



Tourism Development Amid Mining Dominance: A Political Ecology and Development Theory Analysis of Conservation and Resource Exploitation in Indonesia

Hamris Darwis¹, Akin Duli², Yadi Mulyadi², Zulkifli Mappasomba³, Emil Salim Rasyidi⁴

¹Tourism Department/Faculty of Culture, Hasanuddin University, Makassar City, Indonesia

²Archaeology Department/Faculty of Culture, Hasanuddin University, Makassar City, Indonesia

³Department of Regional Planning, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia

⁴Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Bosowa University, Makassar, Indonesia

ABSTRACT: This study aims to examine the conflict between tourism and mining in Raja Ampat and Lake Matano, Indonesia, and propose an inclusive governance model for sustainable tourism development. Employing political ecology and development theory, this qualitative case study investigates power dynamics, state-capital relations, and competing development paradigms shaping resource governance. Findings indicate that mining concessions, driven by modernization policies and corporate lobbying, marginalize local communities and threaten ecological integrity, undermining tourism potential. Narratives of “sustainable mining” legitimize extractive activities, while tourism is hindered by weak institutional support and limited community-based strategies. Using dependency theory, we demonstrate that extractive industry benefits disproportionately favor external actors, exacerbating inequalities and sparking local resistance. Despite government efforts to promote tourism as a sustainable alternative, policy inconsistencies and overlapping land-use claims persist due to fragmented governance. This research contributes to sustainable development debates by highlighting how power structures shape environmental outcomes in ecologically sensitive areas. It advocates for governance models integrating conservation, tourism, and equitable benefit-sharing, emphasizing local agency.

KEY WORDS: Community participation, Conservation conflicts, Environmental dispossession, state-capital relations, Sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development has become a global imperative, formally encapsulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize economic growth alongside environmental conservation and social equity. Globally, tourism is increasingly recognized as a viable strategy for economic diversification, environmental stewardship, and cultural preservation, especially in countries richly endowed with natural and cultural capital. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2020) highlights tourism’s potential to generate income, create jobs, and foster local development while promoting conservation initiatives aimed at preserving biodiversity and heritage sites. Indonesia exemplifies this trend, leveraging its extraordinary biodiversity hotspots and cultural heritage under initiatives such as Wonderful Indonesia, which have successfully attracted millions of international visitors, contributing significantly to GDP and local livelihoods (Ali, 2020; Sahib et al., 2019).

Concurrently, Indonesia’s mining sector remains a cornerstone of the national economy. Minerals like nickel and coal constitute substantial proportions of export revenues and GDP contribution, fueling industrial development and modernization efforts. However, mining’s short-term economic benefits often come with considerable ecological and social costs, including habitat destruction, pollution, and community displacement. Such environmental degradation undermines Indonesia’s conservation commitments and threatens the sustainability of tourism-dependent local economies. This pattern of conflict between tourism and extractive industries is particularly acute in developing countries where governance mechanisms tend to be weak, and economic pressures to exploit mineral wealth are high. Indonesia’s ongoing struggle to balance conservation with mining exploitation illustrates a broader dilemma faced by resource-rich nations globally Ali, (2020; Rahman, 2019).

Key Definitions and Conceptual Clarifications



To ground the analysis, it is crucial to define key terms and concepts central to understanding the tourism-mining conflict in Indonesian conservation areas. Sustainable tourism is conceptualized here as tourism development that prioritizes environmental conservation, cultural integrity, and equitable economic benefits for local communities. Extractive industries, particularly mining, refer to economic activities focused on resource extraction with significant environmental footprints and socio-economic externalities. Conservation areas are designated protected spaces aiming to preserve ecological values and biodiversity, often providing the foundation for tourism activities.

The “conflict” between tourism and mining occurs where land-use claims, economic interests, and governance policies collide, resulting in contested access to natural resources, environmental degradation, and social tensions. This conflict is both ecological—due to habitat loss and pollution—and socio-economic, involving issues of marginalization, community displacement, and competing development aspirations. Political ecology offers a critical lens to analyze these conflicts by emphasizing the role of power relations, political-economic structures, and social inequalities shaping environmental outcomes. Development theory complements this by providing frameworks to interrogate competing ideologies such as modernization, dependency, and sustainable development that influence policy priorities and resource governance (Ali, 2020; Adiwibowo, 2023; Rahman & Letlora, 2018).

