

Designing an Integrated Ecotourism Package for the 7 Summit Area in Sembalun Lawang, Lombok

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Abstract

Sembalun Lawang Village in East Lombok Regency has great potential to be developed as a community-based ecotourism destination. The region is known for its stunning natural landscape and rich local culture, especially in areas crossed by the 7 Summit Sembalun route, such as Bukit Kondo, Pergasingan, Bukit Anak Dara, and the path to Mount Rinjani. However, until now there has not been an integrated tour package that emphasizes the principle of ecotourism as a whole. This research designs ecotourism-based tour packages that prioritize environmental education and local community empowerment. The method used is a descriptive qualitative-participatory approach with a research and development type of research. Data collection techniques included field observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Preliminary findings show that there is high interest from tourists in environmentally friendly trekking activities and the readiness of local communities to be more actively involved in tourism management. The final result of this research is an ecotourism tour package model that is integrated and contextualized with local characteristics. The study concludes that the proposed package has the potential to support environmental education and strengthen community participation in tourism activities. However, claims regarding economic welfare, long-term conservation outcomes, and visitor satisfaction require further empirical testing through implementation and evaluation

Keywords: ecotourism package, sembalun lawang, 7 summit sembalun, lombok

A. INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is widely understood as a tourism approach that emphasizes environmental sustainability, community empowerment, and educational value for visitors. Ecotourism emphasizes environmental conservation, education, and local community welfare (Adi et al., 2017). In this perspective, successful ecotourism development depends not only on the attractiveness of a destination, but also on the extent to which local communities participate in managing and interpreting local resources. Sustainable tourism development requires a balance between ecological, economic, and socio-cultural aspects (Indonesia Expat, 2024). Meanwhile, Weaver (2008) emphasizes that the success of ecotourism depends on the attractiveness of the destination and the active participation of the community in preserving natural resources. Sembalun Lawang Village in East Lombok Regency has strong potential for ecotourism development because it combines mountain landscapes, biodiversity, trekking routes, and living cultural assets within the 7 Summit Sembalun area. Ecotourism has been widely understood as a form of tourism that combines environmental conservation, community benefit, and educational value for visitors. In this perspective, successful ecotourism development depends not only on the attractiveness of the destination, but also on the extent to which local communities participate in managing and interpreting local resources. In Sembalun Lawang, this perspective is particularly relevant because the destination combines mountain landscapes, biodiversity, trekking routes, and living cultural assets that can support integrated ecotourism experiences. However, these resources have not yet been systematically organized

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Received: December 15, 2025; Revised: June 27, 2026; Accepted: June 28, 2026

into a package that connects environmental education, local participation, and destination management in one interpretive flow.

Sembalun Lawang Village is known as one of the leading tourist areas in West Nusa Tenggara. The mesmerizing mountain landscape, biodiversity, and rich local culture make this village unique and attractive as an ecotourism destination. Key trekking points such as Bukit Anak Dara, Bukit Pergasingan, Bukit Kondo, and the initial hiking route to Mount Rinjani offer complementary experiences that can support both recreation and environmental learning. All four points offer a challenging trekking experience with outstanding natural scenery, making it very potential to be part of an ecotourism-based tour package.

Despite this potential, tourism activities in Sembalun Lawang remain fragmented and are not yet organized into an integrated package that systematically connects nature-based experiences, environmental interpretation, and community empowerment. Community participation plays a crucial role in ensuring long-term sustainability in tourism destinations (Junaidi et al., 2021). Existing development has also not sufficiently clarified how local participation can be translated into an operational tourism product, how participatory design should be tested and revised, or how the environmental and economic implications of such a package should be assessed.

