International Journal of Economics, Business and Innovation Research
https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJEBIR
E-ISSN : 2964-0865
IJEBIR

Analyzing the Potential of Cross-Border Ecotourism in Entikong from an Ecotourism Political Economy Perspective

Fuzy Firda Zhan[1], Eri Wahyudin[2]

[1,]Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Tanjungpura, Indonesia
[2]Master of Management Postgraduate Program, Universitas Bina Bangsa, Indonesia

Corresponding author: fuzy.firda@fisip.untan.ac.id

Abstract

Cross-border tourism is a sector that is increasingly being considered by the Indonesian and Malaysian governments, especially in the West Kalimantan-Sarawak border region through the Entikong State Border Post. Due to its strategic location, this region has great potential for developing cultural tourism, ecotourism, and trade that can benefit both countries. This study uses an ecotourism political economy approach as a critical analytical tool to analyze the potential for cross-border ecotourism development in Entikong using ecotourism political economy theory as an analytical tool. The method used to analyze this study is descriptive qualitative. Data were collected and analyzed using a narrative literature review method. This study found that the potential for cross-border ecotourism development in Entikong from an ecotourism political economy perspective is a novelty, and it can be seen from four aspects: environmental ecological potential, capital economic potential, sociocultural potential, and political potential of power relations. Therefore, the Indonesian and Malaysian governments need to develop a technical cooperation framework and cross-border tourism policies that are not only economically oriented but also consider social and ecological sustainability. Involving local governments and communities in cross-border policy negotiations is crucial.

Keywords: political economy, ecotourism, cross-border tourism

INTRODUCTION

Development in border areas has now become inevitable. Through Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2007 concerning the National Long-Term

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Development Plan 2005–2025, the government has emphasized that border area development, from being inward-looking, has become outward-looking. This paradigm shift explains how border development, which initially treated the border as a backyard, has transformed into a country's front yard and gateway.

Border areas are often viewed as marginalized areas neglected in national development. However, in the last decade, borders have begun to receive strategic attention, particularly in the realm of regional integration and strengthening economic connectivity. One prominent aspect is the potential for cross-border tourism development, which not only offers economic opportunities but also strengthens bilateral cooperation between countries. In Southeast Asia, this phenomenon is beginning to be seen at various border points, including the Entikong National Cross-Border Post *(Pos Lintas Batas Nasional/PLBN)*, which connects West Kalimantan (Indonesia) with Sarawak (Malaysia).

Cross-border development is an integral part of national development, the urgency of which extends beyond military resilience to the tourism sector (Sergeyeva et al., 2022). According to a 2017 report from the Ministry of Tourism, tourism is currently a strategic sector, second only to the palm oil sector, as a contributor to the country's foreign exchange. The tourism sector is even recorded as a superior foreign exchange earner compared to oil and gas (Yuniarti, 2021). Given these facts, it is undeniable that Indonesia's tourism sector, a mainstay of the country, needs to be further developed.

The tourism sector is no longer limited to rural tourism, nature tourism, cultural tourism, and the like. Cross-border tourism has now become a new concept, bringing a new dimension to Indonesian tourism. Cross-border tourism is a tourism program typically conducted in neighboring countries. In addition to attracting international tourists, cross-border tourism can also support the development of districts located in Indonesia's border areas by unlocking economic potential for local communities. Communities can develop various creative economic sectors to support tourism, from culinary businesses and handicrafts to homestay rentals. Therefore, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia continues to develop border areas to support cross-border tourism.

West Kalimantan Province is one of the westernmost regions of Indonesia, directly bordering Sarawak, Malaysia. During 2019, at least 14 Cross-Border Festivals were held in the province (Jatmika, 2021). By 2023, West Kalimantan had four Cross-Border Posts: Entikong in Sanggau Regency, Aruk in Sambas Regency, Badau in Kapuas Hulu

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Regency, and Jagoi Babang in Bengkayang Regency (Biro Komunikasi Publik Kementerian PUPR, 2022).

