

PROJMB  
1,95

# Collaborative Management in Ecotourism Business: Evidence from Perum Perhutani and Guci Ashafana Partnership

ID 192

Received 6 April 2025  
Revised 30 May 2025  
Accepted 14 June 2025

Alfiyah Dwi Puspita\*

*Department of Administrative Management, Faculty of Vocational School, Universitas  
Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, 57126, Indonesia*

Irsyadul Ibad

*Department of Administrative Management, Faculty of Vocational School, Universitas  
Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, 57126, Indonesia*

\*) corresponding email: [alfiyahofit@student.uns.ac.id](mailto:alfiyahofit@student.uns.ac.id)

## Abstract

**Purpose** – This study aims to examine the collaboration between Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and Guci Ashafana in the development of state forest-based ecotourism. The research is grounded in Perhutani's 2024 strategic objective to empower subsidiaries through business spin-offs. This study seeks to contribute to the understanding of collaborative governance practices in the context of sustainable tourism development, particularly by analyzing how theoretical principles of collaboration are operationalized in practice.

**Design/method/approach** – A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to explore the collaboration process. Data were collected through interviews, document analysis, and direct observation. The analysis was guided by the collaborative governance framework developed by Ansell and Gash, focusing on elements such as dialogue, trust, commitment, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes.

**Findings** – The findings reveal that the collaboration was grounded in intensive face-to-face dialogues, transparent communication, and mutual commitment. Trust between Perhutani and Guci Ashafana was built through consistent actions and fulfillment of agreed responsibilities. The cooperation agreement reflected a shared understanding that integrated economic, ecological, and social goals. The collaboration resulted in tangible community empowerment through job creation, increased local economic involvement, and environmental conservation initiatives.

**Implications** – The results demonstrate how collaborative governance can be effectively implemented in state-owned enterprise initiatives, offering practical insights for policymakers and practitioners seeking to develop community-based tourism within forest areas. It also highlights the importance of aligning institutional objectives with community needs.

**Novelty/Originality** – This research provides a rare empirical example of successful collaboration between a state-owned enterprise and a local tourism operator in Indonesia, applying the collaborative governance model to a real-world ecotourism project. The study contributes to the limited body of literature on SOE-led sustainable tourism partnerships in Southeast Asia.

**Keywords:** Collaboration, Ecotourism, State Owned Enterprise (SOE), Community Based Tourism (CBT)

**Paper type:** Research paper



Procuratio: Jurnal Manajemen  
dan Bisnis  
Vol. 4 No. 1, 2025 pp. 13-30.  
E-ISSN,2828-8718  
Copyright © 2025 Author,



This work is licensed under a  
[Creative Commons  
Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0  
International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

## 1. Introduction

The tourism sector in Indonesia continues to show significant growth, becoming one of the country's important foreign exchange contributors. Data from the Ministry of Tourism

and Creative Economy shows that by the end of 2024, the sector will make a significant contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with a consistent upward trend from year to year. Within this landscape, the development of ecotourism has emerged as a strategic approach to foster sustainable and responsible tourism growth, aligning economic advancement with environmental stewardship. According to (Mu'tashim & Indahsari, 2021) ecotourism is a conservation activity for nature and the environment that is packaged in a tourism destination, which also has an impact on the local economy. Ecotourism provides a unique experience for tourists while prioritizing environmental conservation and improving the welfare of local communities.

Perum Perhutani, a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) responsible for managing forest areas in Java and Madura, faces the persistent challenge of balancing conservation objectives with the economic utilization of forest resources. To address this, Perhutani has adopted ecotourism development as a core strategy, as reflected in its 2024 Strategic Project Plan point 3 regarding Empowering Subsidiaries through Spin off Businesses, which emphasizes to optimize the sustainable use of forest resources, create economic value for all parties involved, and ensure that the benefits generated are distributed fairly (Perhutani Regulation No. 06/PER/DIR/02/2024). This approach highlights Perhutani's commitment to fostering professional and sustainable tourism destination management through multi-stakeholder collaboration. Effective collaboration and stakeholder engagement are crucial for sustainable ecotourism development, as failures often result from poor partnerships, inadequate competencies, and weak governance (Wondirad et al., 2020). Zakia (2021) reinforces this by showing that ecotourism delivers direct economic benefits through jobs and profit-sharing, while indirect benefits arise from conservation efforts that enhance local infrastructure and livelihoods. Additionally, equitable access and community empowerment foster social gains such as knowledge improvement and cultural preservation. Together, these insights highlight that integrated, collaborative governance balancing ecological conservation with socio-economic benefits is essential for successful and sustainable ecotourism.

A notable example of this collaborative approach is found in the Kesatuan Pengelolaan Hutan (KPH) Pekalongan Barat, a Perhutani working unit with significant potential for ecotourism development. In March 2025, KPH Pekalongan Barat entered into a Cooperation Agreement with PT. Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS) for the management of Wana Wisata Guci Ashafana. Demonstrating the success and mutual benefits of this partnership, PT PKMS has since extended its contract with Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat, reaffirming their commitment to optimizing the sustainable use of forest resources, generating economic value for all stakeholders, and ensuring equitable benefit distribution, while simultaneously enhancing the welfare of surrounding communities.

