbanded. Since the National Park was established, around 2007 or 2010, Kompepar members began to disperse. Meanwhile, I moved to a nearby tourist spot, while Mr. A worked in the IR; some members worked in the hot springs, and others opened their tours. So actually, it's not that it's disbanded, it's just that it's no longer active" (AK, 45 years old).

As expected, these new policies met resistance from local communities and village governments, particularly due to the potential loss of revenue shares previously obtained from ticket sales. In protest, former Kompepar members, together with the governments of Sukajadi and Gunung Malang Villages, constructed a new entrance gate to collect retribution fees from incoming visitors. This once again resulted in the issue of dual entrance fees, which drew criticism from tourists. Eventually, the conflict was resolved by integrating the community and village government revenue shares into the official ticket price collected by TNGHS Authority in accordance with non-tax state revenue (*Penerimaan Negara Bukan Pajak*, PNBP) regulations. The consolidated payment was collected at the main entrance gate to the Curug Nangka ecotourism area.

To replace Kompepar Group, TNGHS Authority recruited fourteen individuals from the local community to serve as volunteers in managing ecotourism activities. These volunteers continued the service roles previously undertaken during the Perhutani era, such as ticketing, security, parking, sanitation, and tour guiding. However, they were no longer permitted to operate outbound facilities within the ecotourism area. Responding to community demands, in 2017 TNGHS Authority granted permission for residents of Sinarwangi Hamlet (RW 05), Sukajadi Village, to develop the Kalimati Pine Forest as a new ecotourism destination within the broader Curug Nangka area. In addition to serving as a camping ground, the site was enhanced with facilities such as treehouses, photo spots, and a mini flying fox.

*"Di sini dulu banyak atraksi gitu dibangun sama anggota masyarakat, cuma sayangnya pas PT masuk pada dibongkar semua. Dulu di sana tuh masih ada bekasnya, disitu kita ngebangun rumah pohon buat foto atau ya mau main ke atas situ juga boleh, dekat rumah pohon ada flying fox mini kita yang bangun juga tuh, yang bikin orangnya juga sama kayak yang bikin flying fox di Curug Nangka bawah, terus disana kita juga sempet ngebangun beberapa saung-saung dari bambu bisa buat sholat juga, kita buat kayak jembatan gitu buat spot foto disini. Udah macem macem dulu mah, orang-orang juga senang gitu main ke sini, gak cuma buat camping doang dulu mah"*

"Here, there used to be many attractions built by community members, but unfortunately, when PT entered, they were all dismantled. In the past there were still traces of it, there we built a tree house for photos or yes you want to play up there too, near the tree house there is a mini flying fox we built too, the people who made it are also the same as those who made the flying fox at Curug Nangka below. We also built several bamboo shelters that can be used for praying, as well as a bridge for photo spots.

There were so many things before, people were also happy to play here, not just for camping" (AG, 45 years old).

Although no formal agreement was signed, TNGHS Authority supported this community initiative while maintaining close supervision to ensure that conservation functions were not compromised. The agency even provided a separate access route to the Kalimati area. As with the main entrance, ticket revenues were consolidated to include community shares, making the management of Kalimati Pine Forest a de facto form of community-based management under the TNGHS Authority regime—comparable to the earlier K3 model under Perhutani.

Since late 2020, however, community-based management of the Curug Nangka ecotourism area has reached its lowest point, following the transfer of management rights to private entities. Under this private governance regime, many ecotourism facilities previously developed by local communities—such as the mini flying fox, outbound areas, and photo spots—were dismantled and replaced with new infrastructure by the company. Community involvement in the management of the ecotourism area has since been significantly reduced, as full control over both the commercial and public zones has been granted to private operators. While community participation is not entirely excluded, it now depends entirely on contractual agreements and direct cooperation with the private company.

