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# The Role of the Provincial Government in Orchestrating Cross-District/City Tourism Governance in the Special Region of Yogyakarta: A Governance Orchestration Perspective

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**ABSTRACT:** Tourism development in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) increasingly demands governance capable of integrating various destinations and actors spread across different districts/cities. In this context, the Provincial Government of DIY acts as an orchestrator that directs, coordinates, and facilitates collaboration among stakeholders to realize integrated and sustainable tourism development. This study aims to analyze the role of the Provincial Government of DIY in orchestrating cross-district/city tourism governance from a Governance Orchestration perspective. The study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document studies involving the provincial government, district/city governments, tourism industry players, communities, and academics. Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, encompassing data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the Provincial Government of DIY performs orchestration functions through five main dimensions: steering, coordination, facilitation, capacity building, and monitoring. These roles strengthen interregional synergy, enhance program integration and destination promotion, and foster more competitive regional tourism development. However, the study also finds challenges such as differing regional development priorities, limited resources, and suboptimal cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening institutional capacity and collaborative mechanisms to improve the effectiveness of regional tourism governance.

**KEYWORDS**: Governance Orchestration, Tourism Governance, Regional Tourism, Interregional Collaboration, Provincial Government of Special Region of Yogyakarta.

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the strategic sectors that contributes significantly to economic growth, job creation, and regional development. In recent decades, the paradigm of tourism development has shifted from a sectoral approach to a collaborative approach involving various actors and levels of government. This shift has occurred because the complexity of tourism issues cannot be resolved by a single organization or administrative region alone; rather, it requires synergy among actors and across regions within an integrated governance system (Bramwell & Lane, 2011).

In the context of modern governance, the government is no longer the sole actor controlling the entire development process, but rather acts as a director and coordinator of diverse actors with different interests (Muhammad et al., 2025; Sugiyanto et al., 2025). The governance perspective positions the government as a facilitator for building collaboration among the public sector, private sector, local communities, and civil society organizations (R.A.W. Rhodes, 2017). In the tourism sector, effective governance is a key factor in ensuring destination sustainability, enhancing competitiveness, and optimizing the economic and social benefits for local communities (Hall, 2011).3

The Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) is one of Indonesia's leading tourist destinations, characterized by its unique composition of five administrative regions: Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta City, Sleman Regency, Bantul Regency, Kulon Progo Regency, and Gunungkidul Regency. Each region has distinct yet complementary tourism potential and attractions. Tourism destinations in DIY cannot be separated by administrative boundaries because tourists typically move across multiple districts/cities during a single trip. This circumstance necessitates tourism governance capable of integrating policies, programs, and interests across regions.

Nevertheless, cross-district/city tourism management often faces various challenges, such as differing development priorities, competition among destinations, institutional coordination limitations, and policy fragmentation. According to Dredge & Jamal (2015), institutional fragmentation in tourism governance can impede effective decision-making and diminish regions' ability to build competitive destinations (Dredge & Jamal, 2015). Therefore, an actor is needed who can bridge diverse interests and foster collective action among stakeholders.

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The concept of Governance Orchestration offers a relevant perspective for understanding the government's role in managing complex actor networks. Abbott et al. (2015) explain that orchestration is a form of indirect governance where a leading actor (the orchestrator) mobilizes and coordinates various intermediaries to achieve specific policy objectives (Abbott et al., 2015). In the context of local government, the provincial government can serve as an orchestrator that guides, coordinates, facilitates, builds capacity, and monitors the implementation of cross-regional policies without necessarily dominating the entire decision-making process.

The role of the provincial government as orchestrator becomes increasingly important in a system of decentralized governance. As the intermediate level of government, the provincial government has a strategic position to bridge the interests of district/city governments while also aligning them with national development agendas. In the tourism sector, this function can be carried out through regional policy formulation, development of collaborative networks, joint promotion, and strengthening stakeholder capacity (Pattberg et al., 2014).

