

RE-INVENTING A TOURISM DEVELOPMENT MODEL USING COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE: THE NORTH SULAWESI PROVINCE CASE STUDY

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North Sulawesi also referred as Sulawesi Utara or SULUT is one of the 34 provinces composing Indonesia. As such, SULUT, located in the eastern part of the world largest archipelago has to compete to promote its originality, develop trade and industry (Wuryaningrat, 2013) as well as work hard to attract both Indonesian and international tourists.

With a population of only 2.41 million in 2015 (Statistik, 2015), less known, publicized or accessible than Bali, Java or Sumatra, located at the fringe of Indonesia, bathed by both the Maluku and Sulawesi seas; North Sulawesi is before all home of natural wonders both inland and underwater as well as culturally rich of unsuspected indigenous traditions or colonial heritage.

For about 35 years, tourism in North Sulawesi has been driven by the reputation of its main city, Manado, for offering spectacular dive spots to underwater lovers and being home of the last Coleacanths (Holder, et al., 1999).

Some studies show the damages of the increase of tourism on fauna and flora more particularly on the coral population of the marine reserve of Bunaken (Tangian, et al., 2015). Besides, benefits for and positive impacts on the daily life of islanders are not that obvious.

More recently the development of new direct flights, the cheaper airfares, the modernization of local airports, have increased the attractiveness of Manado for Asian tourists in particular from China. As a consequence, hotels of large capacity and shopping malls are burgeoning in order to fulfill the needs and desiderata of a new kind of tourists less attracted by the wonder of nature than by the pleasures of the consumption society.

A tendency that could be far more increased if North Sulawesi becomes integrated in the OBOR (One Belt One Road) Chinese initiative also referred as New Silk Road and the province receives huge investments from Beijing.

Now, Manado is challenged by other regencies (also called Kabupaten) encouraged by provincial authorities to develop a tourism offer able to compete with the existing one.

At a time Indonesia is at the crossroads (Fournié, et al., 2017), the current paper intends to explore for the tourism industry the global perspectives of development of the North Sulawesi province and its related islands.

Besides diving, ecotourism (Wowiling, et al., 2013), cultural, historical and religious tourism, local know-how, food tasting and handicraft as well as sport initiatives would be examined.

Tourism development shall be beneficial to local people in terms of job creation and daily life improvement. It shall be conducted in such a way that environment be protected; that culture and traditions be explained, preserved and valued. (Hadi-Kusuma, et al., 2004)

Our study advocates that to do so tourism shall be planned and organized using a Competitive Intelligence (CI) and Territorial Development approach at provincial (Dou, et al., 2004) level in order to make possible a complementary and equilibrated development in all areas of SULUT. At the same time initiatives including tourism projects but also training and education, development of handicraft, small related industries and services shall take place at local level.

Tough competition between Kabupaten, full deregulation and wild developments could create conflicts and prejudices to some communities

We intend to demonstrate that several traps could be avoided provided proper studies are conducted and their results implemented. As a consequence, capturing complete and accurate data, have it

analyzed by a knowledgeable and independent expert team able to suggest the orientations of the regional strategy would be one of the steps to go through. Then possibly, Provincial authorities claim that tourism may bring back North Sulawesi "glory days" may become a reality. (Tempo, 2018)

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