

## **THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GEOTOURISM AS AN INNOVATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN CILETUH PALABUHANRATU UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK (CPUGGP)**

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**ABSTRACT.** Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu area, which has geoheritage, biodiversity, and cultural diversity, was globally recognized by UNESCO as a geopark in 2018. A way to manage geopark is geotourism, which a development of sustainable tourism in geopark area which pays attention to conservation, education, and development of sustainable economic activities. As a new policy, as stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy / Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency Number 2/2020, it can be said that geotourism is an innovation or new idea in the development of sustainable tourism. Applying Diffusion of Innovation theory from Everett M. Rogers, this research sought to reveal the characteristics of geotourism as an innovation in terms of relative advantage, rate of compatibility, rate of complexity, rate of trialability, and rate of observability. The researchers used quantitative method to answer the research questions and descriptive statistical analysis to process the primary data, which they obtained from the questionnaire distributed to 100 respondents of Tamanjaya Villagers of Ciemas District, Sukabumi Regency. They also conducted a literature review and observations to obtain secondary data. The results showed that geotourism as an innovation is in high category. Geotourism development is considered advantageous, compatible with the prevailing values in social systems, regulations, and community needs, applicable in a small trial, and observable by the public, either local people, tourism management, or visitors. However, in terms of complexity, the development of geotourism in Ciletuh Palabuhanratu UNESCO Global Geopark (CPUGGp) is considered complicated and not easy to implement. Thus, various authorities should continue to socialize the development of this geotourism and it is also necessary to hold various trainings in order to make it possible for the community, especially those involved in the geotourism development, to implement this new concept properly and correctly.

**KEYWORDS:** sustainable tourism; characteristics of innovations; geotourism; geopark; CPUGGp

### **INTRODUCTION**

Today tourism has been a backbone of the strategic sectors of Indonesian economy. This was stated by

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President Joko Widodo in a Plenary Session on Tourism at Bogor Palace on February 16, 2015. He stated that tourism was a leading sector in Indonesia. This was due to the growth of foreign exchange earnings from year to year: from USD6,297.99 million in 2009 to USD7,603.45 million in 2010 to USD8,554.39 million in 2011 to USD9,120.85 million in 2012 to USD10,054.15 million. This is why tourism becomes a *leading sector* in Indonesia. Not to mention the achievement of Indonesian tourism in 2017, where it finished in 47<sup>th</sup> place in global tourism rank. It was a significant achievement since it was previously in 100<sup>th</sup> (Octavianti et al., 2018).

Based on the 2020-2024 Medium Term National Development Plan Indonesia (RPJMN), tourism has been a national priority sector. The followings are the targets: USD 30,000 million of foreign exchange earnings, 15 million manpower, 5.5% contribution to Gross Domestic Income (GDI). Thus, various developments in Indonesian tourism are needed.

Tourism should be developed for meeting the needs of the tourists, the tourism industry, and local people without sacrificing the next generation's ability to meet their own needs. Therefore, tourism should be developed sustainably. Sustainable tourism development should refer to qualitative growth, where it can be supported ecologically in the long term as well as economically feasible, ethically and socially equitable for the community (Pitana & Diarta, 2019).

The concept of sustainable tourism development comes from that of sustainable development. In general, the concept of development includes efforts to maintain ecological integrity and diversification, meet basic human needs, open choices for next generations, reduce injustice, and increase self-determination for local communities (Picard, 2006). Thus, it can be concluded that the objectives of sustainable development should comprise three principles: (1) ecological continuity; (2) sociocultural continuity; and (3) economic viability, where it can fulfill today's needs without sacrificing the next generation's ability to fulfill their needs.

Geotourism is a kind of sustainable natural tourism where it focuses on the geological appearance of Earth's face to encourage people's understanding of culture and environment, appreciation, conservation, and concern for the preservation of local wisdom. It offers natural tourism and highlights the beauty, uniqueness, scarcity, and wonder of a natural phenomenon that is closely related to geological phenomenon and described in popular or simple language (Hidayat, 2002). Therefore, it can be stated that the concept of geotourism is part of sustainable tourism.

Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy / Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency Number 2/2020 states that geotourism is an effort to develop geopark. According to UNESCO (2004), geopark is an area in which it has an outstanding geology, i.e. archaeological, ecological, and cultural values by involving local communities to play a role in protecting and fulfilling the functions of natural heritage.

Today Global Geopark Network (GGN) has 120 members from 33 countries (Hermawan, 2017). According to the data of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (2018), as of 2018, Indonesia has had four UNESCO Global Geoparks: Mount Batur, Mount Sewu, Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu, and Rinjani Lombok. In addition, Indonesia has seven National Geoparks: Toba Caldera, Marangin Jambi, Belitong, Maros-Pangkep, Raja Ampat, Bojonegoro, and Mount Tambora.

Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu Geopark has been recognized as a member of UNESCO Global Geopark since April 17, 2018 through the 204<sup>th</sup> Convention of the UNESCO Executive Board, the Programme and External Relations Commission in Paris, France. The recognition makes it the only West Java's geopark that is globally

recognized today (Raharjo et al., 2019). This is, of course, a pride for West Java, which is rich in natural resources for sustainable tourism.

In general, tourism can be defined as a person or a group of people's temporary travel from one place to another in pursuit of pleasure and insights from the visited places. Based on this, the focus of tourism development is solely on how to attract more visitors to come to a certain tourism destination. It can be stated that tourism is merely profit-oriented. This, indeed, is not in line with the concept of sustainable tourism, especially geotourism--which is a more specific one.

To communicate a new concept or thought to the public is not easy. Geotourism in this case can be viewed as a new concept, where it comes up with innovations for sustainable tourism, especially for geopark. As an innovation, it needs an effort to diffuse the concept to make it acceptable and implementable for the community and all stakeholders of the tourism development. Moreover, when there is a new concept or idea, long-standing tourism destinations, where the community and stakeholders has been already accustomed to their long-standing management, need a greater effort to change the old thoughts and beliefs.

Diffusion is a specific communication for conveying messages as new ideas, while innovation is an idea, practice, or thing which is considered new by individuals or groups of people (Rogers, 2003). In this case, new doesn't always refer to the time of its invention or its first use. Rogers and Shoemaker state that new to a person is in perception, or subjectivity, which leads to his reaction to the innovation. In other words, when a thing is considered new to a person, it is an innovation. So is the concept of geotourism. It is new to a community accustomed to run the long-standing tourism development.

Geotourism must be appropriately diffused so that it can be adopted by the community and implemented in their long-standing tourism management. There is an influencing factor in this adoption, i.e. the characteristic of innovations. It shows how individuals perceive five characteristics of innovations, which in turn predict the rate of adoption.

One of theoretical assumptions of diffusion of innovation theory is that *the characteristic of innovations, as perceived by individuals, help to explain their different rate of adoption* (Rogers, 2003), which is one to test in this research. During the first year, the researchers limited the research to the effort to describe the characteristic of innovations of geotourism according to the people who live in the area of Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark.

Thus, this research sought to reveal the characteristic of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development according to the people who live in the area of Ciletuh-PUGGp. Community's perception of relative advantage, rate of compatibility, rate of complexity, rate of trialability, and rate of observability of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development are five things to answer in this research.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research used descriptive quantitative method. This was that it sought to gather, to compile, to analyze, and to interpret data on the characteristics of geotourism as an innovation from the local people who live in Ciletuh-PUGGp. Descriptive research does not seek to find out or describe relationships, to test a hypothesis, nor to predict something. The objective of this method is solely to systematically, factually, and carefully illustrate the facts about and the characteristics of a certain population (Rakhmat, 2012). In regard to the aims of using descriptive method, referring to Rakhmat as well, this research sought to gather actual

information in details to illustrate the characteristics of innovations: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability.

This research was conducted in Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark, which is located Sukabumi Regency, West Java. The population of this research was the people who live in that area. Multistages cluster sampling was used and it was found that Tamanjaya Village in Ciemas District, Sukabumi Regency was the smallest cluster. The primary data was obtained by distributing questionnaires to 100 respondents comprising local people who lived in geopark area, people who were involved in geotourism management, and visitors who at the time of data gathering were visiting the village.