#### 4.3. Dynamics of Private-Based Ecotourism Management

Currently, two private companies have been granted licenses by the government to manage different spaces within the Curug Nangka ecotourism area. The first is PT X, a Limited Liability Company which holds a license to manage the commercial space located in the Kalimati Pine Forest area. In accordance with its permit to provide nature-based tourism facilities in this zone, PT X has developed a restaurant, along with several ecotourism attractions such as a camping ground, mini outbound area, and zipline. The company has also constructed a glamorous camping (glamping) facility to offer higher-end camping experiences.

The second company, CV Y, was granted a license to manage the public space in the Curug Nangka area for the provision of ecotourism services. This company is, in fact, a transformation of Koperasi Salak Endah, a cooperative initially established to accommodate volunteers and former members of Kompepar Group who remained active. The cooperative's legal status was subsequently converted into a limited partnership (*Commanditaire Vennootschap*, CV) in preparation for the transition of the ecotourism governance from TNGHS Authority to a private management. In accordance with its license, the activities of CV Y are limited to service provision roles such as ticketing, managing food and souvenir kiosks, guiding tourists, operating sanitation facilities, and general security.

*"Dulu ada yang berinisiatif buat nyelesaiin masalah antara taman nasional sama desa terkait gerbang tiket yang ada dua di Curug Nangka, kemudian dibentuklah koperasi buat nyelesaiin masalah ini di tahun 2019. Terus karena pegawai taman nasional gak boleh mengelola area taman nasional maka dibentuklah CV Y, untuk mengelola area Curug Nangka yang anggotanya juga dari anggota volunteer dan Kompepar"*

"In the past, someone took the initiative to solve the problem between the national park and the village regarding the two ticket gates at Curug Nangka, then a cooperative was formed to solve this problem in 2019. Then, because national park employees are not allowed to manage the national park area, CV Y was formed to manage the Curug Nangka area, whose members are also volunteers and Kompepar" (ME 38 years old).

PT X has engaged the local community in the Kalimati Pine Forest area primarily through two mechanisms: employment and partnership. Currently, the company employs approximately thirty individuals, most of whom are casual daily workers serving as restaurant staff, baristas,

rangers, and technicians. However, not all employees are local residents. A minority are recruited from outside the area, particularly for positions requiring specialized skills not readily available among the local population.

*“PT X itu dulu bilang kalau mereka bakalan merekrut 90% pegawainya dari masyarakat sekitar, terus mereka juga bilang dari pendapatan yang dulu didapat mereka bakalan bikin pendapatan kita 2-3 kali lipat dari itu. Jadi misalkan kita sehari dapet 25 ribu ya dulu, nah si PT ini bilang kalo nanti setelah bermitra sama mereka pendapatan kita bisa 50 - 75 ribu per hari”*

"The PT X used to say that they would recruit 90% of their employees from the surrounding community, and they also said that from the income they used to get, they would make our income 2-3 times more than that. So, for example, we used to earn 25 thousand a day, but the PT said that after partnering with them, our income could be 50 - 75 thousand per day" (MAR, 46 years old)

PT X currently maintains three forms of partnerships with the local community. First, a partnership with local youth, who are entrusted with managing the parking area in the Kalimati Pine Forest. Around ten young individuals have been recruited as rotating parking attendants. Under the revenue-sharing agreement, earnings from the parking business are split 50:50 between the parking coordinators and PT X. The internal distribution of income among the attendants is left to the discretion of the parking management team.

Second, a partnership with residents of RW 05—who had previously managed the Kalimati Pine Forest on a de facto basis and are now collectively referred to as the Kalimati Community. Under this partnership, they are tasked with ticket collection and security duties. The revenue-sharing arrangement is derived from ticket sales priced at IDR 32,000 on weekends and IDR 22,000 on weekdays, and distributed as follows: for weekend tickets, IDR 7,500 is allocated to the Kalimati Community, IDR 15,000 to PT X, and the remaining IDR 9,500 constitutes non-tax state revenue (PNBP) paid to the national treasury. On weekdays, both the Kalimati Community and PT X receive IDR 7,500 each, while PNBP is allocated IDR 7,000.