Table. 1 Number of Ecotourism Visitors in KPH Pekalongan Barat Area

Year	Number of Visitors
2022	175.673 Visitors
2023	190.968 Visitors
2024	164.563 Visitors

Source: Documents of Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat, 2025

The selection of the research object at Guci Ashafana Ecotourism is based on the large potential of visitors who reach 50-60% of the total number of ecotourism visitors in the KPH Pekalongan Barat area. The area displays natural beauty with complete tourist facilities, such as villas, glamping, hot springs, and outbound areas. In addition, the collaboration between Perhutani as a state forest manager and Guci Ashafana as a private business partner is a clear example of a strategic partnership that can provide economic benefits while preserving the environment. This object also has unique characteristics because it integrates forest resource management with tourism business development involving various stakeholders, making it a rich phenomenon to analyze from the aspect of collaboration. Despite the increasing attention to ecotourism in Indonesia, a significant research gap remains regarding the collaborative governance mechanisms between state-owned enterprises and private partners in ecotourism development. Most existing studies focus on community-based ecotourism models (Wijaya, et al 2019) or public-private partnerships in protected areas, with limited empirical investigation into hybrid models involving SOEs like Perhutani and private business entities. This gap is particularly evident in three areas: (1) the lack of empirical analysis on the components of effective collaboration in SOE-involved ecotourism ventures; (2) the predominance of literature on community or private models, with insufficient attention to state-private partnership; and (3) the scarcity of research on governance frameworks that ensure equitable benefit-sharing and ecological sustainability in state-managed forests (Zakia, 2021).

This study seeks to address these gaps by providing empirical evidence on the collaborative governance model between Perhutani and Guci Ashafana. Specifically, it examines five key components of collaboration face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, commitment to the process, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes offering a comprehensive framework for evaluating collaborative arrangements in ecotourism development. This approach extends beyond widely studied community-based models (Wijaya and Sudarmawan, 2019) and provides insights into scalable partnership models suitable for Indonesia's extensive state-managed forests. Furthermore, this research distinguishes itself from studies of village tourism management systems, such as those in Torongrejo Village, Batu City, where governance is centered on Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) (Susenohaji et al., in Rakhman et al., 2023). Instead, it explores a partnership between a national-level SOE and a private entity, offering potential for replication in other regions. The benefits of this research are theoretically expected to enrich the literature and are expected to be used as a comparison in further research and development in the application of collaborative governance in ecotourism on public private partnership. Practically, this research can be a reference for Perhutani and similar organizations to implement effective collaborations in ecotourism management, optimize stakeholder roles, and guide other regions in developing their ecotourism potential through strategic partnerships.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Collaborative Management**

Etymologically, the term "collaboration" comes from the combination of the Latin words *cum* (together) and *laborare* (to work hard), which means to work together in earnest

to achieve an agreed goal. In practice, collaboration is an active process that combines various skills, perspectives and resources from many parties. Collaboration is not simply working together, but rather a complementary engagement to achieve results that cannot be achieved individually. In line with this, Gray in Gazley (2017) calls collaboration a "dynamic relationship involving coordinated activities based on a common goal". This relationship is flexible and adaptive to the dynamics of the challenges and needs faced by the parties involved.

In Barfield (2016) view, collaboration includes shared decision-making, sharing of responsibilities, and working together to achieve more than can be achieved individually. This means that collaboration does not rely on just one dominant party, but demands equal contribution, openness, and a sense of belonging. The key to the success of this process is effective communication that not only conveys information, but also aligns interests and builds trust. In line with this, Wondirad et al. (2020) define collaboration as "a process in which actors come together to discuss issues of common interest with the aim of reaching an understanding." This approach makes collaboration an inclusive and reflective dialog space where all parties can be actively involved in the decision-making process.

Furthermore, Hardy et al., in Majchrzak et al. (2015) emphasize that collaboration is an inter-organizational relationship formed through continuous communication and does not rely on market control or formal hierarchical structures. This confirms that collaboration is egalitarian, where each party has an equal position and collective responsibility for the results achieved. Therefore, collaboration can be understood as a complex process that not only strengthens relationships between parties, but also creates opportunities for innovation through the synergy of shared thoughts and actions. In the context of ecotourism development or other cross-sector policies, a collaborative approach becomes very relevant to address multidimensional challenges in a way that is inclusive, sustainable and adaptive to change.

## **Key Components of Collaborative Management**

Ansell and Gash's framework outlines five interrelated components that define effective collaborative processes: face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, commitment to the process, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes (Ansell and Gash in Mia Fairuza, 2017: 6-7). These elements provide a structure for analyzing collaborative management practices in ecotourism:

### **a. Face to face dialogue**

Face-to-face dialog is a critical component of collaborative governance as it facilitates the in-depth communication needed to build consensus among stakeholders. Through direct interaction, the parties involved can erode prejudices, overcome communication barriers and explore opportunities for mutually beneficial synergies. This process is not simply a medium for negotiation, but the core of trust-building, mutual respect, collective understanding, and shared commitment to the goals of collaboration. While face-to-face dialog has the potential to reinforce stereotypes or status inequalities if not managed well. the literature shows that effective collaboration practices are difficult to achieve without direct interaction.

## **b. Trust Building**

Trust-building between stakeholders is a fundamental element of collaborative governance, particularly when there is a prior history of conflict. This process goes beyond mere technical negotiations, demanding the transformation of relationships through active efforts to erode prejudices and build a basis for mutually beneficial cooperation. Collaborative leaders must design mechanisms for ongoing dialog transparency in decision-making, and consistency of action to foster collective credibility. Without a long-term commitment to improving these relational dynamics, collaboration risks stagnating despite a strong regulatory framework. Early investment in strengthening emotional bonds between parties is an absolute prerequisite before moving on to the operational planning stage, ensuring the sustainability of the partnership in the future.

## **c. Commitment to the Process**

Commitment is a very important component in the collaboration process. Commitment is closely related to the original motivation of the collaboration actors. Commitment is influenced by several factors: the initial motivation to participate, such as the desire to ensure their perspective is heard or to fulfill a legal obligation; the belief that good faith negotiations will result in mutual benefits: trust between parties; and clear, fair and transparent procedures. In addition, commitment also requires psychological changes such as mutual recognition and appreciation, willingness to accept outcomes that may not be fully agreed upon, and a sense of ownership of the collective decision-making process. Other factors that strengthen commitment are the high interdependence between stakeholders and the need for sustainable cooperation, where shared responsibility and trust are key to sustaining the collaboration.