This research had been conducted since April 2021. However, in regard to field data gathering, the researchers faced some obstacles. The main one was the Community Activities Restrictions Enforcement a.k.a. CARE (PPKM), which was declared by the government and responded by the leaders of University. As a result, the lecturers and all members of academic community should reduce their offline activities, including data gathering for the research. Nevertheless, during this period, the researchers kept on seeking to work on the research by using any communication media and the available network they have in order to keep the research on track. When CARE was dropped to level 2, the research team finally could gather primary data firsthand. The compiled questionnaires could be distributed to the respondents, i.e. local people who lived in Tamanjaya Village. In addition, the researchers conducted focus group discussion with the tourism actors in the research site to obtain better information about the objects of the research. Interviews and literary studies were also conducted to gain secondary data for making a deeper and more holistic analysis on primary data.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This research was participated by 100 respondents: 67% male and 33% female. Fifty one percent of them were members of the geopark management, 32% visitors, and the rest was local people who live in Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu Global Geopark area. As stated in the introduction, geotourism as a new concept of tourism development in geopark is still not familiar to nor well-understood by the community, either those who live in geopark area, the tourism management, or the visitors.

Based on age, the respondents of this research vary in the following ways: 16-26 (30%), 27-37 (30%), 38-48 (26%), 49-59 (9%), and 60-70 (2%). Based on the data, it appears that the research respondents are on a normal curve, and thereby it will strengthen the future data. All respondents are Muslim with various educational attainments. More than half of them (51%) managed to finish primary education, 36% secondary education, and 13% higher education.

Based on occupation, the respondents vary as well. However, most of them are self-employed (31%), housewives (20%), and farmers (15%). This is understandable since this research was conducted in a rural area with a fairly long travel time from the district capital. Only 4% of them work as civil servants, 7% are private employees, and 11% are still students. Twelve percent of them stated that they are retired, unemployed, or worked in unlisted sectors. None of them worked as a fisherman. This is that the research was conducted in a village in a plateau/highland, far from the beach. Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu area is indeed immense and comprises beaches and highlands. In this research, the focus is on the community who live in the highlands of Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark.

The results and discussions of this article is part of an ongoing research. In this article the researchers will

only convey the characteristics of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism in geopark areas, particularly Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark. Five characteristics of innovations will be discussed in this article: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in geopark areas.

Relative advantage of geotourism development in CPUGGp area is the rate to which geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development is considered better and more profitable than old ideas so that it can provide convenience, economic benefit, and preventive advantage. The results showed that the existence of geopark in Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu is considered better and more profitable than the conditions when the area was not recognized as a global geopark. Sixty six percent of the respondents rate the relative advantage of geotourism development in CPUGGp high, while 34% rate it moderate. The data of the research do not show low rate.

In more detail, the three indicators that forms the relative advantage clearly show that the respondents consider the development of geotourism profitable, both in terms of convenience, economic benefit, and preventive advantage. Seventy one percent of respondents rate convenience high and 29% rate it low. The respondents feel the convenience because since the development of geotourism, tourist destinations in CPUGGp are considered more presentable (82%) and more organized (81%), inter-destinations connecting roads are easier to pass (76%) and wider (67%), and the facilities of each tourist detination are considered more complete. Sixty eight percent of the respondents state that there is enough parking space for vehicles, 76% state that public toilets are available at tourist destinations, which are in clean condition (57%) and fit for use (66%). Seventy eight percent of the respondents state that there are Islamic prayer rooms in tourist destinations for Muslim visitors.

Geotourism development in CPUGGP is considered gaining economic benefit, where 76% respondents rate it high and 24% rate it moderate. Considering its recognition as a UNESCO Global Geopark, 81% respondents state that the number of kiosks/stalls that the community can use to trade is increasing and 82% state that people who ended up trading at the kiosks/stalls in tourist destinations is also increasing. In addition, 86% respondents state that the number of inns is growing and 80% state that homestays are improving the economy of the pople living around tourist destinations. Global recognition has an impact on the lives of Sukabumi people, i.e. increasing job opportunities and reducing unemployment. Seventy eight percent respondents state that since its recognition as a global geopark, job opportunities for local people are increasing, and 61% state that unemployment rate is decreasing. This is in line with the Sukabumi Regent's statement in an audience with the CPUGGp Management Board in January 2021 that "The development of CPUGGp must provide added value for the welfare of the community (Adv, 2021).