According to the head of the Kalimati Community, PT X's presence has significantly limited the community's role in managing the ecotourism area. They no longer have the autonomy to operate ecotourism activities independently and now function merely as labourers without the freedom to develop the site in accordance with their own aspirations. Although a revenue-sharing arrangement is in place, actual income from ecotourism has declined since PT X took over management—primarily due to reduced visitor numbers caused by higher ticket prices compared to those under previous community management. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to the decline in tourist arrivals.

Third, PT X has entered into a partnership with CV Y. While this appears to be a business-to-business arrangement between private entities, CV Y is in fact the legal successor of Koperasi Salak Endah, whose membership comprises local residents. The cooperative was originally established at the initiative of TNGHS Authority to resolve conflicts arising from the existence of two separate entrance gates collecting fees for access to the Curug Nangka ecotourism area. Its members were drawn from two previously opposing groups: volunteers recruited by the park authority and members of Kompepar Group formed earlier under Perhutani. After transitioning into a CV, the entity consisted of fourteen members and was chaired by Mr. S, a retired employee of TNGHS Authority.

Based on its license to provide nature-based tourism services in the public space of Curug Nangka, CV Y's activities remain largely similar to its previous functions: ticketing, security, tour guiding, kiosk and toilet management. However, the group no longer oversees parking, as parking operations have been moved to the Kalimati Pine Forest zone. As a business entity, CV Y has also partnered with food and souvenir vendors who occupy kiosks provided by TNGHS Authority.

In this context, the establishment of CV Y as a formal business entity can be seen as an effort to represent community and village interests in the management of the Curug Nangka ecotourism area. This is reflected in the distribution of ticket revenue allocated to CV Y, which must be shared among three parties. Like the Kalimati Community, CV Y receives IDR 7,500 from each ticket sold—regardless of whether on a weekend or weekday. However, this amount is further subdivided, with IDR 1,000 each allocated to Sukajadi Village and Gunung Malang Village. The remaining IDR 5,500 becomes CV Y's share, to be distributed among its active members.

#### 4.4. Governance Implementation in Terms of Legitimacy, Voice, and Strategic Vision

Policy changes concerning the legal status of state forest areas in the Curug Nangka area have led to a significant shift in its governance regime. These changes have been accompanied by a significant decline in community-based ecotourism management and, conversely, the rise of privately driven governance models. This raises the critical question: how has ecotourism governance been implemented under the Perhutani, National Park Authority, and private regimes respectively, and to what extent have local communities been involved in each regime?

As outlined earlier, this study employed three categories of governance variables to explore respondents' perceptions of ecotourism governance under each regime: (1) the degree of legitimacy, voice, and strategic vision; (2) the level of performance and accountability; and (3) the extent of equity. The first category specifically evaluates the extent to which space is provided for community voices to be expressed and integrated into ecotourism development, and whether such development is oriented in a direction that accounts for the historical, sociocultural, and economic context of the local population.

Based on nine questionnaire items related to this variable group, the findings indicate that most respondents rated governance implementation under the Perhutani regime as high. This was followed by the National Park Authority and PT X regimes, respectively. Notably, governance under the CV Y regime was assessed by the majority of respondents as low, suggesting limited legitimacy and inclusiveness in decision-making and strategic orientation.

**Table 2.** Respondents' Perceptions of Governance Implementation under Three Regimes in Terms of Legitimacy, Voice, and Strategic Vision

Level of Legitimacy, Voice, and Strategic Vision	Perhutani Regime (1990-2007)		National Park Authority Regime (2007-2020)		Private Regime (2020-2022)			
					CV Y		PT X	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Low	3	27.3	6	28.6	8	57	8	44.4
High	8	72.7	15	71.4	6	43	10	55.6
Total	11	100	21	100	14	100	18	100

Source: Processed from primary data

The implementation of governance under the Perhutani regime, which the majority of respondents rated as *high*, is understandable given the significant space provided for community involvement in managing the Curug Nangka ecotourism area under this regime. Kompepar Group, the community-based tourism group officially established by Perhutani, was granted considerable autonomy to carry out forest management devolution and to organize ecotourism activities in accordance with the community's own preferences and initiatives.