## **d. Shared Understanding**

A shared understanding of what can be collectively achieved must be developed by stakeholders at some point in the collaboration process. This shared understanding is often referred to by various terms such as shared mission, shared purpose, shared vision, or core value alignment, which includes agreement on the definition of the problem and the relevant knowledge to address it. The development of this shared understanding is part of a broader collaborative learning process, where parties jointly test hypotheses, agree on change objectives and learn from experience to achieve an effective shared agenda. With a shared understanding and aligned goals, collaboration can be more effective as all parties have the same direction and focus in addressing challenges together.

## **e. Intermediate Outcomes**

The interim impact of achieving "small wins" is very important in collaborative processes as it provides concrete tangible results and builds momentum for success. These small wins, like the shared fact finding, trigger a positive cycle that increases trust and commitment between stakeholders. Especially when there is high antagonism and long-term commitment is needed to build trust, the success of small wins is crucial: without the expectation of such wins, the collaboration process should not be initiated. However, for highly ambitious goals that are difficult to break down into intermediate outcomes, a small wins strategy may be less effective, where trust can be built through an initial joint exploration of the overall value of the collaboration. Small wins thus serve as stepping

stones that strengthen motivation, clarify progress and create an environment conducive to sustained cooperation.

#### **f. Ecotourism**

Ecotourism has emerged as a new paradigm in tourism that prioritizes harmony between tourism activities and the preservation of nature. This approach has significant differences compared to conventional tourism models, because it emphasizes tourism experiences that have a responsibility to the surrounding environment and increase the ecological awareness of visitors. Different from conventional tourism, which is often oriented towards resource exploitation, ecotourism prioritizes ecological responsibility and environmental education for visitors. According to Bjork in Wondirad et al. (2020), ecotourism is an activity that involves authorities, industry players, tourists, and local communities to create trips to natural areas in a way that does not exploit, but rather contributes to sustainable development. This approach actively promotes conservation, whether through limiting the number of visitors, using environmentally friendly technologies, or directly contributing to the preservation of biodiversity. As a regional policy instrument, ecotourism is also geared towards supporting the protection of protected areas and strengthening the synergy between conservation and community welfare.

Local community participation is the main foundation in sustainable ecotourism. The community is not only involved as a complement, but as the main actor who has local wisdom and ecological knowledge that has been formed for generations. This approach opens up new economic opportunities through the provision of accommodation, local food, specialty crafts, and tour guide services. Alyani in Ahmad (2022) emphasized that the higher the number of tourists visiting tourist attractions, the higher the local revenue received. To strengthen this impact, strengthening local capacity is very important. As stated by Hani et al. (2022), the role of the community around tourist attractions such as in Karimunjawa is the main motor of successful destination management, both in maintaining cleanliness, security, and tourist services. Such active involvement also strengthens a sense of ownership and a more equitable distribution of economic benefits.

In the context of long-term planning, ecotourism development needs to be designed strategically, adaptively and inclusively. The master plan must consider the dynamics of climate change, global tourism trends, and technological innovation. Diversification of tourism products is an important part of this strategy, as stated by (Pitana in Naibaho in Sukmaratri & Damayanti, 2016), that the variety of tourist activities does not change the authenticity of the destination, but enriches the experience and extends the length of stay of tourists. In addition, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system must be implemented to measure success from an ecological, social, and economic perspective. Murniati et al. (2025) highlight that ecotourism activities should be carried out with simplicity and respect for the authenticity of nature, in order to create a balance between human needs and environmental carrying capacity.

### **3. Methods**

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the collaboration between Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and Guci Ashafana. As articulated by Rita Fiantika et al. (2022), qualitative research focuses on the interpretation and understanding

of social phenomena, emphasizing meaning, context, and the perspectives of involved actors rather than relying on statistical analysis. The research was conducted in the Guci Ashafana tourism area, Tegal District, Central Java, over a five-week period from February 17, 2025, to March 22, 2025. The main object of the study is the cooperation mechanism between the two institutions, while the research subjects were selected through purposive sampling to ensure relevance and credibility. Specifically, informants comprised the KSS Agroforestry and Ecotourism, KSS Business Development from Perhutani, and the manager of Guci Ashafana, all of whom possess direct authority and insight regarding the partnership. This selection strategy was intended to maximize the representativeness and depth of the data, allowing the research to capture nuanced perspectives and firsthand experiences.

Data collection in this study employed a triangulation approach, integrating participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis to enhance the credibility and validity of findings. Participatory observation was primarily conducted at the Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat office, where the researcher closely observed the interactions and communication patterns between the two organizations. Additional field visits to the Guci Ashafana site enabled the researcher to cross-check the physical facilities and infrastructure agreed upon in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), as well as to observe the practical implementation of collaborative agreements. In-depth interviews were carried out using structured guidelines, with each session recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy. These interviews explored the backgrounds of each actor, validated their roles as credible informants, and specifically addressed the five main components of collaboration under study: face-to-face dialogue, trust building, commitment to process, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes. Document analysis involved a systematic review of key documents such as the MoU, annual feasibility studies, company profiles, and organizational structures to extract, categorize, and cross-validate information with the findings from observations and interviews. This triangulation of methods not only strengthened the reliability of the data but also allowed for comprehensive cross-checking of information, ensuring that the research findings were well-grounded.