The Entikong National Cross-Border Post is located on the Malindo Crossroad in Sanggau Regency, West Kalimantan. The Entikong National Cross-Border Post is a strategic main route for the mobility of people, goods, and services. Entikong is a border area located in Entikong District, Sanggau Regency, West Kalimantan Province, directly adjacent to Sarawak, Malaysia. This area has a strong tourism appeal, including ecotourism and nature tourism.



Figure 1: Satellite Map of Entikong National Cross-Border Post-ICQS Tebedu
Source: (Pangastomo, et al., 2023)

This region possesses rich natural resources and local culture with significant potential for development as a cross-border ecotourism destination. In addition to tropical forests and biodiversity, the Dayak indigenous community, with its strong local traditions and ecological knowledge, is a crucial asset in the development of community-based tourism. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the potential for cross-border ecotourism development in the Entikong region by highlighting the roles of the state, local communities, and other cross-border actors. This research is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to the development of inclusive, equitable, and sustainable border ecotourism.

Although numerous studies on ecotourism and border tourism have been conducted, there are still limited studies that integrate both with a political economy

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approach, specifically in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region. Furthermore, previous studies tended to focus on technical aspects such as destination promotion or management (Evstrop'eva & Korytnyi, 2016), which have not addressed the power dynamics and relations between local and state actors in managing cross-border ecotourism potential. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap with an interdisciplinary approach and in-depth critical analysis as a novelty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ecotourism is defined as a form of tourism that is environmentally responsible, oriented toward nature conservation, and empowers local communities (Cobbinah, 2015). Ecotourism, while often associated with ecological spaces like natural areas, also operates within social and political contexts (Samal & Dash, 2023). It's not solely about environmental conservation; it also involves cultural exchange, community engagement, and navigating political landscapes to ensure responsible and sustainable practices. Ecotourism occurs not only in ecological spaces but also in social and political spaces. A political economy approach to ecotourism studies emphasizes the importance of examining the interactions between power structures, policies, and actors in managing tourism resources.

The main principles of ecotourism include environmental conservation, tourist education, community participation, and socio-economic sustainability. In practice, ecotourism is not only a means of nature conservation but also an alternative development approach in underdeveloped areas, including border regions (Cvetković et al, 2023). Transboundary ecotourism refers to visits to destinations across borders to experience culture, nature, lifestyle, cuisine, landmarks, and so on. The scope of transboundary ecotourism is broad. The types of transnational destinations vary, including heritage areas, parks, monuments, nature reserves, watersheds, heritage and cultural routes, and geographical regions. This demonstrates that transboundary ecotourism is related to tourism that transcends borders and encompasses a wide range of destinations and activities that attract tourists.

Cross-border ecotourism is a form of tourism that combines the concept of ecotourism with travel across national borders. Several studies have shown that developing cross-border tourism can encourage economic integration, reduce regional disparities, and strengthen community diplomacy (Prokkola, 2008). Types of cross-border ecotourism cooperation areas include cross-border corridors, cross-border cooperation centers, natural resource centers, transportation and highway hubs, protected areas,

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ethnocultural complexes, and economic cooperation zones (Evstrop'eva & Korytnyi, 2016). Cross-border ecotourism can provide opportunities for inclusive and responsible economic growth and promises to achieve environmental protection goals, as well as sustainable empowerment and job creation for border communities (Pikardo, Zhan, Ruspandi, & Asy'ari, 2024). However, due to its remoteness and inaccessibility, connectivity (physical, information, air, and economic) is a major obstacle to developing cross-border ecotourism.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative research approach to explore the potential for cross-border ecotourism development in Entikong through the lens of ecotourism political economy theory. The qualitative design allows for an in-depth understanding of the complex interactions (Moser & Korstjens, 2017) between ecological, economic, sociocultural, and political factors that shape tourism in border areas. Data were collected through a narrative literature review, which involved the analysis of academic publications, policy documents, official government reports, and media sources relevant to cross-border tourism, ecotourism, and the Entikong border region. The literature was selected using purposive sampling based on relevance, credibility, and thematic alignment with the analytical dimensions. The ecotourism political economy framework was applied to critically interpret how state and non-state actors, institutional structures, and policy regimes interact and influence development outcomes. The approach emphasizes the role of power, access, and equity in shaping both opportunities and constraints for sustainable cross-border ecotourism in Entikong.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Environmental Ecological Potential