The third indicator of relative advantage variable is preventive advantage, i.e. geotourism development prevent future misfortune. Data of the research show that 54% respondents rate preventive advantage high and 46% rate it moderate. To measure the indicator, the researchers used three instruments: (1) warranty of environmental pollution or damage prevention; (2) warranty of community safety, health, and lives; and (3) warranty of the of survival of all organisms in it and environmental protection in tourist destinations.

Table 2  
Preventive Advantages of Geotourism Development in CPUGGp

No	Statement	Agree	Doubt	Disagree	Total
1	The large number of visitors does not make the geopark area dirty with the large amount of waste.	53%	28%	19%	100%
2	Tourism development in geopark areas does not damage unspoiled natural conditions.	73%	19%	8%	100%
3	The growing number of inns does not decrease water supply in geopark area.	64%	17%	19%	100%
4	The large number of visitors does not compromise the security of residential area.	76%	17%	7%	100%
5	Tourism development in geopark area does not change local traditions.	74%	16%	10%	100%
6	The growing development does not have a negative impact on public health.	70%	19%	11%	100%
7	Tourism development pays attention to the protection of plants in geopark area.	71%	21%	8%	100%
8	The habitats of various animals are not disturbed even though tourism development continues in geopark area.	65%	23%	12%	100%

Source: Data Processing Results, 2021

The second variable to examine in this research is the compatibility of geotourism development in CPUGGp, which is the rate to which geotourism as an innovation is compatible with the prevailing values in social systems, regulations, and community needs. The results show that in regard to compatibility, 82% respondents rate it high, 17% rate it moderate, and 1% rate it low. While in regard to social systems and beliefs, 91% respondents state that cleanliness is an important thing to consider in tourism development in geopark area because it is part of faith. In addition, 87% respondents state that preventing environmental damage in tourism development in geopark area is a shared responsibility, and 88% state that the rules that apply at tourist destinations are in accordance with the religious teachings they believe in.

The next indicator is that geotourism development in CPUGGp must be compatible with the applicable regulation. The data show that 69% respondents state that tourism development in geopark area has been in accordance with article 5 of Presidential Decree No. 9/2009 on “Geopark management through geotourism development,” and 59% respondents state that it has been in accordance with technical guidelines in the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy Regulation No. 2/2020.

Another indicator to measure the compatibility of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in CPUGGp is that geotourism development should fulfill the following needs: (1) revalidation as UNESCO Global Geopark; (2) geoheritage preservation; (3) increasing public awareness of the

environment; (4) community economic improvement; and (5) increasing public knowledge.

Eighty four percent of the respondents state that tourism development in geopark area is a requirement to get a global recognition from UNESCO. Every four years UNESCO will re-evaluate the management of the globally-recognized geoparks. The management Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark must meet many requirements to maintain UNESCO recognition for the next 4 years. Thus, geopark management, in this case geotourism development, is an important requirement for the next revalidation.

Seventy seven percent of the respondents state that tourism in geopark area is needed to preserve geoheritage, 82% to increase public awareness of the environment, 89% to improve community economy, 77% to increase public knowledge about geodiversity, biodiversity (77%), and cultural diversity (84%).

In the compatibility aspect of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development, Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark is considered high. Thus, it can be stated that geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development has already been compatible with the prevailing values in social systems, regulations, and community needs.

The third variable to examine in this research is the complexity of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in CPUGGp. Complexity here can be defined as the rate to which geotourism is considered hard to understand and use. According to Rogers (2003), the higher the complexity of an innovation, the more difficult its adoption. The level of difficulty is measured with two indicators: the difficulty in understanding the concept of geotourism and the difficulty in implementing the concept in real tourism activities.