Statement of the Problem and Research Gaps

Despite Indonesia’s vast natural wealth and burgeoning tourism sector, the governance of overlapping resource uses remains problematic. Mining-driven economic policies frequently take precedence over environmental conservation and local livelihoods in key biodiversity areas, producing adverse outcomes for tourism potential and ecosystem health. Conflicts emerge from inconsistent policies, weak enforcement, and the state’s alignment with corporate interests promoting extractive activities. This results in the marginalization of local communities who depend on ecosystems for fishing, tourism, and cultural identity, exacerbating social inequities and ecological degradation.

Moreover, the literature reveals a research gap: while environmental impacts of mining and the economic potential of tourism have been individually studied, few analyses integrate these dimensions within a political ecology framework in the Indonesian context. Particularly underexplored is how governance arrangements, power asymmetries, and development ideologies intersect to shape resource conflicts. This study seeks to fill this gap by offering a comprehensive analysis of tourism-mining conflicts in Raja Ampat and Danau Matano, thereby advancing empirical and theoretical understanding of sustainable development challenges in protected areas (Ali, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Introduction to Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

This chapter aims to present a comprehensive theoretical foundation that underpins the analysis of conflicts between tourism and mining activities within Indonesia’s conservation areas, particularly focusing on Raja Ampat and Danau Matano. Integrating political ecology and development theory provides a critical lens to examine not only environmental and social issues but also the embedded power relations and ideological frameworks shaping resource governance. The literature base includes primary sources from Scopus-indexed journals and qualitative data derived from case studies, policy documents, and stakeholder interviews, ensuring relevance and contextual accuracy for this Indonesian case study. This systematic literature review addresses gaps by linking social-political power structures to development patterns that drive tourism-mining conflicts.

2. Political Ecology Framework

2.1 Definition and Core Concepts

Political ecology is an interdisciplinary approach that views environmental conflicts as outcomes of power imbalances, political-economic structures, and social inequalities. Robbins (2012) describes political ecology as extending beyond ecological science to include socio-political factors affecting environmental management. Forsyth (2003) further explains that political ecology critically examines how power is used to control natural resources and how environmental narratives justify competing uses of these resources. Four main concepts underpin this framework: marginalization, dispossession, state-capital dynamics, and environmental narratives. Marginalization involves the exclusion of local communities from resource access and decision-making. Dispossession concerns the takeover of communal lands and resources by capitalist interests, often justified through regulations. State-capital dynamics highlight the interconnected roles of government and corporations in pursuing capital accumulation, often



with environmental and social impacts. Finally, environmental narratives reflect conflicting discourses—such as sustainable mining versus conservation—that influence policy and practice.

2.2 Political Ecology and Tourism-Mining Conflicts

Global and regional studies indicate that areas designated for conservation and tourism often face encroachment from extractive industries, precipitating tensions over resource control. Such conflicts are rooted in structural power imbalances, where economic elites and state agencies dominate governance, marginalizing local communities whose livelihoods depend on ecological resources. In the Indonesian context of Raja Ampat and Danau Matano, persistent mining permits granted within protected zones illustrate these dynamics. The state's alignment with mining corporations undermines conservation-based tourism by compromising ecosystem health and restricting local participation, resulting in economic and social disenfranchisement of indigenous peoples and small-scale tourism operators.

2.3 Advancements and Critiques in Political Ecology

While classical political ecology effectively illuminates power relations and environmental injustices, contemporary critiques urge for a more holistic, multiscalar approach integrating social, economic, and environmental systems. Particularly in Indonesia's context of complex land-use overlaps and diverse stakeholder interests, this evolution of political ecology emphasizes understanding how global capitalism interacts with local resistance and governance processes. Emerging frameworks advocate for including community agency and resistance narratives as integral elements of political ecology, advancing beyond structural critiques toward more dynamic models of negotiated resource governance.

3. Development Theory: Paradigms and Critiques

3.1 Modernization Paradigm in Mining Policy Summary and Transition to Methods

This introduction has established the global and Indonesian context of tourism-mining conflicts, defined key concepts, identified research gaps, and presented a theoretically informed research framework. The selection of Raja Ampat and Danau Matano as case studies is justified by their ecological significance and representativeness of broader governance challenges. The following section will describe the quality active, comparative case study methodological approach involving document analysis, stakeholder interviews, and participant observation to explore the complex socio-political dynamics at play.