The analytical process followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018), which is characterized by three core stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion. Data reduction involved organizing and categorizing raw data according to the five core components of collaboration, while extraneous variables were systematically eliminated to maintain a clear focus on the research objectives. The reduced data were then displayed in the form of descriptive narratives and visual matrices, facilitating the identification of patterns, relationships, and emerging themes. The final stage of analysis involved synthesizing the displayed data, verifying findings through member checking with key informants, and formulating credible conclusions. This iterative and reflective process ensured that the analysis was both rigorous and authentic, capturing the real-world dynamics of the partnership as observed in the field and documented in official records.

Throughout the research process, ethical considerations were given paramount importance. Informed consent was obtained from all informants prior to conducting and recording interviews, and the confidentiality of sensitive data was strictly maintained. The validity and reliability of the findings were further enhanced through methodological

triangulation and member checking, which allowed for the cross-validation of data from different sources and the confirmation of interpretations with the research subjects themselves. This comprehensive and transparent methodological framework not only strengthens the credibility and trustworthiness of the research but also ensures that the results are transferable and relevant to similar contexts in the field of ecotourism and collaborative governance.

To provide a clearer understanding of the research methodology and its sequential logic, the process is visually summarized in Figure 1 below. This flowchart illustrates the integration of the triangulation approach, beginning with participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, all converging at the stage of data collection. The subsequent analytical stages data reduction, data display, and conclusion verification are depicted as interconnected processes, reflecting the iterative and cyclical nature of qualitative analysis. The inclusion of Figure 1 not only enhances transparency but also enables readers to visualize the logical flow and coherence of the research methodology, in line with best practices for scientific reporting.

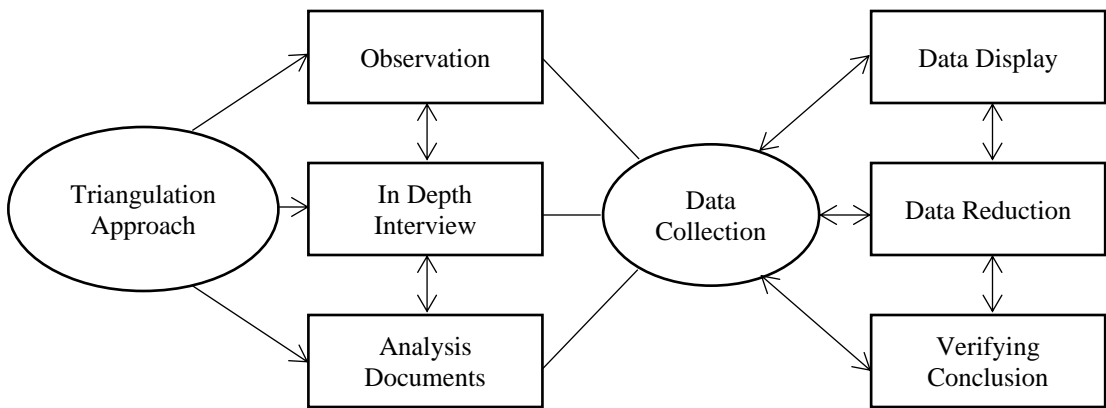


Figure 1. Flowchart of Triangulation and Data Analysis Process

#### 4. Result and Discussion

##### General Conditions

Guci Ashafana is one of the leading objects in the city of Tegal with the level of tourist visits that continues to increase every year. Management is carried out by PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS) with Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat. Guci Ashafana tourist destination is on plots 49 and 50 geographically located at coordinates between 7° 11'52" -7°11'52" S and 109° 9'56", with a total area of 84.69 hectares. Of this total, around 28.73 hectares have been utilized as a wana wisata (WW) area. The vegetation of this area is dominated by stands of pine forest (*Pinus merkusii*) and mixed forests that not only provide ecotourism value but also have ecological functions as protective water catchment areas and microclimate control.



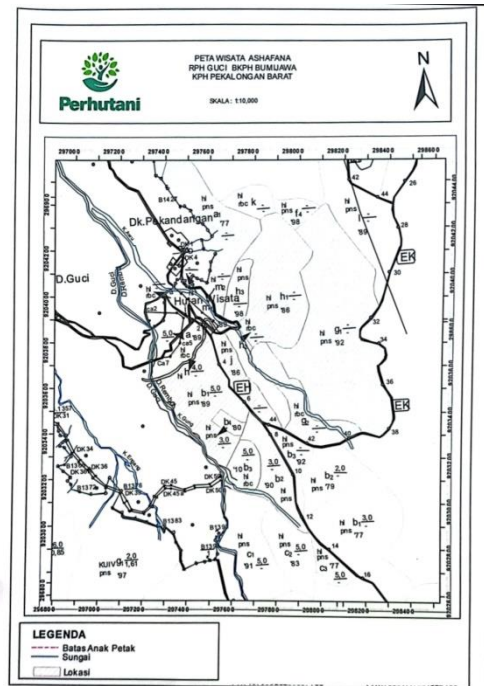


Figure 2. Guci Ashafana Map

### Potential Tourism Areas

Topographically, Guci Ashafana is located at an altitude of 1,250 to 1,725 meters above sea level, making it ideal for nature tourism and recreation. The hilly geographical conditions, cool tropical climate, and high rainfall support the sustainability of vegetation and ecosystems. This potential has been developed into various rides, such as hot spring pools (for children and adults), outbound areas, glamping, bamboo huts, photo spots, restaurants, and camping grounds.



Figure 3. Guci Ashafana Facilities and Attraction

This proves that Guci Ashafana has developed not only as a tourist attraction but also as a center of economic activity for the local community. In addition to offering nature-based tourist attractions, Guci Ashafana also applies the principle of community-based tourism (CBT). The involvement of the local community is evident in the employment aspect, where the majority of staff to managerial staff come from Rembul Village residents. This is

in line with ecotourism values that prioritize direct benefits for the surrounding community. As revealed in a comprehensive study by Alyani in Ahmad (2022) emphasized that the higher the number of tourists visiting tourist attractions, the higher the local revenue received. To strengthen this impact, strengthening local capacity is very important. Thus, this ecotourism-based economic system builds a more equitable and sustainable welfare foundation, so that people are no longer forced to carry out activities that damage the environment to meet their economic needs.