Entikong, located in West Kalimantan, Indonesia, and directly bordering Sarawak, Malaysia, holds significant environmental and ecological potential for cross-border ecotourism (Lord & Chang, 2018). The Entikong region holds significant potential for the development of nature and culture-based ecotourism. The tropical rainforests, part of the Borneo landscape, offer rich biodiversity and relatively pristine scenery. Furthermore, the indigenous Dayak people who inhabit this region possess local wisdom in forest conservation, unique cultural rituals, and handicraft skills that have the potential to become tourist attractions. Entikong's geographic location, directly bordering Sarawak, also makes it an important route for international travelers, both from Malaysia and other

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ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries, who traverse Kalimantan overland.

As part of the larger Borneo ecosystem, it is one of the world's richest biodiversity hotspots. This region boasts a vast array of natural resources and ecological characteristics that are highly valuable not only for conservation but also for sustainable tourism development. Recognizing this potential is crucial to building an ecotourism model that is both environmentally responsible and economically inclusive, especially within the framework of cross-border cooperation.

One of the most prominent ecological assets of Entikong is its tropical rainforest, which is home to a rich diversity of flora and fauna. These forests host endemic species, including rare birds, primates, and medicinal plants, offering a strong foundation for nature-based tourism activities such as wildlife watching, forest trekking, and ecological interpretation. Most of the plantation crops found in Entikong are oil palm and rubber, with production amounts in 2023 of 7.337 tons and 1.070 tons, respectively (BPS Kabupaten Sanggau, 2024).

The region also supports freshwater ecosystems such as rivers and streams, which are crucial for both ecological balance and local livelihoods. These waterways not only provide habitat for various aquatic species but also offer potential for recreational activities like river tubing, canoeing, and eco-fishing. The scenic beauty of these natural landscapes enhances their touristic value, especially when packaged with cultural narratives and local storytelling.

In addition to its natural features, Entikong's cultural-ecological interface is particularly unique. The indigenous Dayak communities have long-standing traditions of forest management based on customary laws, including sacred forest zones, seasonal harvesting, and rotational farming practices that align with ecological cycles. These practices reflect a deep-rooted ecological wisdom and sustainable coexistence with nature, which can be leveraged as part of community-based ecotourism offerings (Poa, 2025). Cultural immersion experiences—such as participating in rituals, traditional cooking, or forest walks with local guides—can provide valuable educational opportunities for visitors while reinforcing the importance of indigenous knowledge systems.

However, the ecological potential of Entikong is not without threats. Deforestation, land-use conversion, and industrial encroachment—driven by extractive industries such as logging and oil palm plantations—pose serious risks to the integrity of the environment. Moreover, a lack of clear land tenure and the marginalization of local communities in decision-making processes may lead to unsustainable exploitation of these ecological

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resources. This is where the principles of ecotourism and the framework of environmental governance must intersect.

To harness its full ecological potential, any tourism development strategy in Entikong must prioritize environmental conservation, community participation, and cross-border policy alignment. Environmental impact assessments, zoning for conservation-tourism areas, and capacity-building for local stakeholders are critical. Moreover, cross-border cooperation with Malaysian authorities could help establish shared conservation corridors and integrated ecotourism routes, contributing to the preservation of Borneo's transboundary ecosystems. Entikong's environmental ecological potential is vast, rooted in its rich biodiversity, traditional ecological knowledge, and natural landscapes. Realizing this potential requires a collaborative, community-based, and ecologically sensitive approach that balances tourism with conservation and supports long-term ecological and socio-economic sustainability.