*"Kompepar anggotanya masih sama kayak anggota K3, cuma beda nama. Pas jaman itu kita bebas mau ngebangun apa gitu, asal bukan bangunan permanen. Bahkan dulu masyarakat baik yang jualan atau penjaga parkir ikut untuk bebersih Curug Nangka, kayak motongin rumput atau nyapu"*

"The members of Kompepar Group were basically the same as those of K3 Group, just under a different name. Back then, we had the freedom to build whatever we wanted, as long as it wasn't a permanent structure. Even the local community, whether vendors or

parking attendants, participated in cleaning Curug Nangka like cutting the grass or sweeping the paths” (AK, 45 years old).

In a closely comparable percentage, most respondents also assessed the implementation of governance under the National Park Authority regime as high. This is largely attributed to the occurrence of de facto community-based management under this regime, particularly in the Kalimati Pine Forest area, even though it was not formalized through legal instruments.

In contrast, only 55.60% of respondents rated the governance implementation by PT X as high. Moreover, the majority of respondents (57%) assessed the performance of CV Y as low in this regard. This discrepancy is closely linked to the very limited degree of community involvement in ecotourism management under the PT X regime. Although CV Y represents a community-based enterprise, the scope of its operational license is significantly narrower than that of PT X, leaving it with limited flexibility to innovate or expand its activities.

*“Rapat sih kayaknya selalu ada ya dulu mah. Tetapi, kalau sekarang-sekarang ini biasanya ya mereka-mereka aja, gitu. Kalau pedagang kayak saya mah gak pernah diajak-ajak deh”*

*“There used to be meetings all the time, I think. But nowadays, it’s usually just the same group of people. As for small vendors like me, we’re never invited anymore” (ASA, 55 years old).*

In addition, the leadership of CV Y acknowledged their weak bargaining position when negotiating with PT X, resulting in a modest revenue share of only IDR 7,500 from each ticket sold. From this amount, a portion must be allocated to Sukajadi and Gunung Malang villages. According to one informant, the perceived weakness of CV Y’s governance is also due to the lack of participation of its local partners, particularly food vendors.

#### 4.5. Governance Implementation in Terms of Performance and Accountability

The assessment of governance implementation based on this category of variables aims to explore the division of roles among stakeholders, the formulation and adherence to rules, the degree of transparency between actors, and the responsiveness to emerging issues and conflicts. Based on nine questionnaire items related to these dimensions, the majority of respondents (66.7%) rated the governance performance of PT X as high. In contrast, assessments of governance implementation under the other three regimes tended to be more evenly distributed between the high and low categories.

**Table 3.** Respondents’ Perceptions of Governance Implementation under Three Regimes in Terms of Performance and Accountability

Level of Performance and Accountability	Perhutani Regime (1990-2007)		National Park Authority Regime (2007-2020)		Private Regime (2020-2022)			
					CV Y		PT X	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Low	5	45.5	10	47.6	7	50	6	33.3
High	6	<b>54.5</b>	11	<b>52.4</b>	7	50	12	<b>66.7</b>
Total	11	100	21	100	14	100	18	100

*Source: Processed from primary data*

The majority perception that governance under PT X falls within the high category is closely linked to the company’s extensive experience in managing ecotourism operations in conservation areas. In addition to its operations in Bogor, the company has developed similar ecotourism businesses in several other cities under various legal entities. Field observations during the research further confirmed that tasks were clearly and effectively distributed among both employees and partner groups. PT X also fulfilled its initial commitment to recruit local labor, a move well received by the surrounding communities. Moreover, the company established partnerships and implemented a revenue-sharing scheme with local stakeholders.