Tourism activities in this area are still partial and not yet supported by a good environmental interpretation system. Despite the strong ecotourism potential of the 7 Summit Sembalun area, the academic gap is not limited to the absence of an integrated tour package. A more significant gap lies in the lack of a validated ecotourism product model that systematically connects nature-based experiences, environmental interpretation, and community empowerment within a coherent service design. In addition, the existing development context has not yet clarified how local participation can be translated into an operational package structure, how such a product should be tested and revised through participatory procedures, and how its economic and environmental implications can be assessed systematically. Therefore, this study addresses a scientific gap at the intersection of product integration, participatory design, and sustainable ecotourism validation in a local destination setting

Local communities have also not been fully empowered as tour guides, homestay managers, or facilitators of environmental education programs. The absence of a systematic tourism development model is a challenge in managing this area sustainably. With the lack of other activities, visitors only come for trekking, resulting in the accumulation of tourists in one tourist activity. The research gap addressed by this study is therefore not merely the absence of an integrated tour package, but the lack of a locally grounded and participatory ecotourism model that explains how natural attractions, educational elements, and community roles can be combined within a coherent service design. Previous discussion in the local context has not sufficiently clarified how natural attractions, educational elements, and community roles should be operationalized within one product framework. This study therefore addresses a gap in the design and validation of integrated ecotourism products at the destination level.

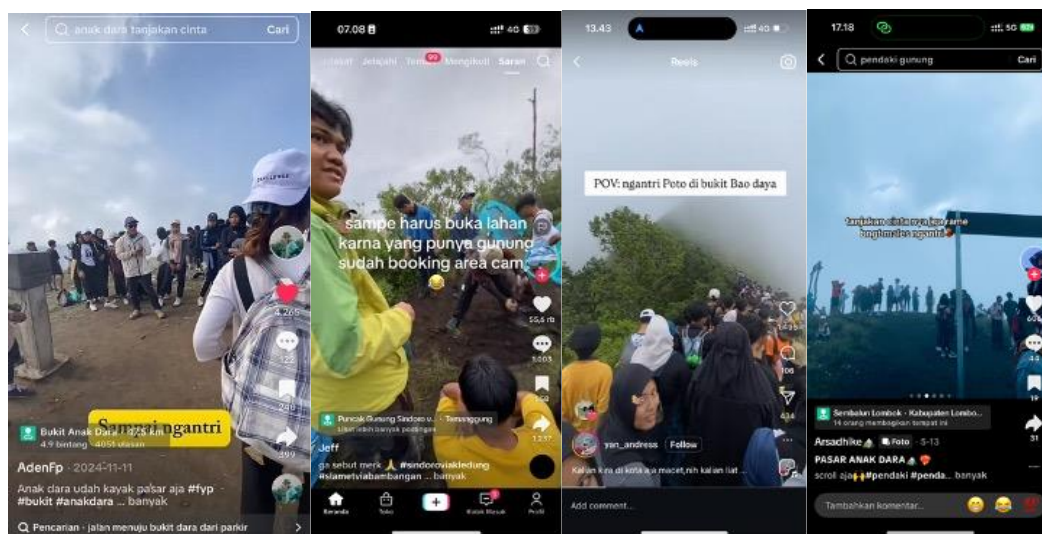


Figure 1

Visitor density in the 7 Summit Sembalun area.

Source: tiktok/@adenfp, @jeff, @yan_andreas, @arsadhike, 2025

The development of integrated ecotourism tour packages in Sembalun Lawang Village is an urgent need. Bukit Kondo with its forest area offers a natural camping experience, Bukit Pergasingan and Anak Dara are popular for photography and sunrise viewing, while the initial ascent route of Rinjani provides a lot of educational potential on conservation and endemic flora. These four locations have the potential to be focal points in the design of ecotourism tour packages. The development of integrated ecotourism tour packages in Sembalun Lawang Village is an urgent need. Bukit Kondo with its forest area offers a natural camping experience, Bukit Pergasingan and Anak Dara are popular for photography and sunrise viewing, while the initial ascent route of Rinjani provides a lot of educational potential on conservation and endemic flora. These four locations have the potential to be focal points in the design of ecotourism tour packages. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of community-based tourism in achieving sustainable development. Research conducted in Penglipuran Village shows that strong community involvement contributes significantly to tourism sustainability (Dorn, 2012; Pradnyaparamita & Laksmi, 2019). Similarly, studies in Sembalun indicate that local participation plays a crucial role in tourism management (Junaidi et al., 2021).