### **Stages of Collaboration Process**

The initiation of cooperation began with a proposal submitted by PT PKMS to Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat. This request was intended to establish cooperation in the management of forest areas as tourist attractions. In this framework, Perhutani as the holder of state forest management rights acts as a landowner, while PKMS as an investor and tour operator. This collaboration is based on the principle of mutual benefit, namely economic benefits for the private sector and conservation of forest functions for Perhutani.

The initial step of this cooperation is an administrative assessment of the business proposal submitted by prospective partners. The proposal must at least contain information on the company profile, organizational structure, vision and mission, previous experience in tourism management or similar activities, aims and objectives of cooperation, development design plan (site plan), as well as financial feasibility analysis such as investment value, NPV, IRR, and profit-sharing projections. This is in accordance with the practice of cooperation in the management of forest resources based on the guidelines of PERDIR No. 06/PER/DIR/02/2024 on forest management cooperation.

#### **a. Legal and Administrative Requirements**

To ensure legal and operational feasibility, prospective partners are also required to complete a number of administrative documents. These documents include the company's deed of establishment, Business Identification Number (NIB), NPWP, letter of confirmation as a Taxable Entrepreneur (PKP), and financial statements for the last two years that have been audited by a public accountant. In addition, a statement letter that the company is not in the process of bankruptcy, free from criminal cases, and stating investment commitments during the cooperation period is also required. In the context of integrity, potential partners are also required to sign an integrity pact stating compliance with the ISO 37001:2016 standard on Anti-Bribery Management Systems. For consortium partners, the consortium leader is required to submit documents from all its members to ensure transparency and accountability. In an effort to ensure seriousness, partners must also provide a bid guarantee in the form of a bank guarantee of 5% of the investment value, with a minimum validity period of three months or until the release of the selected partner by Perum Perhutani.

#### **b. Preparation and Evaluation of Feasibility Study**

After passing the administrative selection, prospective partners are required to prepare a Business Feasibility Study Document. This document is prepared by an independent consultant who has competence in the field of tourism and financial management, and is officially registered. The cost of preparation is borne by the prospective partner as a form of initial commitment. The feasibility study contains various important aspects such as

economic/financial, market, technical/operational, legal, risk management, and cooperation period scheme. The financial analysis in this study shall include investment projections, calculation of NPV, IRR, payback period, and sensitivity analysis. In the context of direct selection, the content of the study should refer to the initial business proposal. The investment value and compensation scheme for Perum Perhutani should not be lower than those stated in the original document, to maintain the fairness and economic feasibility of this cooperation.

### **c. Final Assessment Process and Partner Determination**

The final assessment is conducted by Perum Perhutani's Business Development Division and relevant technical divisions. This evaluation aims to ensure that the administrative documents and feasibility studies meet the eligibility standards and support forest sustainability. Recommendations from the assessment are then submitted to the Board of Directors of Perum Perhutani as the highest decision maker. If the partner is approved, an official notification will be given in writing. Similarly, if the partner does not pass, a formal notification will be given. This procedure shows that cooperation in managing forest areas as tourism objects is not only based on a business approach alone, but also includes legal, social and environmental responsibilities. This is in accordance with the spirit of Article of the Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation No. 487/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/5/2023, which prioritizes the principles of community participation and sustainability in the utilization of state forests.

## **Components of Collaboration in Research**

Ansell and Gash argue that in collaboration there are components that form a process that affects one another (Ansell and Gash in Fairuza, 2017: 6-7).

### **a. Face to face dialogue**

Direct interaction or face-to-face dialogue is a fundamental element in building effective and sustainable collaboration, as stated by Ansell & Gash in Hidayat et al., (2023). In the context of managing Guci Ashafana ecotourism, face-to-face dialogue between Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS) is not only the beginning of the cooperation process, but also serves as a space to build trust, equalize vision, and solve technical and social problems directly. This interaction is the most concrete form of communication, where the expressions, gestures, and intentions of each party can be conveyed without a break in interpretation.

Since the initiation of the collaboration, in-person meetings have been the main method of agreeing on crucial decisions. For example, in applying for a partnership, the first meeting is not only a place to submit proposal documents, but also an opportunity for PKMS to verbally explain their vision to Perhutani. This process allows for a mutual impression to be formed, which is crucial for building initial trust. Furthermore, at the boundary measurement stage, face-to-face dialog is used as a means of technical clarification in the field to ensure that the area to be cooperated is in accordance with the boundary documents and the Long-Term Forest Management Plan (RPHJP).

The presentation of the business feasibility study was also done directly in front of Perhutani representatives, so that the analysis presented was not only read, but also criticized, questioned and discussed openly. This face-to-face forum became a kind of

deliberative forum where both parties not only listened to each other but also negotiated. Not stopping at the initial process, direct interaction continues in the form of joint monitoring in the field. Perhutani is regularly present to supervise and ensure that the construction of tourist facilities runs according to the agreed design, does not violate conservation rules, and still pays attention to the carrying capacity of the environment. This shows that face-to-face is not only a formal instrument in the initial negotiations, but becomes a habit that forms a culture of open and responsible cooperation.

Face-to-face interactions also take place in informal contexts, which have no less significance than formal meetings. In the momentum of religious holidays such as Eid al-Fitr, Perhutani is symbolically present at tourist sites by carrying congratulatory banners that include the logos of both parties. This action may seem simple, but it has a deep symbolic meaning. It shows that the relationship is not merely a legal and economic one, but also a social one that contains respect and recognition for the cooperation being built. This reflects what Etzioni (2018) calls "communitarian values" in collaborative governance, where social values reinforce the formal contract.