Table 3  
The Indicators of the Rate of Complexity of Geotourism as An Innovation in Sustainable Tourism Development in CPUGGp

No	Indicator	Statement	Agree	Doubt	Disagree	Total
1	Difficulty in understanding the concept of geotourism	Tourism development in geopark area is complicated.	49%	26%	25%	100%
		Tourism development in Ciletuh Geopark is difficult to understand.	55%	20%	25%	100%
2	Difficulty in implementing tourism development in geopark area	Practically, tourism development in geopark area is more difficult than that in non-geopark area.	60%	18%	22%	100%
		The complexity in geotourism management	12%	22%	66%	100%

		comes because in a global geopark many aspects must be considered.				
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Source: Data Processing Results, 2021

Based on data in table 3, it can be noticed that there are different combinations of answers for each item asked to the respondents. However, based on them, the researchers categorized the rate of complexity of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in CPUGGp in 3 categories as in table 4.

Table 4  
The Rate of Complexity of Geotourism as An Innovation in Sustainable Tourism Development in CPUGGp

Variable	Category	f	%
Rate of Complexity of Geotourism	High	13	13%
	Moderate	66	66%
	Low	21	21%
Total		100	100%

Source: Data Processing Results, 2021

Table 4 shows that the rate of complexity of geotourism is moderate (66%), and 21% respondents still state that geotourism has a high complexity. It means that geotourism development on geopark area is still considered difficult to understand and implement in tourism management. The levels of difficulty faced by the respondents are as follows.

Table 5  
The Categories of Rate of Complexity of Geotourism as An Innovation in Sustainable Tourism Development in CPUGGp

Indicator of Rate of Complexity	Category	f	%	Total
Difficulty in understanding the concept of geotourism	High	18	18%	100%
	Moderate	39	39%	
	Low	43	43%	
Difficulty in implementing geotourism in tourism	High	11	11%	100%
	Moderate	84	84%	



development	e			
	Low	5	5%	

Source: Data Processing Results, 2021

Based on this, efforts from various parties are still needed to provide education about geoparks and their development in order to decrease the rate of complexity. This must be done to make the rate of adoption faster so that the goals of developing geotourism can be achieved.

The second variable to examine in this research is the compatibility of geotourism development in CPUGGp, which is the rate to which geotourism. The fourth variable to examine to find out the characteristics of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in CPUGGp is the rate of trialability, which is that an innovation should be able to undergo a small-scale trial. In this research, the indicator is that tourism development in geopark area can be tested by the community of tourism actors. The results show that the rate of trialability of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in CPUGGp is high (62%), whereas 37% categorize it moderate, and 1% low. In details, the categorization of the rate of trialability is as follows:

Table 6

The Indicators of the Rate of Trialability of Geotourism as An Innovation in Sustainable Tourism Development in CPUGGp

No	Statement	Agree	Doubt	Disagree	Total
1	Management of tourist destinations can do a trial to create educating tourism attractions for the visitors.	65%	21%	14%	100%
2	Tour guides can explain the potentials of the tourist destinations for geoparks.	83%	12%	5%	100%

Source: Data Processing Results, 2021

Sixty five percent of the respondents state that the management of tourist destinations can do a trial to create educating tourism attractions. This is evident from the results of observations, which was conducted when the researchers were in the research site. The management then was able to explain dos and don'ts in the tourist destination, which was a waterfall. A guide accompanying the researchers could show many attractions to do at the waterfall, and which places are allowed to swim and which are not. In addition, when the researchers were on a cliff that resembled an amphitheater, hence the name Panenjoan Amphitheater, the guide was able to explain the natural history of the cliff (fault). The guide explained the tectonic process of the collapse of rock blocks from the west, i.e. from Jampang plateau to Palabuhan Ratu bay, which created amphitheater-like faults around the edge of Jampang plateau. Even though everything that was conveyed was the same as what was written on the information board, at least the guide was able to convey it back to the researchers who were acting as a tourist at that time.

The last variable to examine in this research is the rate of observability of geotourism as an innovation in

sustainable tourism development in CPUGGp, which is the rate to which tourism development in CPUGGp area can be observed by the community.