*“PT X ini ada perjanjian sama desa, 90% pegawainya tuh berasal dari desa sekitar. Kalau dilihat sih yang jadi rangers di situ juga kebanyakan dari Desa Sukajadi sini”*

" PT X has an agreement with the village; 90% of its employees are from nearby villages. If you look at the rangers there, most of them are from Sukajadi Village." (MF, 56 years old).

Nevertheless, when viewed more broadly, the implementation of governance in terms of performance and accountability does not show substantial differences across the three governance regimes. This can be seen in Table 3, which indicates a relatively balanced distribution of respondents' assessments of governance performance under the Perhutani regime, the National Park Authority regime, and the CV Y regime.

#### 4.6. Governance Implementation in Terms of Equity

The evaluation of governance implementation based on the equity variable aims to assess the extent to which equal opportunities are afforded to local communities in accessing employment and entrepreneurial activities within the Curug Nangka ecotourism area, thereby supporting their livelihoods. Based on five questionnaire items, the majority of respondents rated the Perhutani and National Park Authority regimes as high in terms of equity. Conversely, the majority of respondents rated both private regimes—CV Y and PT X—as low on this criterion.

**Table 4.** Respondents' Perceptions of Governance Implementation under Three Regimes in Terms of Equity

Level of Equity	Perhutani Regime (1990-2007)		National Park Authority Regime (2007-2020)		Private Regime (2020-2022)			
					CV Y		PT X	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Low	3	27.3	8	38.1	9	64.3	11	61
High	8	72.7	13	61.9	5	35.7	7	39
Total	11	100	21	100	14	100	18	100

*Source: Processed from primary data*

The favourable assessments of the Perhutani and National Park Authority regimes are closely associated with the greater employment and business opportunities available to local residents under these governance structures, compared to those under the private regimes. According to one informant, the number of food stalls and vendors during the Perhutani era far exceeded that observed after the area was designated as a conservation zone under the National Park Authority.

*“Dulu, pas tahun 90-an, Curug Nangka mah rame banget. Dari pertigaan Highland di depan itu kiri-kanannya rame warga jualan. Jalannya juga kan masih bebatuan. Jadi dulu pengunjung berjalan dari sana ke Curug”*

" Back in the 1990s, Curug Nangka was very lively. From the Highland intersection ahead, both sides of the road were filled with local vendors. The path was still unpaved then, so visitors would walk all the way from there to the falls" (MBD, 40 years old).

Once the Curug Nangka area was reclassified as a conservation forest, opportunities for local residents to secure sustainable sources of livelihood became increasingly limited. This restriction was exacerbated when management was transferred to private entities, effectively eliminating the possibility of either de facto or de jure devolution of governance to the community. These developments likely contributed to respondents' overall perception of private regimes as low in ensuring equity.

Based on the above discussion, a comparative summary of governance implementation across regimes can be presented as follows. In terms of legitimacy, voice, and strategic vision, the Perhutani regime received the highest percentage of high ratings among all governance regimes. A similar pattern emerged for the equity variable, where Perhutani also received the most

favourable assessments. However, regarding performance and accountability, the share of respondents rating Perhutani's governance as high was second only to PT X. Overall, the Perhutani regime was rated most positively across all dimensions, largely due to the genuine implementation of forest governance devolution to local communities—initially on a *de facto* basis and subsequently formalized *de jure*. This devolution granted communities considerable autonomy and facilitated access to employment, business opportunities, and income generation more readily than in later regimes.

Respondents' assessments placed TNGHS Authority regime second overall, following Perhutani, in terms of legitimacy, voice, and strategic vision, as well as equity. However, for performance and accountability, it ranked third—behind PT X and Perhutani. As with the Perhutani era, forest governance under the TNGHS Authority regime also experienced community devolution, although only on a *de facto* basis, without formal legal recognition. Furthermore, the designation of Curug Nangka as a conservation area under this regime imposed restrictions on economic activity, resulting in fewer employment and entrepreneurial opportunities than under previous arrangements. These factors shaped respondents' assessments of the TNGHS Authority regime's governance performance.