### **b. Trust Building**

Trust is a fundamental foundation in building and maintaining long-term cooperation, especially in the context of cross-institutional collaboration such as that between Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS). From the results of field observations and in-depth interviews, I found that both parties have a high level of trust in each other. This trust does not appear instantly, but grows through a process of consistent, transparent, and mutually beneficial interactions in various stages of cooperation.

For Guci Ashafana, trust in Perhutani is based on the structural and legal legitimacy of the institution as a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE). This status gives confidence that every cooperation procedure has a strong legal basis and can be accounted for administratively and legally. In the view of the business world, the existence of partners with a solid legal position is very important to avoid legal risks in the future. Meanwhile, from Perhutani's side, trust in PKMS is built on a track record of collaboration that shows responsibility, compliance with rules, and commitment to managing the area professionally. Perhutani sees that this partner is able to maintain the integrity of cooperation, proving it through financial reporting, data disclosure, and satisfactory operational achievements.

In the theoretical framework, Ansell and Gash in Hidayat et al. (2023) explain that trust building in organizational collaboration is an active process to create a climate of cooperation based on transparency, consistency, and certainty of commitment fulfillment. Trust can be interpersonal between individuals representing institutions or organizational in nature, where systems, procedures, and institutional reputation become benchmarks. Even on a broader scale, trust can target the relationship between the organization and the community. In this collaboration, I found that the trust formed is dual: first, at the organizational level through the fulfillment of administrative and financial requirements; second, at the social relationship level, through symbolic presence and humanist communication. In this case, Guci Ashafana always provides periodic reports on tourism operations, includes financial projections, and is willing to be evaluated by Perhutani and third parties. On the other hand, Perhutani provides administrative support and ensures

that legal and technical obligations owned by the state do not become a one-sided burden. This kind of interplay creates a symbiotic mutualistic relationship where trust breeds responsibility, and responsibility strengthens trust.

### **c. Commitment to the Process**

The commitment shown by both parties Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS) is an essential component in maintaining the sustainability and effectiveness of collaboration in the management of Guci Ashafana ecotourism. This commitment is not merely symbolic or administrative, but is actually implemented in all stages of cooperation, from planning, preparation of legal documents, presentation of business feasibility studies, to technical and operational implementation stages in the field. Mutual respect for the roles and responsibilities of each party confirms that this collaboration is not just a form of working partnership, but also the result of a deep commitment to the principles of governance that is inclusive and oriented towards mutual benefits.

The initial motivation behind this collaboration arose from both parties' awareness of the importance of uniting institutional perspectives and capacities in one strategic goal. Perhutani, as the authority over the state forest area, has a mandate for conservation and spatial regulation, while PKMS brings capital, innovation and managerial capacity to transform forest potential into an economic tourism attraction. The desire to listen to each other, uphold applicable laws, and create a fair and transparent relationship are the cornerstones of a healthy collaboration. This reflects the basic value of collaborative governance, which is the active involvement of all parties to achieve better solutions than if acting individually Ansell & Gash in Hidayat et al., (2023)

In this context, commitment is also manifested in the willingness of both parties to accept compromises over differences in interests or technical approaches. Not all decisions can be ideal for each party, but an open attitude to accept collective results, even if they are not always optimal for all, reflects a sense of ownership of the results of cooperation. This attitude is what Jackson et al. (2018) call the result of sectoral complementarity when two parties from different sectors come together because of the potential added value that cannot be obtained independently. In other words, collaboration makes sense and is rational because each party brings complementary advantages: Perhutani with land legality and ecological commitment. PKMS with capital and tourism innovation.

Furthermore, the success of maintaining commitment is also supported by the existence of open communication mechanisms, standardized cooperation procedures (as stipulated in PERDIR 06/2024), and regular evaluations carried out by both parties. This process creates a dynamic, flexible cooperation structure that remains bound to the principles of law and public ethics. In other words, commitments are not just intentions, but are translated into concrete actions that can be verified and audited (Yuhao Ba et al., 2024). Collaboration rooted in mutual commitment and complementary values between sectors fosters resilient partnerships that adapt to socio-economic shifts. This aligns with research on cross-sector readiness, which highlights how aligned organizational values and structured governance enhance sustainability in collaborative efforts (Yuhao Ba et al., 2024).

#### **d. Shared Understanding**

Shared understanding is a key foundation in collaborative practices, especially in resource management involving two institutions with different mandates, objectives and backgrounds. In the collaboration between Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS), this understanding is not only built from informal discussions, but has been formalized through a cooperation agreement document. The document reflects a strategic agreement that is not only administrative, but also a symbol of trust and a control tool for the implementation of deliberative and structured cooperation. The agreement incorporates common goals, division of responsibilities, and directions for the development of the area based on sustainability principles.

The contents of the cooperation document include the basic principles of managing state forest areas that not only emphasize economic growth, but also proportionally include ecological and social dimensions. Both parties show awareness that the success of the Guci Ashafana ecotourism development is not sufficiently measured only from the financial aspect and the number of visitors, but also from the extent to which tourism activities are able to maintain the ecological function of the forest and provide direct benefits to local communities. In this case, commitment to forest sustainability, fulfillment of legal aspects, and emphasis on prudence in utilizing the area are an integral part of the understanding.