Capital Economic Potential

The capital economic potential of Entikong as a cross-border ecotourism destination lies in its strategic position as a trade and mobility gateway between Indonesia and Malaysia. Situated along the Trans-Kalimantan Highway, the Entikong National Cross-Border Post serves as a vital economic corridor that facilitates not only the movement of goods and services but also the flow of people, including tourists. From an ecotourism political economy perspective, this connectivity presents a unique opportunity to link economic capital—both tangible and intangible—to sustainable tourism development in the region.

One key form of economic capital is infrastructure investment, particularly the recent modernization of Entikong National Cross-Border Post by the Indonesian government. This includes border facilities, customs, immigration, and supporting amenities that improve the ease of access for cross-border travelers. Improved physical infrastructure enhances market accessibility for local tourism entrepreneurs, allowing for the creation of tourism-related microenterprises such as homestays, local guiding services, and craft markets. However, these opportunities remain underutilized due to a lack of integrated planning and institutional support at the local level.

The Village-Owned Enterprise (*Badan Usaha Milik Desa/BUMDes*) also supports the local economy in the Entikong border area by collecting agricultural products, handling trade administration at the Entikong National Cross-Border Post, and facilitating sales to Malaysian buyers who arrive at the Zero Point of the Indonesia-Malaysia border (Djafar,

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Bariyah, Wahyudi, & Sulistiawati, 2024). In terms of financial capital, there is growing potential to mobilize public and private sector investments in ecotourism development. Local banks, cooperatives, and cross-border funding initiatives such as those under the BIMP-EAGA (Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area) can play a role in financing small-scale tourism ventures. Unfortunately, access to credit remains a barrier for many indigenous and rural entrepreneurs due to administrative and collateral requirements. A political economy analysis reveals that capital tends to be concentrated among actors with institutional ties and political leverage, thus marginalizing grassroots tourism initiatives.

Human capital also forms an important aspect of the economic dimension. The communities surrounding Entikong possess indigenous ecological knowledge, cultural storytelling, and artisanal skills that can be commodified ethically for tourism experiences. However, capacity building in tourism management, hospitality, and digital marketing remains minimal. Government and non-government interventions are needed to improve training and education, enabling local actors to participate meaningfully in tourism value chains rather than remaining as passive beneficiaries.

Additionally, natural capital, while primarily discussed in environmental terms, also has economic value through ecosystem services that can be integrated into ecotourism offerings. These include forest trekking, birdwatching, herbal medicine tours, and river-based recreation. Monetizing these activities must, however, be done carefully to avoid ecological degradation and ensure that revenue flows back to conservation efforts and local communities.

From a political economy standpoint, the allocation, control, and distribution of economic capital in Entikong are not neutral. Development tends to favor top-down planning and extractive economic models, with limited community participation (Zhan, 2024). To unlock the full capital economic potential of ecotourism, policies must address structural inequities in resource access, promote inclusive financing models, and foster cross-border economic partnerships that are community-centered.

Sociocultural Potential

The sociocultural potential of Entikong in the context of cross-border ecotourism is deeply rooted in the region's rich cultural diversity, strong indigenous traditions, and long-standing cross-border social ties between communities on both sides of the Indonesia–Malaysia border. Entikong has a unique socio-cultural context. The local Entikong community consists of diverse tribes and ethnicities, including Malay, Dayak, and

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Chinese. One of these is the Dayak Bidayuh tribe, which is further divided into several sub-tribes. They generally inhabit areas along the Sekayam River. The Malay community is also part of Entikong and interacts harmoniously with the Dayak tribe (Wahyudin, 2025). These communities share historical, linguistic, and cultural ties with similar ethnic groups across the border in Sarawak, Malaysia. Such shared identities enable transnational sociocultural linkages, including kinship networks, cross-border marriages, and customary practices that transcend political boundaries. These living traditions provide a compelling foundation for cultural ecotourism, where tourists can participate in authentic experiences such as traditional festivals, rituals, music, dance, handicrafts, and local gastronomy.