The governance of Curug Nangka under the private regime involves both CV Y and PT X. Overall, the majority of respondents rated the private governance regime as low across the three governance dimensions. Both CV Y and PT X were rated low in terms of equity. CV Y also received low ratings from most respondents for legitimacy, voice, and strategic vision, while half of the respondents rated its performance and accountability as low. In contrast, PT X was rated high by most respondents on all three governance dimensions. Notably, for performance and accountability, the proportion of respondents assigning a high rating to PT X was the largest among all governance regimes. This positive perception likely reflects PT X's established experience managing ecotourism in various regions across Indonesia. In contrast, although CV Y is legally a private entity, it originated from a cooperative composed of local residents and continues to face significant managerial challenges that require structural improvement. PT X, on the other hand, has entered into partnerships and implemented a revenue-sharing scheme with local communities and village governments. These factors have likely influenced respondents to rate PT X more favourably than both the Perhutani and TNGHS Authority regimes.

## 5. Conclusions

The Curug Nangka ecotourism area in Bogor Regency constitutes part of Indonesia's state forest lands, the management regime of which has shifted over time following successive changes in its designated status and function as determined by government policy. Regardless of which entity assumes management responsibility, the inherent character of this area as a common-pool resource—that is, a resource that is open, easily accessible by multiple actors, and costly to exclude others from—renders collaborative governance with local communities an unavoidable necessity (Shohibuddin et al., 2023). This form of collaboration has been present since the area was managed under the Perhutani regime, continued under the TNGHS Authority regime, and persists to some extent under private governance. However, the degree of community participation and autonomy in such collaborations has varied significantly across regimes. Notably, there has been a clear downward trend in community roles and autonomy following the transfer of management to the private sector.

Local communities' responses and general acceptance of this trend must be understood in the context of state-imposed policy shifts regarding forest status and governance; wherein local populations lack sufficient bargaining power to resist such top-down decisions. This local context is further embedded in a broader policy trajectory marked by the growing trend of privatization in ecotourism management, particularly in conservation areas, which has been reinforced by the government's policy on National Tourism Strategic Areas (*Kawasan Strategis Pariwisata*

Nasional, KSPN) in ten priority locations across the country (known as “10 New Bali”). The development of these KSPNs involves active government support for private sector involvement, including in the management of ecotourism activities within conservation zones.

The designation of conservation areas, in itself, represents a form of state appropriation of common-pool resources previously governed by local communities. However, as Dale and Afioma (2020) argue, such appropriation by the state is often intended to transform these resources into new commons for broader public benefit, beyond the interests of local communities alone. Yet, when the management of these conservation areas is subsequently delegated to private entities, the result is a serious threat to the commons as a whole. This is because private governance of conservation areas tends to be driven by profit-maximizing motives, or more precisely, by dynamics of accumulation by dispossession—a tendency that was less evident when such commons were managed directly by state agencies.

Local community responses to this privatization trend vary from one site to another. In the case of Curug Nangka, the community appears to have opted for a form of passive accommodation, allowing themselves to be incorporated into the structures of private governance. Nevertheless, due to their long-standing involvement in the management of the area, local actors could not be entirely sidelined by private operators. On the contrary, the latter were compelled to establish partnerships and implement revenue-sharing schemes with local communities and village governments. This dynamic stands in sharp contrast to the case of Komodo National Park, as examined by Dale and Afioma (2020), where local communities, confronted with the threat of exclusion from marine and coastal resources, mounted a counterstrategy against privatized ecotourism governance. Interestingly, their resistance was articulated through a combination of community-based conservation and ecotourism principles, grounded in traditional knowledge and customary resource management practices.

Ultimately, the divergent responses of local communities to the privatization of ecotourism governance in conservation areas underscore a critical point: the historical trajectory and conjuncture of local social struggles serve as decisive factors in shaping the dynamics and direction of ecotourism governance under private regimes.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest in relation to the topic discussed or with any of the parties mentioned in this article.

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