This study aims to develop a participatory model of an integrated ecotourism package for the 7 Summit area in Sembalun Lawang and to examine how local tourism potential, environmental education, and community participation can be combined into a feasible product design. In this way, the study positions the package not only as a practical tourism product, but also as a conceptual model for community-based ecotourism development. This study is also expected to be able to answer gaps in current tourism development, as well as provide applicable references for the management of similar areas in Indonesia. Using a qualitative-participatory approach and research and development methods, this research will examine the opportunities, challenges, and readiness of local communities in implementing integrated tourism packages. In this way, the study contributes to the ecotourism literature by proposing a locally grounded model for integrating dispersed destination components into a coherent, community-based, and environmentally oriented tourism product. Rather than merely listing tourism assets, the study shows how dispersed destination components can be structured into a coherent package model that responds to sustainability, inclusiveness, and local relevance. The study also contributes a

participatory product-development perspective by demonstrating how local stakeholder input can inform the design of ecotourism services in emerging rural destinations.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative-participatory approach combined with a Research and Development design adapted from the simplified Borg and Gall model. The research was conducted in Sembalun Lawang Village, Sembalun District, East Lombok Regency, from April to June 2025. A total of 15 participants were selected through purposive sampling to represent key stakeholders involved in ecotourism development in the study area. These participants consisted of community leaders, local tour guides, homestay owners, village officials, and tourists. Data were collected through field observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Field observation was used to identify tourism potential, site characteristics, and existing visitor activities, while interviews were used to explore stakeholder perspectives on community participation, development constraints, and opportunities for integrated package design. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which included data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. This analytical process was used to identify patterns in destination potential, forms of community involvement, readiness for participation, and the feasibility of structuring an integrated ecotourism package based on local characteristics. The R&D process consisted of five stages: preliminary study and data collection, initial product planning and design, limited trial, product revision, and broader trial followed by product finalization. Through this sequence, the study sought to produce an ecotourism package model that was contextually grounded, participatory in design, and responsive to local development needs.