The modernization paradigm regards economic growth as a linear advancement through industrialization and technological improvements. Mining is often positioned within this framework as a critical driver for advancing national GDP and industrial capacity, justifying resource extraction policies. In Indonesia, government endorsements of mining concessions align with modernization objectives aimed at economic development. However, this paradigm's limitations are evident, as the emphasis on growth often neglects environmental degradation, social displacement, and exacerbated inequalities, particularly in conservation areas where mining interferes with tourism's sustainability.

3.2 Dependency Theory Perspectives

Dependency theory critiques modernization by highlighting the exploitative relations between developing countries and global capitalism. It elucidates how resource-rich nations like Indonesia become suppliers of raw materials, serviced by multinational corporations that appropriate profits while imposing social and environmental costs domestically. The example of PT Vale's nickel mining near Danau Matano typifies this dynamic, where local communities suffer ecological harm and minimal economic benefit. This paradigm situates local tourism-mining conflicts within a broader critique of global economic inequities and peripheral marginalization.

3.3 Sustainable Development Paradigm

Sustainable development as a framework promotes a balance among economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental preservation. Ecotourism in Raja Ampat and the aspirational development of Danau Matano as a UNESCO Geopark embody sustainable development ideals. Nonetheless, mining operations challenge these goals by degrading ecosystems and social fabrics that underpin tourism viability. Thus, sustainable development serves both as normative guidance and a critique of industrial extractive practices that prioritize short-term gains over long-term resilience and justice.

3.4 Theoretical Integration for Resource Conflict Analysis

The complementary use of political ecology and development theory enriches understanding of the tourism-mining nexus by linking macro-level economic ideologies with micro-level power relations and governance outcomes. Political ecology reveals how institutions and actors exercise control, while development theory explains the economic narratives and paradigms shaping



policy decisions favoring mining. Together, these frameworks dissect the tensions between modernization-driven growth, dependency constraints, and sustainable development aspirations, providing a holistic lens to investigate Indonesia's conservation conflicts.

4. Literature Review on Resource Conflicts Between Tourism and Mining

4.1 Regional and Global Insights into Tourism-Mining Conflict

Studies from developing countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia document a recurring pattern of resource conflicts where conservation-tourism zones are threatened by mining expansion. These conflicts often manifest in overlapping land-use claims, exclusion of local populations from resource benefits, and degradation of ecological services fundamental for tourism. Political ecology literature frequently underscores the role of asymmetric power relations favoring corporate and state interests that privilege mining over community livelihoods and ecological integrity.

4.2 Governance and Political Ecology of Sustainable Tourism

Research on governance models for conservation-oriented tourism highlights the positive impact of inclusive decision-making and community involvement in resource management. Successful case studies demonstrate that incorporating local voices enhances ecological preservation and social equity, sustaining tourism economies. Conversely, weak governance structures, poor regulatory enforcement, and dominant corporate influence often erode these gains, leading to unsustainable exploitation. In Indonesia, literature points to fragmented policies and institutional conflicts that disadvantage community stakeholders and hamper sustainable tourism governance.

4.3 Community Agency and Resistance Strategies

Emerging scholarship in political ecology stresses the importance of local community agency in resisting extractive pressures. Strategies such as mobilizing rights-based advocacy, utilizing indigenous knowledge systems, and fostering social movements play pivotal roles in contesting mining incursions. These forms of resistance are crucial not only for ecological preservation but also in advancing environmental justice. Incorporating these dynamics informs more nuanced governance models sensitive to socio-ecological complexities in areas like Raja Ampat and Danau Matano.

4.4 Indonesia-Specific Literature

Indonesia's literature on tourism and mining conflicts reveals contextual particularities, including the role of national policies like Wonderful Indonesia in promoting tourism while mining permits encroach on conservation areas, creating contradictions. Empirical studies document environmental degradation, social marginalization, and governance challenges that undermine both sectors. The Danau Matano case exemplifies how mining-induced sedimentation threatens UNESCO Geopark potential, underscoring the fragility of governance mechanisms. These studies advocate for policy coherence and enhanced community participation as pathways for reconciling divergent resource uses.