Although various studies have discussed tourism governance and actor collaboration, research specifically examining the role of the Provincial Government of DIY as orchestrator in cross-district/city tourism governance remains relatively limited. Most previous studies have focused on collaborative governance, destination management, or tourism partnerships without closely examining how orchestration functions are implemented by the provincial government. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of the Provincial Government of DIY in orchestrating cross-district/city tourism governance through the dimensions of steering, coordination, facilitation, capacity building, and monitoring. The research findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of the Governance Orchestration concept in local government studies as well as provide practical recommendations for strengthening sustainable regional tourism governance.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Governance Orchestration in Public Governance

The transformation of public governance has shifted the role of government from a hierarchical regulator to a facilitator and coordinator of networks involving multiple stakeholders. Contemporary governance emphasizes collaboration among public institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations, and local communities to address increasingly complex public issues (Rhodes, 2017). Within this context, the concept of Governance Orchestration has emerged as an important analytical framework for understanding how governments influence collective action without relying solely on formal authority.

Abbott et al. (2015) define governance orchestration as a form of indirect governance in which an orchestrator mobilizes, coordinates, and supports intermediary actors to achieve common policy objectives. Rather than exercising direct control, orchestrators influence governance networks through steering, facilitation, coordination, capacity building, and monitoring. This perspective is particularly relevant in decentralized governance systems where authority and resources are distributed across multiple organizations and jurisdictions.

Compared with traditional command-and-control approaches, governance orchestration emphasizes network management, institutional collaboration, and the creation of enabling environments for collective action. Pattberg et al. (2014) argue that orchestration has become increasingly significant in complex governance systems characterized by fragmented authority and overlapping institutional responsibilities.

### Tourism Governance and Interregional Collaboration

Tourism governance has evolved beyond destination management toward collaborative governance involving multiple actors across administrative boundaries. Bramwell and Lane (2011) emphasize that sustainable tourism development depends on the ability of governments to coordinate diverse stakeholders while balancing economic, environmental, and socio-cultural objectives. Similarly, Hall (2011) argues that effective tourism governance requires integrated policy coordination, institutional learning, and continuous adaptation.

Tourism destinations frequently transcend administrative boundaries. Visitors often travel across multiple regions within a single destination system, making interregional coordination essential for destination competitiveness (Dredge & Jamal, 2015). Consequently, provincial governments occupy a strategic position as intermediary governments capable of integrating tourism planning, infrastructure development, destination branding, and policy implementation across districts and municipalities.

In Indonesia's decentralized governance system, provincial governments possess coordinating authority rather than direct operational control over local governments. This institutional arrangement creates opportunities for orchestration through policy alignment, collaborative planning, joint promotion, capacity development, and intergovernmental networking.

### Previous Studies

Previous research has extensively examined collaborative governance, tourism partnerships, and destination management. Bramwell and Lane (2011) demonstrate that collaboration among government agencies, businesses, and communities contributes significantly to sustainable tourism development. Hall (2011) highlights the importance of governance learning and adaptive policymaking in improving tourism performance.

Several Indonesian studies have explored collaborative governance in tourism. Monika and Muhammad (2024) found that government–community collaboration strengthened tourism management at Parangtritis Beach through shared decision-making and community participation. Nurwati et al. (2023) examined tourism development in Bintan Regency and reported that collaboration among government agencies, tourism operators, and local communities enhanced destination competitiveness.

Other studies by Muhammad and colleagues (2016, 2017, 2025) emphasize collaborative governance in border management, tourism village development, and regional governance. These studies consistently show that collaboration enhances policy implementation, stakeholder participation, and institutional effectiveness. However, their primary analytical framework remains collaborative governance rather than governance orchestration.

Internationally, Abbott et al. (2015) and Pattberg et al. (2014) have primarily applied governance orchestration to global governance institutions, environmental governance, and transnational policy networks. Empirical applications of orchestration theory within subnational governments remain relatively limited, particularly in tourism governance.