Table 7  
The Indicators of the Rate of Observability of Geotourism as An Innovation in Sustainable Tourism Development in CPUGGp

No .	Indicator	Statement	Agree	Doubt	Disagree	Total
1	Information about geoparks can be observed in plain view in tourist areas.	Information boards about geoparks can be observed in every tourist destination.	82%	9%	9%	100%
		Explanatory signs about geoheritage can be observed easily in tourist areas.	80%	15%	5%	100%
2	Geotourism development in Ciletuh Geopark can be observed in various media.	Tourist attractions in Ciletuh Geopark can be observed in social media.	84%	10%	6%	100%
		Information about Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu Geopark can be easily observed in online news portals.	74%	16%	10%	100%

Source: Data Processing Results, 2021

The last variable, i.e. observability, shows that geotourism development in CPUGGp area has already been observable, and local people, tourism management, and visitors can see it in plain view. The rate of observability of geotourism development in CPUGGp is 84% in high category, 10% in moderate, and 6% in low. The high rating of observability is due to the convenience to find information about geoparks in tourist destinations (figure 1). Even in local-owned homestays it can be found easily (figure 2).

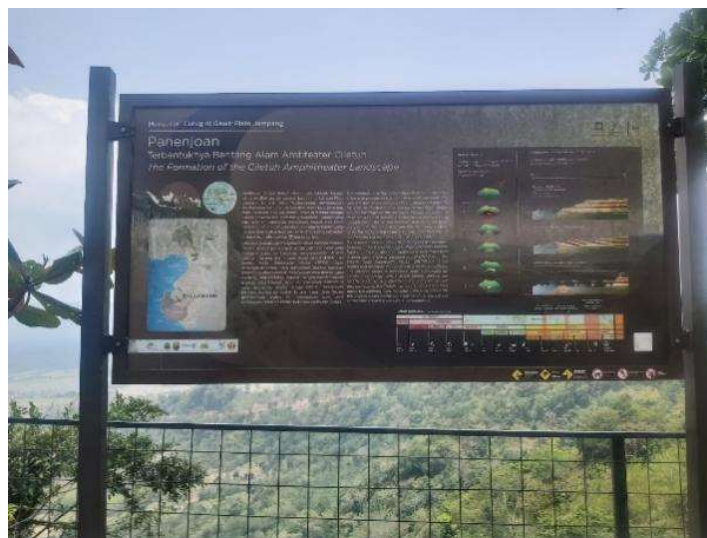


Figure 1. Information board about Panenjoan Amphitheater, a tourist destination  
Source: Research Documentation, 2021

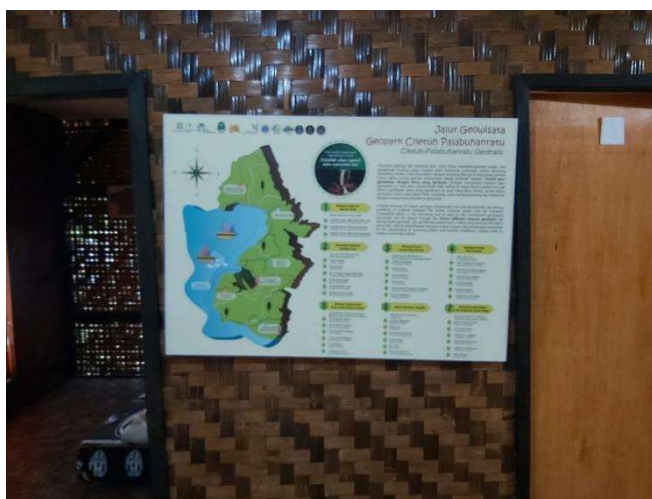


Figure 2. Information board about Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu Geopark, a geotourism, in a homestay where the researchers stayed  
Source: Research Documentation, 2021

In addition to seeing it firsthand, the public can also get information from various media, both conventional and digital. Digitally, it can be found in the official website [www.ciletuhpalabuhanratuugg.id](http://www.ciletuhpalabuhanratuugg.id) and official Instagram @ciletuh, which are directly managed by the CPUGGp Management. Apart from the official ones, there are also many unofficial digital promotional media, either from every tourist destination management or individuals, such as Instagram accounts @geopark\_ciletuh\_sukabumi, @ciletuhhills, @geopark\_ciletuh\_sukabumi, @explore\_ciletuh, @ciletuhpalabuharatugeopark, @visitciletuh, @papsiciletuh, and many more. In addition, information about Ciletuh Geopark can be easily found in many online news portals.