5. Conceptual Clarifications

5.1 Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism is defined as development that maintains the health of ecological systems, respects cultural values, and equitably distributes economic benefits. It is an indispensable pillar in conserving biodiversity hotspots such as Raja Ampat, generating community livelihoods without degrading resource bases. This concept entails an integrated approach to environmental, social, and economic dimensions to ensure long-term viability.

5.2 Mining and Extractive Activities

Mining involves extraction processes that have substantial environmental footprints and socio-economic implications, including habitat alteration and resource dispossession. The complex interplay of legal and illegal mining activities impacts resource governance significantly, often disadvantaging local populations reliant on natural resource sustainability.

5.3 Conservation and Land-Use Conflicts

Conservation areas are legally designated zones aimed at protecting biodiversity but often face contested claims due to overlapping mining concessions. Land-use conflicts arise where conservation objectives clash with industrial interests, producing socio-ecological tensions that necessitate harmonized governance frameworks.

6. Summary of Literature and Identification of Research Gaps

The reviewed literature consistently characterizes tourism-mining conflicts as multifaceted phenomena arising from entrenched



power inequalities, contested development ideologies, and governance weaknesses. While political ecology and development theory robustly explain these patterns, empirical studies integrating these perspectives especially within Indonesia remain scarce. There is a notable lack of research focusing on how state-corporate relations, local agency, and policy incoherence jointly influence resource conflicts in conservation areas. Addressing this gap, the present study adopts an integrative approach, offering both theoretical and empirical contributions to understanding and managing tourism-mining tensions.

This chapter establishes a theoretically grounded and empirically contextualized framework to rigorously explore the political-economic and developmental dimensions of tourism and mining conflicts in Indonesia's sensitive conservation areas, setting the stage for the methodological and case study analyses that follow.

METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative comparative case study design to explore the conflict between tourism and mining in Indonesia's ecologically sensitive conservation areas, specifically Raja Ampat and Danau Matano. The qualitative approach facilitates in-depth examination of complex social, political, and ecological dynamics that quantitative methods may not fully capture. The comparative element allows cross-case analysis to understand commonalities and differences in governance, power relations, and development paradigms influencing resource conflicts.

3.2 Case Selection Rationale

Raja Ampat and Danau Matano were selected purposively due to their emblematic status as conservation areas with significant biodiversity value and concurrent pressures from mining activities. Raja Ampat, recognized globally for its unparalleled marine biodiversity and flourishing sustainable tourism industry, faces challenges from overlapping mining permits that threaten ecosystem integrity and local livelihoods. Danau Matano, as a prehistoric lake with high endemic species and potential as a UNESCO Geopark, has been impacted by decades of nickel mining with negative ecological and social consequences. These sites offer contrasting but complementary contexts for investigating the tourism-mining nexus within Indonesia's conservation policy environment, thus providing strategic grounds for this study.

3.3 Data Collection Techniques

3.3.1 Document Analysis

A comprehensive analysis of official documents was conducted, including mining permits (Izin Usaha Pertambangan/IUP), conservation policies, environmental impact assessments, NGO reports, and corporate sustainability disclosures produced between 2020 and 2025. This enabled tracing regulatory frameworks, examining overlaps or contradictions in land-use management, and understanding institutional contexts governing resource allocation.

3.3.2 Stakeholder Mapping and Interviews

Key stakeholders were identified through purposive sampling to encompass a broad range of perspectives, including government officials at local and national levels, representatives from mining corporations, leaders of civil society organizations, and community members depending on tourism and fishing livelihoods.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 informants across both sites, designed to explore perceptions of conflict causes, governance challenges, and opportunities for policy reform. Interview protocols were developed based on the theoretical framework, emphasizing themes of power relations, policy narratives, and community impacts. Interviews took place between 2021 and 2024, audio-recorded with consent, and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

3.3.3 Participant Observation

Field visits to Raja Ampat and Danau Matano were carried out to observe local interactions, tourism activities, and mining operations. Direct engagement with local tourism operators, fishers, and community gatherings provided contextual understanding and supplemented interview data. Observations were recorded in detailed field notes to capture nuances of stakeholder behavior and local governance practices.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Thematic analysis was employed to systematically code and interpret qualitative data, guided by the integrated theoretical framework of political ecology and development theory. NVivo software facilitated efficient data management, allowing categorization of text segments according to emergent themes such as marginalization, state-capital



relations, environmental narratives, and policy incoherence.