### Research Gap

Although previous studies provide valuable insights into tourism governance and collaborative governance, several important gaps remain.

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a) First, most tourism governance studies focus on collaboration among stakeholders without explicitly examining the provincial government's role as an orchestrator that indirectly coordinates multiple actors across administrative jurisdictions.
b) Second, governance orchestration theory has predominantly been applied in international and global governance contexts, whereas empirical evidence regarding its application within decentralized regional governments is still scarce.
c) Third, existing studies generally analyze destination management at individual tourism sites or single local governments. Limited attention has been paid to cross-district and cross-city tourism governance, where coordination complexity is substantially higher due to fragmented authority, diverse regional priorities, and institutional differences.

Finally, few studies investigate how provincial governments simultaneously perform orchestration functions through steering, coordination, facilitation, capacity building, and monitoring within integrated regional tourism governance.

To address these gaps, this study analyzes the role of the Provincial Government of the Special Region of Yogyakarta as an orchestrator of cross-district/city tourism governance using the Governance Orchestration framework proposed by Abbott et al. (2015). By extending orchestration theory to the context of decentralized regional governance, this study contributes both theoretically to governance literature and practically to improving collaborative tourism governance in Indonesia.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of the Provincial Government of the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) in orchestrating cross-district/city tourism governance. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the processes, interactions, and dynamics of relationships among stakeholders involved in regional tourism governance (Abdillah et al., 2025; Creswell, 2014).

The research was conducted in the DIY Province, which comprises five administrative areas: Yogyakarta City, Sleman Regency, Bantul Regency, Kulon Progo Regency, and Gunungkidul Regency. The study focused on the role of the DIY Provincial Government as orchestrator in cross-regional tourism governance through the five dimensions of Governance Orchestration, namely: steering, coordination, facilitation, capacity building, and monitoring (Abbott et al., 2015). Informants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their knowledge, experience, and involvement in regional tourism management. The research informants consisted of:

a) Officials at the DIY Provincial Tourism Office;
b) Officials from district/city Tourism Offices in DIY;
c) Representatives of tourism industry associations;
d) Tourism destination managers;
e) Tourism business actors;
f) Academics in tourism and government;
g) Representatives of communities and tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis).

Informants were selected until data saturation was reached, i.e., when the information obtained showed recurring patterns and no significant new information was identified (Guest et al., 2020).

Supporting data for this research were collected through several techniques, including interviews, observation, and document study. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain information regarding strategies, coordination mechanisms, forms of facilitation, capacity building, and monitoring systems carried out by the DIY Provincial Government in cross-district/city tourism governance. Observation was conducted of coordination activities, collaboration forums, joint promotions, and destination development activities involving various stakeholders. The purpose of observation was to understand orchestration practices as they occur in real-life contexts. To complement and refine the data obtained through interviews and observation, the researcher conducted a document review. The documents analyzed included the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD), Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (RIPPARDA), local government performance reports, regional regulations, inter-regional memoranda of understanding, as well as policy documents and publications related to the development of tourism in DIY.

Once sufficient data had been collected, the next step was to analyze the data. Data analysis employed the interactive model of Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña (2014), which includes:

a) Data Condensation, i.e., the process of selecting, simplifying, and grouping data based on the dimensions of Governance Orchestration;
b) Data Display, i.e., presenting the data in the form of matrices, tables, and thematic narratives to facilitate interpretation;
c) Conclusion Drawing and Verification, i.e., repeatedly drawing and verifying conclusions to ensure the consistency of research findings (Miles, M.B, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

To ensure the validity and reliability of findings, the study employed source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking techniques. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing information from different groups of informants, while method triangulation was done by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Member checking was performed by requesting confirmation from informants regarding the interpretation of interview results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The analysis was based on the concept of Governance Orchestration developed by Abbott et al. (2015). In this study, the DIY Provincial Government is positioned as the orchestrator, while district/city governments, business actors, tourism communities, associations, and academics serve as intermediary and implementing actors in the regional tourism governance network. The five dimensions of analysis used are:

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**Table 1. Dimensions and Indicators of Governance Orchestration in Tourism in D.I. Yogyakarta**

| Dimension | Analysis Indicator |
|---|---|
| Steering | Formulation of the vision, policy direction, and regional tourism development priorities |
| Coordination | Synchronization of programs, communication, and cross-regional cooperation |
| Facilitation | Provision of resources, collaborative forums, and policy support |
| Capacity Building | Strengthening of competencies, training, and assistance for stakeholders |
| Monitoring | Evaluation, supervision, and feedback on program implementation |

**Source: Processed data, 2026.**

Through the framework as outlined in Table 1 above, this study seeks to explain how the Government of the Special Region of Yogyakarta carries out the orchestration function in developing collaborative, integrated, and sustainable cross-district/municipal tourism governance.

## RESULTS

The Role of the DIY Provincial Government in Orchestrating Cross-District/City Tourism Governance Tourism governance in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) involves various actors from the provincial government, district/city governments, the private sector, tourism communities, academics, and the public. The complexity of relationships among these stakeholders requires an actor capable of synergizing interests and resources so that tourism development proceeds in an integrated manner. In this context, the DIY Provincial Government acts as the orchestrator, connecting, directing, and strengthening collaboration among actors through the mechanism of Governance Orchestration.

The research findings show that the orchestration function of the DIY Provincial Government is manifested through five main dimensions: steering, coordination, facilitation, capacity building, and monitoring.

**Steering: Directing the Regional Tourism Vision and Priorities**

The research findings indicate that the DIY Provincial Government, through the Tourism Office, has played a central role in setting the direction of regional tourism development through various strategic planning documents, such as RIPPARDA and RPJMD. RIPPARDA was enacted by the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) together with the Governor through Regional Regulation of the Special Region of Yogyakarta Number 2 of 2026 concerning the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan of the Special Region of Yogyakarta 2026–2045. The provincial government not only sets development targets for the tourism sector but also builds a shared narrative regarding DIY's position as an integrated cultural, educational, and creative tourism destination.

These policy directions serve as guidelines for district/city governments in formulating their tourism programs and activities. As a result, destination development across various regions does not take place in a piecemeal way, but rather supports the overall development of tourism areas in DIY.

This finding is in line with Abbott et al. (2015), who state that the main function of an orchestrator is to provide a vision, goals, and frameworks that can serve as references for various actors within the governance network.

**Coordination: Uniting Actors and Programs Across Regions**

Coordination is the most dominant dimension in the practice of tourism orchestration in DIY. The DIY Provincial Government routinely facilitates coordination forums involving district/city governments, tourism industry associations, destination managers, and communities.Interview results show that coordination is carried out through several joint activities, including:

a) Forums for tourism sector regional government agencies;
b) Cross-district/city program synchronization meetings;
c) Joint event calendar preparation;
d) Development of integrated interregional tourism packages;
e) Collective destination promotion.

Such coordination enables the integration of mutually complementary tourist destinations. Visitors to DIY do not only visit one area, but move through a network of destinations covering the City of Yogyakarta, Sleman, Bantul, Kulon Progo, and Gunungkidul. The D.I. Yogyakarta Provincial Government through the Tourism Office provides information on the annual event calendar via the website as shown in the following service screenshot:

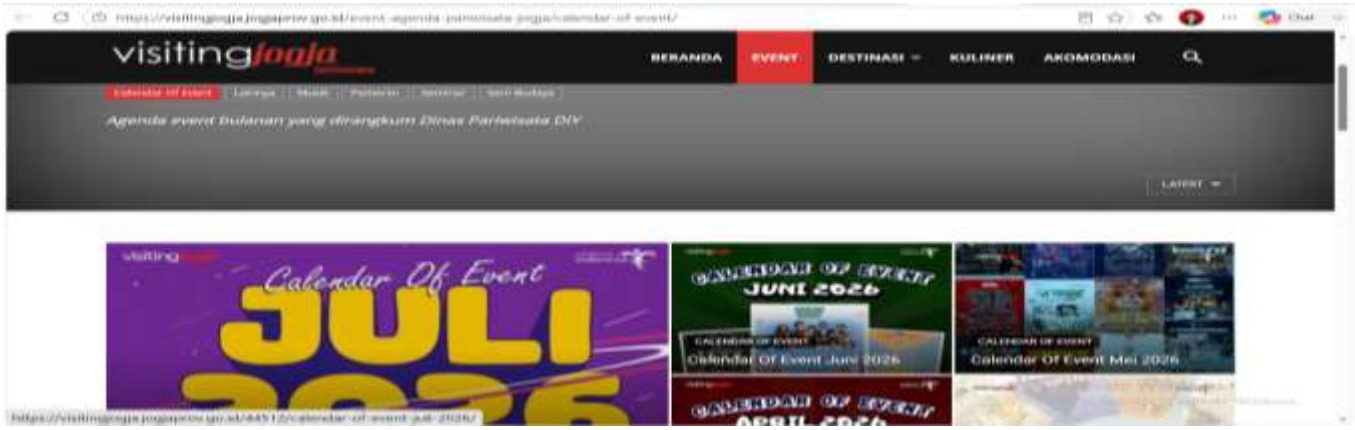



**Figure 1. Annual Tourism Calendar Website**

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These findings support Rhodes' (2017) view that modern governance depends on the government's ability to build networks and manage inter-organizational relationships rather than controlling the entire process hierarchically.

**Facilitation: Strengthening Collaboration Through Support and Resources**

The facilitative role carried out by the DIY Provincial Government through the Tourism Office is evident in the provision of various forms of support for tourism stakeholders. Types of facilitation identified in the study include:

a) Provision of communication and collaboration forums;
b) Support for destination promotion;
c) Facilitation of interregional cooperation;
d) Assistance in developing tourism-supporting infrastructure;
e) Provision of tourism data and information.

The provincial government also acts as a mediator when differences of interest arise among actors or between regions. This function is important because tourism development often involves competition over resources and differing development priorities.According to Pattberg et al. (2019), an effective orchestrator not only directs other actors, but also provides incentives and facilities that enable collaboration to take place sustainably.

**Capacity Building: Enhancing the Capacity of Tourism Stakeholders**

The capacity building dimension demonstrates the commitment of the DIY Provincial Government to improving the capacity of actors involved in tourism management. The research findings show a variety of capacity-strengthening programs, including:

a) Training in destination management;
b) Tourism digital marketing training;
c) Assistance for tourism villages;
d) Certification of tourism human resource competencies;
e) Institutional strengthening of tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis).

These programs contribute to improving service quality, destination innovation, and the ability to adapt to changing tourism trends.

This finding reinforces the argument that governance orchestration is not only oriented toward coordination, but also toward enhancing the capacity of actors to effectively carry out their roles within the governance network (Abbott et al., 2015).

**Monitoring: Supervising and Evaluating Collaborative Performance**

Monitoring is an important instrument in ensuring that regional tourism development objectives can be achieved. The DIY Provincial Government conducts monitoring through:

a) Evaluation of tourism programs;
b) Monitoring of tourism sector performance indicators;
c) Monitoring the development of tourist destinations;
d) Evaluation of local event implementation;
e) Collection of tourist visitation data.

As a form of commitment to conducting tourism monitoring, the Provincial Government organizes certification for tourism managers as well as guides, as in the following example:




**Figure 2. Local Tour Guide Certification**

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The research results show that monitoring serves not only as a supervisory mechanism, but also as a means of collective learning for all stakeholders. This practice aligns with Hall's (2011) view that effective tourism governance requires evaluation mechanisms capable of generating feedback for the continuous improvement of policy processes.