Wondirad et al. (2020) emphasize that collaboration is a process where parties come together to discuss common interests in order to find common ground. This process is evident in the formulation of a shared vision and mission, planning the development of the area, and determining the profit-sharing scheme between Perhutani and PKMS. Barfield (2016) also underlines that true collaboration involves setting common goals, sharing roles fairly, and collective work that cannot be completed by one party alone. Therefore, shared understanding in this context is not just a technical understanding of the content of the document, but a reflection of the synergy of values, expectations and interests brought together in a collaborative spirit. Thus, the Guci Ashafana becomes than just a tourist project; it is a living example of collaborative governance grounded in the principle of collective benefit.

#### **e. Intermediate Outcomes**

One of the early indicators of the success of the collaboration between Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS) in managing the Guci Ashafana Tourism Park lies in the social and economic impacts directly felt by the local community. This collaboration goes beyond a formal relationship between institutions, but rather forms an inclusive and empowering social ecosystem. Guci Ashafana's "family company" philosophy is evidence of this participatory approach, where the people of Rembul Village and its surroundings are placed as the main actors in tourism management. Not only at the operational level, but also up to managerial positions, local residents are empowered, opening up opportunities for sustainable leadership and economic capacity building.

Community participation in ecotourism activities is expanded not only through the employment sector, but also in the form of facilitation for businesses outside the region that want to trade in tourist areas. However, their placement is directed to certain zones so as not to disturb the local social and economic balance. This arrangement reflects efforts to

avoid conflicts of interest and ensure that there is no external domination that harms the surrounding community. This approach is in line with the principle of community-based tourism (CBT), which emphasizes the active and equitable involvement of local communities in managing and benefiting from tourism that takes place in their area. This is consistent with the findings of Wijaya & Sudarmawan (2019), who found that the implementation of the CBT concept in the management of Kampoeng Karts Rammang-Rammang's natural tourism met the criteria of gaining community support, providing economic benefits, and protecting both culture and the environment in tourism activities. Furthermore, research on ecotourism management in Indonesia highlights that while community involvement is often still limited to utilization, the empowerment and active participation of local communities are essential for ensuring sustainability, equitable economic outcomes, and the preservation of local values and resources (Zakia, 2021).

Roberts et al. (2016) classify collaboration outcomes into three categories: social outcomes, business outcomes, and individual outcomes. In the context of Guci Ashafana, social outcomes are reflected in the improved quality of life of the community, harmony between local and external businesses, and widespread economic participation. In business terms, this collaboration encourages an increase in the number of visits and revenue of the tourism area, and strengthens the positive image of the destination. Individual results are evident in the growing work capacity, improved skills and confidence of local residents as an integral part of the tourism business system. These impacts not only strengthen the social legitimacy of collaboration, but also become long-term social capital towards village independence and ecotourism sustainability oriented towards shared prosperity.

The Guci Ashafana case illustrates how Ansell and Gash's collaborative governance framework operates as an interdependent system rather than a checklist of components. Face-to-face dialogue established the relational foundation, enabling trust-building mechanisms that sustained commitment during contentious negotiations. This commitment, in turn, facilitated the co-creation of shared goals, which structured the collaboration's operational phase. Intermediate outcomes then validated the process, securing ongoing stakeholder support. Removing any component would disrupt this sequence: without trust, dialogue becomes perfunctory; without shared understanding, commitment lacks direction; without outcomes, the collaboration loses legitimacy.

## **5. Conclusion**

This research concludes that the collaboration between Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS) is a form of strategic partnership that is structured, legal, and based on a shared vision. This collaboration is not only intended to achieve economic goals, but also to realize environmental sustainability and empower local communities. The entire cooperation process has been carried out through administrative and technical stages in accordance with applicable regulations, and shows active involvement and high commitment from both parties.

The collaborative framework between Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS) in managing Guci Ashafana ecotourism exemplifies the operationalization of Ansell and Gash's theoretical model, demonstrating how interdependent components face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, commitment, shared

understanding, and intermediate outcomes create a self-reinforcing cycle of sustainable development.

In terms of collaboration components, face-to-face dialog has been intensive and effective since the initiation stage, including in the process of measuring the area, preparing business feasibility studies, and monitoring activities in the field. Even in informal contexts such as holiday celebrations, Perhutani still maintains communication as a symbolic form of emotional involvement. Trust between the two parties was strongly built; Guci Ashafana believed in Perhutani's integrity as a state-owned enterprise, while Perhutani considered Guci Ashafana as a consistent and professional partner. This trust developed from a personal level to institutional trust, supported by transparency of information and fulfillment of mutual commitments.

Commitment to the process is reflected through the willingness to carry out each stage of collaboration in a disciplined manner, as well as the strengthening of mutual understanding formalized in a cooperation agreement based on the principles of justice, sustainability and legality. The intermediate results of this collaboration are evident through the social and economic impacts on the community, especially with the implementation of the "family company" philosophy by Guci Ashafana that prioritizes local labor and regulates external business actors fairly. Based on the framework of Roberts et al., (2016), this collaboration has resulted in achievements in three main categories: social, business and individual. Therefore, this collaborative model is worthy of reference or replication in other ecotourism developments, especially in state forest areas, in order to build equitable, participatory and sustainable multi-stakeholder governance.

The collaboration between Perum Perhutani KPH Pekalongan Barat and PT Panca Karya Manunggal Sejahtera (PKMS) at Guci Ashafana ecotourism demonstrates that effective partnership built on open dialogue, trust, commitment, and shared goals—can successfully balance conservation with economic benefits. This model's achievements, including reduced deforestation and increased tourism, highlight the importance of regular evaluation, transparent management, and community involvement. To replicate this success, future ecotourism initiatives should institutionalize collaborative governance, ensure fair benefit-sharing, and adaptively manage resources, while policymakers are encouraged to support such models through clear regulations and incentives. The Guci Ashafana case thus offers a practical and scalable blueprint for sustainable ecotourism development in Indonesia's state-managed forests.