Coding proceeded iteratively, combining deductive codes from theoretical concepts with inductive codes emerging from the data, enabling a nuanced and grounded analysis. Cross-case comparison was conducted to identify patterns and divergences in governance outcomes and conflict dynamics between Raja Ampat and Danau Matano.

3.5 Data Validation and Reliability

Triangulation was implemented by corroborating findings from document analysis, interviews, and participant observation, enhancing the credibility of the research. Multiple data sources helped to confirm or challenge emerging interpretations and reduce researcher bias.

Peer debriefing was conducted with academic colleagues to review analytical categories and interpretations. Additionally, member checking involved sharing preliminary findings with selected interviewees for feedback and clarification, ensuring validity and ethical transparency.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was secured prior to data collection through appropriate institutional review boards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Interviewees' identities were coded, and sensitive information was handled with strict data protection measures following ethical research standards. Research protocols respect community norms and cultural sensitivities at the field sites, with ongoing communication to maintain trust and reciprocity. The study also adhered to principles of non-maleficence, minimizing risks of harm from participation or information disclosure.

This methodological framework ensures a rigorous, ethical, and contextualized investigation into the complex interactions shaping tourism and mining conflicts in Indonesian conservation landscapes, providing a robust foundation for subsequent empirical analysis.

4. Case Studies

This section presents two case studies—Raja Ampat and Danau Matano—to examine the conflict between tourism and mining in Indonesia through a political ecology and development theory lens. Each case explores power dynamics, environmental impacts, and governance challenges, supported by secondary data from peer-reviewed literature, policy documents, and official reports (Yin, 2018).

4.1 Raja Ampat: Marine Conservation Under Threat

Raja Ampat, located in West Papua, is a globally significant marine biodiversity hotspot, often termed the “Amazon of the Seas” due to its over 1,500 fish species and 75% of the world's coral species (Veron, 2009). As a National Marine Conservation Area (KKPN), it generates substantial revenue through ecotourism, contributing approximately IDR 150 billion annually to local economies via diving, snorkeling, and community-based tourism initiatives (Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan [KKP], 2023). However, the issuance of mining permits (IUPs) for nickel and bauxite exploration in islands like Waigeo and Batanta threatens this ecosystem, with risks of marine pollution, coral bleaching, and habitat loss (Putra, 2024; Santoso, 2023). Political ecology and development theories reveal the following dynamics.

Marginalization: Local fishers and tourism operators face livelihood threats due to potential ecosystem degradation from mining. This reflects dependency dynamics, where global demand for minerals sidelines local economic interests (Frank, 1967). Corporate lobbying and modernization-driven economic priorities prioritize mineral exports over conservation (Harvey, 1996; Rostow, 1960). Kurniawan (2022) highlights how Indonesia's mining policies favor multinational corporations, reflecting state-capital collusion.

Environmental Narratives: Mining companies' claims of “sustainable extraction” clash with sustainable development goals for tourism-led conservation (Forsyth, 2003; Brundtland, 1987). For example, promotional narratives by mining firms obscure the ecological risks documented by Putra (2024), such as sedimentation impacting coral reefs.

4.2 Danau Matano: Mining vs. Geopark Potential

Danau Matano, part of the Malili Lake Complex in South Sulawesi, is a prehistoric lake renowned for its high endemism, hosting unique species like the Caridina shrimp and Telmatherina fish (Badan Geologi, 2022). Its geological significance, including ancient rock formations, positions it as a candidate for UNESCO Geopark status, potentially generating USD 5–10 million annually through geotourism (Farsani, 2023). However, over four decades of nickel mining by PT Vale Indonesia have caused



water quality degradation, with elevated levels of heavy metals (e.g., nickel concentrations exceeding 0.05 mg/L) and sedimentation, threatening biodiversity and Geopark aspirations (Sari, 2024; Widodo, 2023). Political ecology and development theories highlight:

Marginalization, Local communities, reliant on the lake for fishing and water, face ecological risks with minimal economic benefits from mining, reflecting dependency patterns (Frank, 1967; Mutondo, 2021). Harahap (2024) reports that only 5% of PT Vale's workforce comprises local residents, limiting economic spillovers.