**Challenges of Orchestration in Tourism Governance in DIY**

Although the orchestration function has operated relatively well, this study finds several challenges still faced by the Provincial Government of DIY.

a) Divergence of Regional Development Priorities. Each regency/municipality has different characteristics and development interests. These differences sometimes affect the level of commitment in the implementation of regional tourism programs.
b) Institutional Fragmentation. The large number of organizations involved makes the coordination process more complex. Some programs still run sectorally and have not yet been fully integrated.
c) Resource Limitations. Disparities in fiscal capacity and human resources between regions become obstacles in realizing equitable tourism development.
d) Suboptimal Cross-sectoral Coordination. Tourism development requires the involvement of other sectors such as transportation, environment, culture, MSMEs, and the creative economy. However, integration between these sectors has not yet been fully optimal.

The findings of this study show that the success of orchestration is not determined solely by the capacity of the provincial government, but also by the level of commitment and readiness of the actors involved in the governance network

## DISCUSSION

The research results confirm that the Provincial Government of DIY, particularly through the Tourism Office, has served as orchestrator in tourism governance across regencies/municipalities. In contrast to the hierarchical approach that places the government as the main controller, orchestration is carried out through indirect influence in the form of direction, coordination, facilitation, capacity strengthening, and monitoring (Muhammad & Suswanti, 2026; Muhtar & Muhammad, 2025).

These findings broaden the application of the Governance Orchestration theory, which until now has been widely used in the context of global governance, to the context of regional government and regional tourism management (Muhammad et al., 2025; Nurwati et al., 2023). The provincial government functions as a bridging actor that mediates various interests of regency/municipal governments and other stakeholders.

This study also shows that the success of regional tourism governance does not depend solely on the government's policy-making capacity, but also on its ability to build sustainable collaboration. This is also consistent with research by Muhammad et al. (2016, 2017 and 2024), which found that collaboration is highly beneficial in achieving predetermined targets (Monika & Muhammad, 2024; Muhammad, 2017; Muhammad & Kusasi, 2016). Therefore, strengthening cross-regional coordination mechanisms, integrating tourism data, and increasing institutional capacity have become important agendas to improve the effectiveness of tourism orchestration in DIY.

Theoretically, the research results support the argument presented by Abbott et al. (2015) that an effective orchestrator is an actor capable of mobilizing various organizations toward a common goal without using direct control mechanisms. In the context of tourism in DIY, the Provincial Government has succeeded in playing this role by developing collaborative networks that enable regional tourism development to take place in a more integrated, adaptive, and sustainable manner.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that the Provincial Government of the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY), through the Tourism Office, has acted as orchestrator in cross-regency/municipal tourism governance through collaborative and non-hierarchical management mechanisms. This role is manifested through five main dimensions of Governance Orchestration: steering, coordination, facilitation, capacity building, and monitoring. Through the steering function, the provincial government sets the vision and direction for regional tourism development, serving as a reference for all regencies/municipalities. In the coordination dimension, the provincial government successfully synergizes various programs and interests across regions, resulting in the integration of regional tourist destinations and promotional efforts. Meanwhile, the functions of facilitation and capacity building are realized by providing collaborative forums, resource support, training, and capacity strengthening for stakeholders. The monitoring function, in turn, ensures the effectiveness of program implementation and serves as a means of joint evaluation and learning.

The study also shows that orchestration in tourism governance in DIY has contributed to strengthening inter-regional synergy, improving policy coordination, and supporting the development of tourism that is more integrated and sustainable. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of orchestration still faces a number of challenges, such as differences in regional development priorities, institutional fragmentation, resource limitations, and suboptimal cross-sectoral coordination.

Theoretically, this research extends the application of the Governance Orchestration perspective to the context of regional government and regional tourism governance in Indonesia. In practice, the findings emphasize the importance of strengthening institutional capacity, integrating tourism data and information, and developing more adaptive collaboration mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of tourism governance across regencies/municipalities. Thus, the Provincial Government of DIY does not only act as a regulator but also as a strategic actor that connects, coordinates, and mobilizes various stakeholders toward the goals of sustainable regional tourism development.

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