One of the most distinctive features of Dayak sociocultural life is the rumah panjang or longhouse, a communal living structure that embodies social cohesion, collective identity, and local governance. The longhouse system can be integrated into ecotourism programs as homestay accommodations, cultural immersion sites, or storytelling venues where elders can transmit indigenous knowledge about forest conservation, oral history, and spiritual practices. This can create mutually beneficial encounters between tourists and residents while preserving intangible cultural heritage. Another vital aspect of Entikong's sociocultural potential lies in the ecological worldview of indigenous communities. Integrating these cultural-ecological values into ecotourism education and interpretation can promote environmental awareness and respect among visitors.

From an ecotourism political economy perspective, this potential is not only a cultural asset but also a critical entry point for developing community-based, sustainable, and inclusive tourism strategies that center local identities and participation. However, the sociocultural potential is not without its challenges. Global tourism trends often lead to the commodification of culture, where traditions are packaged and performed to suit tourist expectations, often stripping them of their original meaning. Without community control over the pace and content of cultural representation, such practices risk undermining cultural integrity. Moreover, tourism revenue frequently bypasses local actors, reinforcing external control over cultural assets.

Thus, ensuring local ownership and agency in sociocultural tourism development is critical. One strategy is the formation of community-based tourism cooperatives that allow villagers to collectively manage tourism activities, determine pricing, and distribute income. Another is to involve customary leaders and elders in decision-making processes to ensure that tourism aligns with community values and does not erode cultural norms.

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Inclusion of youth and women in tourism training and leadership roles is also essential for intergenerational cultural preservation and equitable participation.

Cross-border sociocultural cooperation also offers significant opportunities. The shared heritage between Indonesian and Malaysian border communities can be the basis for joint cultural festivals, heritage trails, and transboundary ecotourism circuits that celebrate cultural continuity across national lines. These initiatives can foster people-to-people diplomacy, promote peacebuilding, and counteract the securitization of border areas that often marginalize indigenous voices. However, political sensitivities and regulatory barriers often hinder such collaboration. Greater flexibility in cross-border mobility and recognition of shared heritage rights are needed to unlock this sociocultural synergy (Zhan, Seli, & Sahrul, 2025).

Additionally, language is a significant asset. Many border residents are multilingual, speaking Indonesian, Malay, Dayak dialects, and sometimes English. This linguistic flexibility facilitates interaction with both domestic and international tourists and can be leveraged in guiding, interpretation, and storytelling services. Language also serves as a medium of cultural resilience, and tourism can support language preservation efforts when content is produced in indigenous languages.

Importantly, the sociocultural potential must be linked with education and capacity-building. Training programs in cultural documentation, tourism guiding, digital marketing, and hospitality can help residents develop skills to engage with ecotourism in a meaningful and sustainable way. Schools and cultural centers can play a role in passing down knowledge while integrating tourism awareness into the curriculum.

The sociocultural potential of Entikong in the cross-border ecotourism context is substantial, grounded in rich indigenous traditions, cross-border cultural networks, and strong community identities. From a political economy perspective, realizing this potential requires addressing power imbalances, ensuring community participation, and resisting cultural exploitation. By designing culturally respectful, community-led ecotourism models, the Entikong region can foster economic empowerment, cultural revitalization, and cross-border solidarity, contributing to a more just and sustainable tourism future.

Political Potential of Power Relations

The political potential of power relations in the context of cross-border ecotourism in Entikong reflects the complex interplay between state actors, local governments, communities, and regional institutions in shaping how ecotourism is conceptualized, regulated, and implemented. Within the framework of the ecotourism political economy,

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power is not only about formal authority, but also about access to decision-making, resources, mobility, and legitimacy. Understanding these dynamics is key to designing inclusive and sustainable cross-border tourism policies.