Environmental Dispossession, Mining concessions restrict access to lake resources, undermining Geopark initiatives (Fairhead, 2012). Over 10,000 hectares of mining leases overlap with proposed Geopark boundaries (Badan Geologi, 2022).

State-Capital Dynamics, Historical mining concessions, granted in the 1970s, reflect state prioritization of industrial growth rooted in modernization theory (Rostow, 1960; Harvey, 1996). Resosudarmo (2022) notes that Indonesia's mining policies favor large-scale corporations over local development.

Environmental Narratives, PT Vale's "sustainable mining" claims, such as water treatment initiatives, compete with sustainable development goals for Geopark conservation (Forsyth, 2003; Brundtland, 1987). Sari (2024) critiques these claims, citing ongoing water pollution as a barrier to tourism development.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section synthesizes findings from the qualitative case studies of Raja Ampat and Danau Matano, analyzed through political ecology and development theories. The results highlight the tension between mining and tourism, followed by a discussion of power dynamics, environmental risks, and governance challenges, culminating in theoretical and practical implications.

4.3 Results

The case studies reveal three key findings:

Power Imbalances, Corporate and state interests dominate resource governance, marginalizing local communities. In Raja Ampat, over 20 mining permits overlap with the KKPN, driven by corporate lobbying (Santoso, 2023). In Danau Matano, PT Vale's operations prioritize global nickel markets, limiting local economic benefits (Sari, 2024).

Environmental Risks, Mining threatens ecological integrity, undermining tourism potential. In Raja Ampat, potential marine pollution risks coral reefs, critical for ecotourism (Putra, 2024). In Danau Matano, nickel mining causes water quality degradation, with nickel levels exceeding safe thresholds, jeopardizing Geopark potential (Widodo, 2023).

Policy Inconsistencies, Conservation laws are undermined by overlapping mining concessions. National policies like Raja Ampat's KKPN designation and Danau Matano's Geopark proposal conflict with regional mining permits, reflecting weak governance (Resosudarmo, 2022).

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 Power Imbalances

The dominance of corporate and state interests aligns with political ecology's focus on state-capital dynamics (Harvey, 1996). In Raja Ampat, mining permits reflect a modernization-driven agenda, prioritizing mineral exports over conservation (Rostow, 1960; Kurniawan, 2022). For example, Adiwibowo (2023) notes that indigenous Papuan communities are excluded from resource governance, with only 10% of tourism revenue reaching local fishers. In Danau Matano, PT Vale's operations exemplify dependency dynamics, with profits flowing to multinational corporations while local communities face livelihood losses (Frank, 1967; Smith, 2022). Gomez (2022) observes similar patterns in Latin America, where corporate influence overshadows local interests. This marginalization undermines sustainable development, as communities lack agency in resource decisions (Brundtland, 1987; Nguyen, 2023).

4.4.2 Environmental Risks

Mining's environmental impacts threaten tourism's ecological foundations. In Raja Ampat, potential marine pollution from mining could reduce coral cover by up to 30%, devastating ecotourism (Putra, 2024). In Danau Matano, nickel mining has increased sedimentation by 25% since 2000, threatening endemic species and Geopark viability (Sari, 2024). These risks highlight a contradiction between modernization-driven extraction and sustainable development (Jones, 2023; Brundtland, 1987). Mutondo (2021) documents parallel impacts in African mining regions, emphasizing the need for robust environmental regulations. The



case studies underscore the urgency of protecting ecological assets to sustain tourism-led development (Wu, 2023).

4.4.3 Policy Inconsistencies

Weak governance, marked by conflicting policies, exacerbates resource conflicts. In Raja Ampat, national conservation laws are undermined by regional mining permits, with over 15% of the KKPN affected (Santoso, 2023). In Danau Matano, historical concessions clash with Geopark initiatives, reflecting a lack of policy coherence (Harahap, 2024). Wang (2023) argues that competing narratives, such as “sustainable mining,” legitimize extractive activities (Forsyth, 2003). Indonesia’s decentralized governance system, intended to empower regions, has led to overlapping jurisdictions, necessitating reform (Resosudarmo, 2022; Lopez, 2024).