Based on primary data from distributing questionnaires to local people around tourist destinations, tourism

actors, and visitors, in general it can be concluded that the characteristics of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in CPUGGP are 70% in high category and 30% in low. This shows that the respondents well-respond, well-view, and well-perceive the characteristics of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark (CPUGGP), whereas the characteristics of the innovation are the recipient's perception of an innovation, not the characteristics that have been classified by experts or agents of change, which will affect the rate of adoption (Rogers, 2003: 212).

The policy of geopark a.k.a. *taman bumi* in Indonesia is a new idea or concept that will certainly need some process to be accepted by the community. The policy was only enacted in 2020 through the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy / Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency of the Republic of Indonesia No. 2/2020. It states that geopark is developed within sustainable tourism development. Geopark development is expected to provide a stimulus to economic activities and sustainable development through geotourism development. This shows that geotourism has a very important position in the development of geoparks as a tourist destination.

To public, geotourism is a brand new idea in sustainable tourism development in Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark (CPUGGP). This is in line with Rogers (2003) who states that innovation is an idea, practice, or thing which is considered new by individuals or groups of people. Rogers also states that an innovation will be accepted or adopted by the public in different time periods. The decision of an innovation is determined by various factors, both environmental and personal. The rate of adoption of an innovation as a dependent variable is determined by various independent variables (Levis, 1995:37). The characteristics of geotourism as an innovation in the development of sustainable tourism in CPUGGP is an independent variable, as Lewis points out. Each of these characteristics may be empirically related to each other but conceptually they are different from each other (Hanafi et al., 1986).

## CONCLUSION

Based on research data on the characteristics of geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development in geoparks, particularly Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark (CPUGGP), it can be concluded that geotourism as an innovation in sustainable tourism development has already been in high category. In terms of relative advantage, the respondents consider it advantageous, either in terms of convenience, economic benefit, or preventive advantage. The development of geotourism in CPUGGP has also been compatible with the prevailing values in social systems, regulations, and community needs, applicable in a small trial, and observable by the public, either local people, tourism management, or visitors. However, in terms of complexity, the development of geotourism in Ciletuh Geopark is still in moderate category. Some even consider that the development of geotourism is complicated and not easy to implement.

Based on the results, the researchers recommend that various authorities continue to socialize the development of this geotourism, knowledge about geoheritage, biodiversity, and cultural diversity of the CPUGGP. In addition, a more intensive training is necessary to hold to make it possible for the guides and other tourism actors which have a direct contact with visitors, such as parking attendants, janitors, and sellers at tourist destinations, to implement the concept of geotourism development more effectively. Apart from knowledge about geology, the tourism actors also need to have the skills to implement the concept of geotourism development, such as making geoproducts to market in every tourist destination and geotourism

packages (in terms of guides and travel agents) so that the unique geological destinations can be explored with fun and educate the visitors.

### LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

This article still has many limitations, because it is a preliminary study. This research will be continued for the next two years. In general, it will discuss the diffusion of innovations in the geotourism development in Ciletuh-Palabuhan Ratu UNESCO Global Geopark (CPUGGp). This article has just discussed the characteristics of geotourism as an innovation in the context of sustainable tourism development. Therefore, a further research is needed for enriching data and providing holistic answers for the research questions. The following research will discuss the communication process in diffusing the geotourism concept to all stakeholders involved in the development of CPUGGp. Thus, the researchers can generate a model of effective communication strategy for the implementation and development of geotourism in the geopark. In terms of methods, they will use qualitative method with case study approach. As a result, they will gain a better picture of the existing communication strategy.

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