Entikong, as a major land crossing point between Indonesia and Malaysia, occupies a strategic geopolitical location. The presence of the Entikong National Cross-Border Post, under the oversight of national-level institutions such as the Indonesian Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Border Management Agency (*Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan/BNPP*), symbolizes the centralized nature of border governance. While this centralized model provides infrastructural investment and formal control, it also limits the autonomy of local governments and communities in managing tourism initiatives. Thus, one of the political potentials lies in decentralizing power toward more participatory governance models that include border communities as legitimate stakeholders in tourism planning.

State borders represent the meeting point between the territories of different nations, serving as zones where sociocultural, economic, and political dimensions converge and interact. Given the expansive stretch of the border area and the dynamic economic, social, and cultural exchanges occurring in Entikong District, there is a pressing need for long-standing management through a comprehensive, effective, and accountable multi-dimensional approach (Setiawan, Madjid, & Wasistiono, 2022). This underscores the importance of integrated governance that bridges national policies with local realities. In the context of cross-border ecotourism, the absence of coordinated and inclusive management not only hampers sustainable tourism development but also weakens the potential of Entikong as a gateway for ecological, cultural, and economic collaboration between Indonesia and Malaysia.

From a bilateral perspective, there is potential for intergovernmental collaboration between Indonesia and Malaysia in tourism policy, especially through frameworks like BIMP-EAGA. These regional platforms can facilitate joint tourism corridors, cross-border permits, and co-marketing of destinations. However, such cooperation often remains at the elite level, with limited trickle-down impact on local actors. Expanding political cooperation to include municipal-to-municipal diplomacy can strengthen grassroots diplomacy and align borderland interests.

The role of customary institutions is another dimension of power relations with political potential. These institutions hold traditional authority in managing communal land, forest, and cultural rituals, many of which are key ecotourism assets. However, they are frequently marginalized in formal tourism planning. Recognizing customary leaders as

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partners in tourism governance can create culturally sensitive policies and enhance legitimacy among indigenous populations. Furthermore, there is growing awareness of the asymmetrical power relations between national elites, investors, and local communities. Many tourism initiatives are driven by top-down interests or external investors seeking economic returns, often at the expense of local ecological values or community benefits. A political economy analysis reveals that without redistributive mechanisms, ecotourism risks replicating extractive economic models. The potential lies in promoting inclusive policy frameworks that prioritize community-based tourism (CBT) and benefit-sharing mechanisms backed by local regulations.

Cross-border mobility regulations also represent a space of power negotiation. At present, stringent visa policies, customs regulations, and security concerns often hinder the flow of tourists, entrepreneurs, and cultural practitioners between Entikong and Sarawak. However, selectively liberalizing border controls for ecotourism, such as through border passes, joint visa schemes, or tourism bubbles, can increase movement and cultural exchange while maintaining security. Such decisions require political commitment and trust between national governments, suggesting that ecotourism can serve as a soft power tool for regional integration.

There is also a significant role for non-state actors, including NGOs, universities, and civil society organizations. These groups often mediate between communities and the state, offering technical assistance, advocacy, and capacity-building. Their ability to influence policy depends on their political capital and relationships with decision-makers. Strengthening these horizontal alliances can democratize knowledge and amplify local voices in tourism discourse. Lastly, political potential also includes reframing tourism narratives. Often, border areas like Entikong are portrayed as peripheral or security-sensitive zones rather than as dynamic spaces of exchange and cultural richness. Transforming this narrative requires political leadership willing to reposition borderland ecotourism as a priority within national development agendas. This reframing can shift resources and legitimacy toward communities that have long been politically and economically neglected.

The political potential of power relations in cross-border ecotourism development in Entikong is significant, but it hinges on redistributing authority, enabling participatory governance, and negotiating fairer cross-border arrangements. By empowering local actors, recognizing customary institutions, and promoting intergovernmental and cross-border collaboration, ecotourism can become a vehicle not only for economic development but also for justice, identity affirmation, and regional diplomacy. From a

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political economy standpoint, ecotourism in Entikong must be seen not only as a tourism strategy but also as a political project to redefine power, inclusion, and sustainability in the borderlands.