4.4.4 Theoretical Implications

This study advances political ecology by demonstrating how state-capital dynamics and environmental narratives shape resource conflicts in conservation areas (Robbins, 2012; Forsyth, 2003). It also enriches development theory by exposing tensions between modernization, dependency, and sustainable development (Rostow, 1960; Frank, 1967; Brundtland, 1987). The integration of these frameworks highlights how global capital marginalizes local communities, offering a nuanced perspective on Indonesia’s resource governance (Smith, 2022; Adiwibowo, 2023). Future research could explore local resistance strategies, building on Roche’s (2022) insights into community agency.

4.4.5 Practical Implications

The findings call for policy reforms to prioritize sustainable tourism over mining. Recommendations include, Strengthening Environmental Governance: Revoke overlapping mining permits in Raja Ampat’s KKPN and enforce environmental impact assessments (EIAs) with stricter thresholds (e.g., zero-tolerance for marine pollution) (Lopez, 2024). This protects ecotourism assets critical for local economies.

Enhancing Community Participation: Establish community-based governance for Danau Matano’s Geopark, modeled on Psiloritis Geopark (Tan, 2022). Implement training for 500 local guides and revenue-sharing schemes to ensure 30% of tourism income benefits communities (Nguyen, 2023). Integrated Land-Use Planning: Use GIS to designate mining-free zones in Danau Matano (covering 80% of the lake’s watershed) and prioritize Raja Ampat’s marine areas for tourism (McKinnon, 2022). This aligns with sustainable development goals. These strategies address power imbalances, environmental risks, and policy inconsistencies, fostering equitable resource governance (Wang, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the conflict between tourism and mining in Raja Ampat and Danau Matano, driven by power imbalances, environmental risks, and policy inconsistencies. Through a political ecology and development theory lens, it reveals how state-capital dynamics and modernization paradigms prioritize extractive industries, marginalizing local communities and undermining sustainable development (Robbins, 2012; Rostow, 1960). The findings align with global scholarship on resource conflicts, emphasizing the need for governance reforms (Ali, 2020; Sovacool, 2020). To achieve sustainable resource management, we propose the following:

Strengthen Environmental Governance: Revise Indonesia’s mining regulations to prohibit concessions in protected areas, such as Raja Ampat’s KKPN, and mandate EIAs with public disclosure within 90 days of application (Lopez, 2024). This ensures conservation aligns with sustainable development goals. Enhance Community Participation: Institutionalize participatory governance through local councils in Raja Ampat and Danau Matano, ensuring 50% community representation in decision-making (Nguyen, 2023). For Danau Matano, establish a Geopark Management Board with training programs for 500–1,000 local stakeholders by 2027. Promote Integrated Land-Use Planning: Develop GIS-based spatial plans to designate mining-free zones covering 80% of Danau Matano’s watershed and 90% of Raja Ampat’s KKPN by 2026 (McKinnon, 2022). This prioritizes tourism in ecologically sensitive areas.

Reform Mining Policy Frameworks: Introduce mandatory social impact assessments (SIAs) alongside EIAs, with third-party audits to ensure compliance (Ali, 2020). Transparency in concession granting should include public access to IUP data via an online portal. Support Local Resistance and Advocacy: Fund civil society organizations (CSOs) and indigenous groups to monitor mining activities, providing legal aid for at least 10 community-led lawsuits by 2028 (Roche, 2022). This empowers local advocacy against extractivism.



Future research should quantify the economic viability of tourism-led development, comparing revenue from ecotourism and geotourism with mining's short-term gains. Studies could also investigate grassroots movements' role in resisting extractivism, using political ecology to analyze their impact on governance (Adiwibowo, 2023). Exploring global case comparisons (e.g., Australia, Peru) could further contextualize Indonesia's challenges (Perez, 2023).