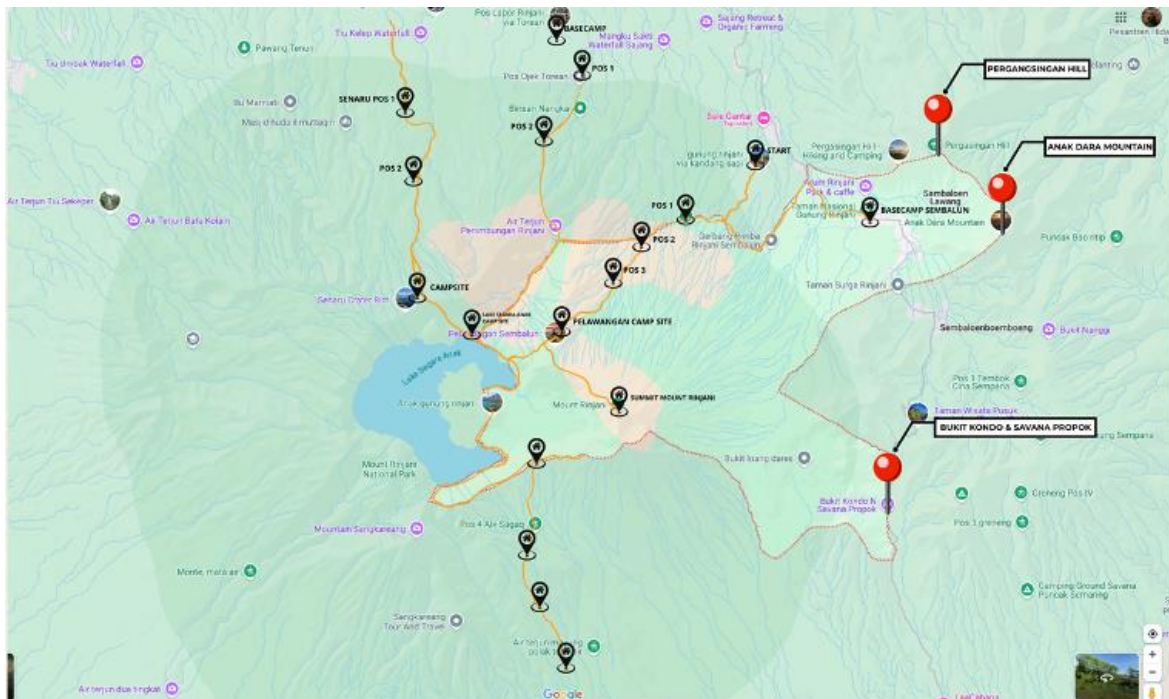


Figure 2

Research location

Source: Modified Google Maps, 2025

C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This research reveals a number of potentials and challenges in Integrated Ecotourism Package Planning for Area 7 of Sembalun Summit in Sembalun Lawang Village, Lombok. Through observations and interviews with 15 participants, 4 (four) main points were identified that have strong potential as components in the tourism package, namely Bukit Anak Dara, Pergasingan, Kondo, and the Rinjani hiking trail. Each location has different but complementary ecotourism characteristics and potential, as shown in the table below.

Table 1
Potential of each trekking location in Sembalun Lawang Village

Location Point	Main Potential	Additional Potential
Bukit Anak Dara	Trekking and sunrise view	Nature photography and interpretation of endemic flora
Bukit Pergasingan	Sunrise sports and panoramic landscapes	Photography activities, and observation of local culture
Bukit Kondo	Camping sites and natural forests	Conservation education, and bird watching
Rinjani Hiking Trail	Conservation education and endemic flora	Zero-waste-trekking, and environmental interpretation

Source: Data Analysis 2025

The findings indicate that integrating multiple destinations into a single tourism package enhances visitor experience. This is consistent with previous studies on integrated tourism systems (Planning Malaysia, 2024). The findings indicate that the four identified locations are not only individually attractive, but also functionally complementary within an integrated ecotourism package. Anak Dara and Pergasingan primarily support scenic trekking and sunrise experiences, while Bukit Kondo and the Rinjani trail provide stronger opportunities for conservation education, birdwatching, endemic flora interpretation, and zero-waste trekking. This complementarity suggests that destination integration in Sembalun should not be understood as a simple combination of sites, but as a structured sequence of experiences that links recreation, learning, and local engagement.

Based on the results of the interview, the local guide said that, “around Sembalun there are indeed a lot of trekking activities, camping and so on, but there are not many educational activities even though they have great potential.”

Community Participation and Readiness

The study suggests that integrated ecotourism development in Sembalun Lawang depends on more than the presence of attractive natural sites. The results show that the main challenge lies in connecting dispersed tourism assets through an interpretive and participatory design that gives environmental meaning to trekking activities and creates clearer roles for local actors. Community readiness appears promising, particularly among homestay owners and cultural actors, but the findings also indicate a practical skills gap in environmental interpretation and tourism facilitation. These results support the view that community participation is a necessary condition for ecotourism development, while also showing that participation alone is insufficient without training, coordination, and product structuring.