Based on these results and discussions, the researcher formulated a chart of aspects of the potential for cross-border ecotourism development in Entikong from an ecotourism political economy perspective as follows.

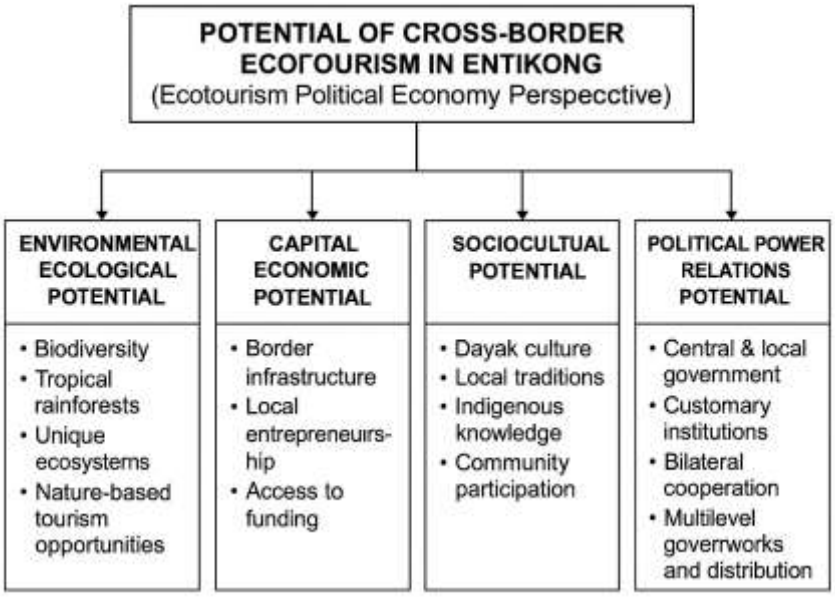


Figure 2: Aspects of the Potential for Cross-Border Ecotourism Development in Entikong from an Ecotourism Political Economy Perspective
Source: (Processed by researchers, 2025)

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant potential for developing cross-border ecotourism in Entikong, situated along the Indonesia–Malaysia border, through the analytical lens of ecotourism political economy. Using a qualitative descriptive method and narrative literature review, the research identifies four interrelated dimensions that collectively shape the prospects and challenges of sustainable tourism in the region: environmental ecological potential, capital economic potential, sociocultural potential, and political potential of power relations.

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Environmentally, Entikong holds rich biodiversity, tropical rainforests, and unique ecosystems that offer attractive ecotourism assets. However, these resources require careful conservation strategies to prevent ecological degradation while ensuring they can be sustainably integrated into tourism activities. Economically, the region's capital potential lies in the availability of cross-border infrastructure, human resources, and emerging local entrepreneurship. Yet, disparities in access to financial capital, limited investment in tourism-specific training, and centralized development planning hinder the growth of community-based ecotourism ventures. Socioculturally, the diverse Dayak cultures and their living traditions represent vital tourism attractions. When properly engaged, these communities can enhance the authenticity and resilience of ecotourism offerings. However, cultural commodification and exclusion from tourism governance remain critical concerns. Politically, the Entikong border area is shaped by multilayered power dynamics involving national agencies, regional governments, and customary institutions. There is political potential in fostering decentralized governance, bilateral cooperation, and inclusive policies that ensure fair distribution of tourism benefits.

In conclusion, advancing cross-border ecotourism in Entikong requires an integrated approach that balances ecological integrity, economic empowerment, cultural respect, and political inclusivity. Policymakers from both Indonesia and Malaysia must foster cooperation frameworks that involve local actors meaningfully, not just as beneficiaries but as co-creators of sustainable borderland tourism.

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