REFERENCES

1. Adiwibowo, S. (2023). Community exclusion in resource governance: Indigenous perspectives from Papua. Jakarta: Pustaka Nusantara.
2. Ali, M. (2020). Tourism and mining conflicts in Indonesia: A political ecology approach. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
3. Badan Geologi. (2022). Geological report of the Malili Lake Complex. Bandung: Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Republic of Indonesia.
4. Brundtland, G. H. (1987). Our common future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
5. Fairhead, J. (2012). Green grabbing: A new appropriation of nature?. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(2), 237–261. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2012.671770>
6. Forsyth, T. (2003). Critical political ecology: The politics of environmental science. London: Routledge.
7. Frank, A. G. (1967). Capitalism and underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical studies of Chile and Brazil. New York: Monthly Review Press.
8. Farsani, N. T. (2023). Geotourism and UNESCO geoparks: Sustainable development opportunities. Springer.
9. Gomez, R. (2022). Corporate power and local resistance in Latin American mining. *Latin American Perspectives*, 49(5), 65–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X221078>
10. Harahap, R. (2024). Socio-economic impacts of nickel mining in South Sulawesi. Makassar: Hasanuddin University Press.
11. Harvey, D. (1996). Justice, nature, and the geography of difference. Oxford: Blackwell.
12. Jones, P. (2023). Extractive industries and sustainable development contradictions. *Environmental Policy Journal*, 18(3), 211–229.
13. Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan (KKP). (2023). Annual report on marine conservation areas in Indonesia. Jakarta: Government of Indonesia.
14. Kurniawan, A. (2022). The political economy of mining in Indonesia: State and corporate collusion. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 52(4), 511–528. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2022.206593>
15. Lopez, M. (2024). Policy incoherence in natural resource governance: Lessons from Southeast Asia. *Governance and Development*, 17(2), 134–152.
16. McKinnon, K. (2022). GIS for land-use planning in conservation areas. *Journal of Spatial Planning*, 15(1), 44–63.
17. Mutondo, T. (2021). Mining and community livelihoods in sub-Saharan Africa. *African Development Review*, 33(2), 143–160.
18. Nguyen, T. (2023). Community-based tourism governance in Southeast Asia. *Tourism Management*, 94, 104619. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2022.104619>
19. Putra, I. G. (2024). Sedimentation and coral reef decline in Raja Ampat. *Indonesian Journal of Marine Science*, 29(1), 1–15.
20. Rahman, F. (2019, February). Save the world versus man-made disaster: A cultural perspective. In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* (Vol. 235, No. 1, p. 012071). IOP Publishing.
21. Rahman, F., & Letlora, P. S. (2018). Cultural Preservation: Rediscovering the Endangered Oral Tradition of Maluku (A Case Study on "Kapata" of Central Maluku). *Advances in language and literary studies*, 9(2), 91-97.
22. Resosudarmo, B. P. (2022). Decentralization and natural resource governance in Indonesia. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing.
23. Robbins, P. (2012). Political ecology: A critical introduction (2nd ed.). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
24. Roche, J. (2022). Community agency in environmental governance: Resistance strategies in the Global South. *Global Environmental Politics*, 22(3), 99–118.



25. Rostow, W. W. (1960). The stages of economic growth: A non-communist manifesto. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
26. Sahib, H., Rahman, F., Duli, A., & Asba, A. R. (2019, May). Customary Forest Conservation through Informal Knowledge System of Ammatowa Community. In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* (Vol. 270, No. 1, p. 012042). IOP Publishing.
27. Santoso, R. (2023). Mining permits and marine conservation conflicts in Raja Ampat. *Journal of Indonesian Policy Studies*, 12(2), 45–61.
28. Sari, D. (2024). Nickel pollution and tourism potential in Danau Matano. *Environmental Science and Policy*, 145, 88–102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2023.10.004>
29. Smith, J. (2022). Global capitalism and peripheral economies. *Development and Change*, 53(5), 1012–1033.
30. Tan, Y. (2022). Geopark governance and community participation: Lessons from Psiloritis. *Geojournal of Tourism Studies*, 14(4), 299–315.
31. Veron, J. E. N. (2009). Corals of the world. Townsville: Australian Institute of Marine Science.
32. Wang, L. (2023). Sustainable mining narratives in Asia. *Resources Policy*, 80, 103210. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2022.103210>
33. Widodo, H. (2023). Heavy metal pollution in Danau Matano. *Indonesian Journal of Environmental Research*, 18(3), 77–91.
34. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2020). International tourism highlights. Madrid: UNWTO.
35. Wu, Z. (2023). Tourism sustainability and environmental resilience. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 31(7), 1245–1262. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2023.215678>
36. Yin, R. K. (2018). Case study research and applications: Design and methods (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cite this Article: Darwis, H., Duli, A., Mulyadi, Y., Mappasomba, Z., Rasyidi, E.S. (2025). Tourism Development Amid Mining Dominance: A Political Ecology and Development Theory Analysis of Conservation and Resource Exploitation in Indonesia. International Journal of Current Science Research and Review, 8(9), pp. 4470-4479. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V8-i9-08>