Figure 3
 Interview with a local guide
 Source: Personal documentation, 2025

Table 2
 Forms of Community involvement around Sembalun Lawang Village

Participant group	Forms of engagement	Readiness
Tour guide	Trekking companion, information provider	Medium
Homestay owner	Local accommodation and meals	High
Village Officials and TNGR	Regulation and facilitation of activities	Medium
Cultural Figure	Indigenous narratives and local wisdom	High

Source: Data analysis, 2025

Preliminary Design of Ecotourism Package

Based on the study results and participant feedback, a 3-day, 2-night tour package was designed that includes 3 (three) main subcomponents: nature experience, environmental education, and local community empowerment. The package starts with cultural and culinary education, followed by trekking and environmental interpretation, and conservation reflection at the end of the trip. The proposed package was structured as a three-day, two-night ecotourism product that integrates three core dimensions: nature-based experience, environmental education, and community empowerment. Rather than functioning only as a travel itinerary, the package was designed as an interpretive sequence in which each destination contributes a distinct educational and social function. Trekking sites such as Anak Dara, Pergasingan, Kondo, and the Rinjani trail were positioned not only as scenic attractions, but also as spaces for conservation learning, cultural interaction, and local service involvement.

This tour package offers a natural and cultural exploration experience in the Sembalun area for 3 days and 2 nights. Participants will be invited to enjoy trekking to Anak Dara Hill and Pergasingan Hill, take concrete action to preserve the environment by planting trees, and get to know the culture and customs of the community by visiting the Beleq Traditional Village.

On the first day, the process of transferring in participants from the airport and heading to Sembalun is done in the morning. After a short break, lunch and briefing, the trip begins with trekking to

Anak Dara Hill. This hill is famous for its challenging long ridge and beautiful mountain panorama. Upon arrival at the top, participants will camp, and enjoy the sunset from a high altitude.

After enjoying the sunrise, on the second day participants descended from Anak Dara Hill and continued with conservation activities in the form of tree planting with local communities. After lunch, in the late afternoon, the group headed to the Beleq traditional village, which is one of the historical evidence that is still preserved even though it looks fragile. The traditional house is located in Beleq Village, Sembalun Lawang Village, Sembalun District. The oldest village in Sembalun is flanked by Bukit Selong and Bukit Pergasingan. Behind the traditional house area, there is a staircase if you want to climb to the slope of Bukit Selong. For this reason, after seeing Beleq Traditional Village, tourists can immediately enjoy the sunset from the top of Selong Hill.

The last day was filled with trekking to Pergasingan Hill, which offers a breathtaking view of Mount Rinjani from an angle. Participants also have the opportunity to take photos and enjoy the panoramic view of Sembalun rice fields from a height. After lunch and rest, the group returned to the starting point and prepared for the return trip.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the main contribution of the proposed package lies in its attempt to connect fragmented tourism activities into a more integrated ecotourism model. This is important because the issue identified in Sembalun Lawang is not the lack of attractions, but the absence of a systematic design that links trekking activities, environmental interpretation, and community participation within a single tourism experience. In this sense, the package extends basic ecotourism principles by translating them into an operational model adapted to local conditions.

Practically, this model addresses the problem of fragmentation of tourism activities in Sembalun. By integrating various points into one interpretive flow, tourists not only enjoy the scenery, but also learn and interact directly with the local community. A tourist stated, "If there is a learning medium, guests can better understand why we have to protect nature.

The proposed model appears to broaden the visitor experience while creating potential opportunities for community-based economic participation, although these outcomes were not measured quantitatively in the present study. This shows that a Research & Development approach combined with participatory ecotourism principles can produce relevant, inclusive and sustainable tourism packages.