## References

- Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia Retrieved at: <https://www.bps.go.id/id> (Accessed: 06 March 2025).
- Ba, Y., Nair, S., & Kedia, M. (2024). Cross-Sector Collaboration, Nonprofit Readiness, And Sustainability Transitions. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eist.2024.100933>
- Barfield, A. (2016). Collaboration. *ELT Journal*, 70(2), 222–224. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccv074>



- Djabbari, M. H. (n.d.). Public Private Partnership Di Sektor Pariwisata Kabupaten Toraja Utara: Model Life Cycle Contract. Public Private Partnership in The Tourism Sector of Toraja Utara District: Life Cycle Contract Model.
- Fairuza, M. (2017). Kolaborasi antar Stakeholder dalam Pembangunan Inklusif pada Sektor Pariwisata (Studi Kasus Wisata Pulau Merah di Kabupaten Banyuwangi). [www.kabarbanyuwangi.com](http://www.kabarbanyuwangi.com)
- Gazley, B. (2017). The Current State of Interorganizational Collaboration: Lessons for Human Service Research and Management. In *Human Service Organizations Management, Leadership and Governance* (Vol. 41, Issue 1, pp. 1–5). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23303131.2015.1095582>
- Hanafi Ahmad, A. (2022). Pengaruh Jumlah Kunjungan Wisatawan, Objek Wisata, Dan Retribusi Pariwisata Terhadap Pendapatan Asli Daerah. *Jurnal Sosial Ekonomi Bisnis*, 2(1), 50–61. <https://doi.org/10.55587/jseb.v2i1.34>
- Hani, U., Astuti, D. P., & Si, M. (n.d.). Partnership Pattern In Optimizing Ecotourism Concept For Karimunjawa Tourism Development In Jepara Regency. <https://fisip.undip.com/>
- Hidayat, M. H. D., Khairil Amran, & Dewi Sulfa Saguni. (2023). Collaborative Process: Trust Building Indicator Dalam Pengelolaan Objek Wisata Alam Mendatte Park Di Kabupaten Enrekang. *Jurnal Administrasi Publik*, 19(2), 261–275. <https://doi.org/10.52316/jap.v19i2.179>
- Jackson, P., Mavi, R. K., Suseno, Y., & Standing, C. (2018). University-Industry Collaboration Within The Triple Helix Of Innovation: The Importance Of Mutuality. *Science and Public Policy*, 45(4), 553–564. <https://doi.org/10.1093/SCIPOL/SCX083>
- Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan Republik Indonesia. (2023). Keputusan Menteri Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan Republik Indonesia Nomor SK.487/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/5/2023 tentang Pedoman Perhutanan Sosial Kemitraan Kehutanan dan Kemitraan Kehutanan Perhutani Produktif.
- Kia, Z. (2021). Ecotourism in Indonesia: Local Community Involvement and The Affecting Factors. *Journal of Governance and Public Policy*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.18196/jgpp.v8i2.10789>
- Lulik Fullela Rakhman, L., & Puspitasari Rochman, G. (2023). Model Kelembagaan dalam Pengelolaan Desa Wisata Berbasis Agro-ekowisata dan Budaya di Indonesia. *Bandung Conference Series: Urban & Regional Planning*, 3(2), 606–616. <https://doi.org/10.29313/bcsurp.v3i2.8724>
- Majchrzak, A., Jarvenpaa, S. L., & Bagherzadeh, M. (2015). A Review of Interorganizational Collaboration Dynamics. In *Journal of Management* (Vol. 41, Issue 5, pp. 1338–1360). SAGE Publications Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314563399>
- Murniati, K., Riantini, M., & Windyata, A. V. (2025). Evaluating Tourism Performance through Tourist Perceptions: A Case Study of Petengoran Mangrove Tourism in Lampung, Indonesia. *Jurnal Sylva Lestari*, 13(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.23960/jsl.v13i1.976>

- Mu'tashim, M. R., & Indahsari, K. (2021). 1 st E-proceeding SENRIABDI 2021 Seminar Nasional Hasil Riset dan Pengabdian kepada. In Masyarakat Universitas Sahid Surakarta (Vol. 1, Issue 1). <https://jurnal.usahidsolo.ac.id/index.php/SENRIABDI>
- Myrna Sukmaratri, & Maya Damayanti. (2016). 12907-29692-1-SM.
- Perum Perhutani. (2024). Peraturan Direksi Perum Perhutani Nomor: 06/PER/DIR/02/2024 tentang Pedoman Kerja Sama Pengelolaan Hutan Perum Perhutani (ditetapkan 28 Februari 2024).
- Program Kerja (2024) Perhutani. Available at: <https://www.perhutani.co.id/tentang-kami/program-kerja/> (Accessed: 07 March 2025).
- Rita Fiantika, F., Wasil, M., & Jumiyati, S. (2022). Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. [www.globaleksekitifteknologi.co.id](http://www.globaleksekitifteknologi.co.id)
- Roberts, D., van Wyk, R., & Dhanpat, N. (n.d.). Exploring Practices For Effective Collaboration.
- Surya Wijaya, N., Wayan, D. I., Sudarmawan, E., Tinggi, S., & Internasional, P. B. (2019). Community Based Tourism (CBT) Sebagai Strategi Pengembangan Pariwisata Berkelanjutan Di DTW Ceking Desa Pekraman Tegallalang Community Based Tourism (CBT) As A Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy In Ceking Dtw, Tegallantang Village. *Jurnal Ilmiah Hospitality Management Disubmit*, 10(1), 77–98. <https://doi.org/10.22334/jihm.v10i1>
- Wondirad, A., Tolkach, D., & King, B. (2020). Stakeholder collaboration as a major factor for sustainable ecotourism development in developing countries. *Tourism Management*, 78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.104024>