Itinerary & Rundown

Table 4
Integrated Ecotourism Package Itinerary & Rundown for Area 7 Summit Sembalun

DAY 1			
Route (From-To)	Time	Duration	Activity
ZAM International Airport	07.50-08.00	10 minutes	Participants arrive at ZAM International Airport and are picked up by the organizing team. The journey continues to the basecamp area
ZAM International Airport - Anak Dara Hill Basecamp	08.00-11.00	3 Hours	The group heads to Anak Dara Hill Basecamp

Anak Dara Hill Basecamp	11.00-12.00	1 Hours	Lunch Break and short rest to prepare for trekking activities
Anak Dara Hill	12.00-15.00	3 Hours	Trekking to the top of Anak Dara Hill, guided by local guides
Anak Dara Hill	15.00-17.00	2 Hours	Tent setup and rest at the summit area
Anak Dara Hill	17.00-18.30	1.5 Hours	Enjoying the sunset and panoramic view of Rinjani
Anak Dara Hill	18.30-21.00	2.5 Hours	Dinner together followed by a casual campfire

DAY 2

Anak Dara Hill	05.00-07.00	2 Hours	Sunrise at the top and breakfast
Anak Dara Hill - Anak Dara Hill Basecamp	07.00-10.00	3 Hours	Descend to basecamp
Anak Dara Hill Basecamp	10.00-12.00	2 Hours	Tree Planting activity with the local community as part1 of an environmental conservation program
Anak Dara Hill Basecamp	12.00-14.00	2 Hours	Lunch and rest
Anak Dara Hill Basecamp - Beleq Traditional Village	14.00-14.10	10 Minutes	The group heads to Beleq Traditional Village
Beleq Traditional Village	14.10- 17.00	2 Hours 50 minutes	Cultural visit of Beleq Traditional Village to learn about local traditions and daily life
Beleq Traditional Village	17.00-18.30	1.5 Hours	Enjoying the sunset from Selong Hill
Beleq Traditional Village	18.30-20.00	1.5 Hours	Dinner
Beleq Traditional Village - Pergangsingan Hill Basecamp	20.00-20.15	15 Minutes	The group heads to Pondok Arum Rinjani
Pergangsingan Hill Basecamp	20.10		Rest

DAY 3

Pergangsingan Hill Basecamp	05.00-06.00	1 Hours	Breakfast
Pergangsingan Hill	06.00-09.00	3 Hours	Trekking Pergangsingan Hill and

Basecamp- Pergangsingan Hilltop			taking pictures
Pergangsingan Hilltop - Pergangsingan Hill Basecamp	09.00-12.00	3 Hours	Down to the Pergangsingan Hill Basecamp
Pergangsingan Hill Basecamp	12.00-13.00	1 Hours	Lunch
Pergangsingan Hill Basecamp	13.00-16.00	3 Hours	Home preparation and airport drop-off

Source: researcher's data, 2025

D. CONCLUSION

This research successfully designed an integrated ecotourism package model based on local community participation in the 7 Summit Sembalun area, Sembalun Lawang Village, East Lombok. Four main spots- Anak Dara Hill, Pergangsingan Hill, Kondo Hill, and the Rinjani hiking trail- were identified as having complementary potential to be brought together in one sustainable tourism flow that integrates nature experiences, environmental education, and local community empowerment.

Key finding show :

1. Destination integration, where previously fragmented tourism activities can be integrated into a systematic and mutually supportive tour package flow.
2. Community participation in the form of high enthusiasm of local communities is an important social capital, but training is still needed in aspects of interpretation and tourism management.
3. Responsive package design, i.e. a model designed through an R&D and participatory approach resulting in a realistic, engaging, and contextualized 3H2M package structure.

Theoretically, these results strengthen the concept of sustainable ecotourism (Fandeli & Mukhlison, 2000) and the community participatory model (weaver, 2008), that the synergy between natural attractions and the active role of the community is the key to successful ecotourism. Practically, this model becomes a prototype for the development of tourism products based on local potential in conservation areas and other villages in Indonesia. The recommendations for further research include

1. Further research needs to examine the economic aspects of this package, including selling price, willingness to pay tourists, and economic impact to the community.
2. Explorative studies to develop locally-based learning media (infographics, booklets, educational QR) will strengthen the educational value of the package.
3. Periodic evaluation of the impact of ecotourism on the environment (erosion, waste, flora and fauna) should be assessed to ensure sustainability.

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