

Regenerative Tourism as a New Paradigm for Island and Marine Destination Sustainability

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Inputted : July 10, 2026

Accepted: July 31, 2026

Revised : July 25, 2026

Published: August 6, 2026

Abstract

Island and marine destinations face an intensifying paradox: the tourism industry that sustains their economies is simultaneously eroding the ecological and social systems on which that economy depends. Conventional sustainable tourism, oriented toward minimizing harm, has proven insufficient to reverse degradation in coral reefs, coastal ecosystems, and small-island communities exposed to overtourism, climate stress, and resource leakage. This article examines regenerative tourism as an emerging paradigm that moves beyond damage limitation toward the active restoration of ecological, cultural, and community vitality in island and marine settings. Using a systematic narrative review of thirty-five peer-reviewed articles published between 2021 and 2026, drawn from international and Indonesian sources, the study synthesizes conceptual foundations, island-specific applications, governance mechanisms, and measurement approaches associated with regenerative tourism. The findings show that regenerative practice depends on living-systems thinking, place-based co-design with local and indigenous communities, circular resource management, and outcome indicators that capture ecological and socio-cultural regeneration rather than visitor volume alone. The article's novelty lies in integrating fragmented conceptual, governance, and indicator-based literature into a single applied framework tailored to island and marine geographies, including Indonesian archipelagic contexts. The article concludes that regenerative tourism offers island and marine destinations a viable pathway toward long-term ecological resilience, community empowerment, and destination competitiveness beyond sustainability.

Keywords : *regenerative tourism; sustainable tourism; island destination; marine tourism; destination governance*

Citation :

Murdana, I. M., Idrus, S., & Yulendra, L. (2026). Regenerative tourism as a new paradigm for island and marine destination sustainability. *Majority Science Journal (MSJ)*, 4(3), xx–xx. <https://doi.org/10.61942/msj.v4i3.647>

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1. Introduction

Islands and marine destinations occupy a paradoxical position within the global tourism economy. Their coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass meadows, and coastal cultures are precisely the assets that attract visitors, yet these same assets are among the most ecologically fragile and socially vulnerable systems on the planet. Small island developing states and archipelagic nations such as Indonesia depend heavily on marine and coastal tourism for foreign exchange, employment, and regional development, but this dependence has historically been built on a growth logic that treats natural and cultural capital as inputs to be consumed rather than living systems to be renewed (Grilli et al., 2021). Rising visitor numbers, unmanaged waste and marine litter, coral bleaching linked to climate stress, freshwater scarcity, and the displacement of local livelihoods by externally owned tourism enterprises have combined to produce a widely documented pattern of overtourism-driven degradation across island and marine geographies worldwide (Serrona et al., 2022; Fakfare & Wattanacharoensil, 2022).

For roughly three decades, sustainable tourism has served as the dominant policy and academic response to these pressures. Its central logic is one of harm minimization: reducing carbon footprints, managing carrying capacity, certifying eco-labels, and balancing the so-called triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental outcomes (Fakfare & Wattanacharoensil, 2024; Laksmi & Saputra, 2025). This logic has produced genuine improvements in areas such as low-carbon travel behavior and destination-level environmental management. However, a growing body of scholarship argues that sustainability, understood as doing less harm or maintaining a static equilibrium, is structurally incapable of reversing decades of accumulated ecological and social decline in destinations that are already degraded (Dredge, 2022; Bellato & Pollock, 2023). Sustainability aims to slow the rate of loss; it does not, by design, generate net-positive ecological or social outcomes. This limitation is especially consequential for island and marine destinations, where ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangrove forests exist in fragile equilibria that, once disturbed beyond a threshold, do not recover through passive protection alone but require active, human-assisted regeneration (Alvarez, 2023; Duarte et al., 2024).

Regenerative tourism has emerged over the past five years as a paradigm that directly addresses this gap. Rooted in living-systems thinking and regenerative development theory originally developed in architecture and agriculture, regenerative tourism reframes destinations not as static assets to be managed but as living systems whose vitality, resilience, and capacity for self-renewal tourism should actively strengthen (Bellato et al., 2022a; Bellato et al., 2022b). Rather than asking how tourism can minimize damage, regenerative tourism asks how tourism activity can leave a destination's ecological, cultural, and social systems healthier than they were before visitors arrived (Fusté-Forné & Hussain, 2022). This reframing carries significant conceptual weight: it repositions local communities, indigenous knowledge holders, and place-based ecosystems as co-creators of tourism value rather than passive stakeholders to be consulted, and it treats destination planning as an exercise in cultivating reciprocity between visitors, hosts, and place, rather than an exercise in capacity management (Bellato et al., 2023a; Iddawala & Lee, 2025).

The academic conversation around regenerative tourism has matured rapidly, moving from early conceptual framing (Major & Clarke, 2021; Becken & Kaur, 2021) toward state-of-the-art reviews (Bellato & Pollock, 2023), transformative epistemologies, and decolonial critiques of how regenerative principles are operationalized in practice (Bellato et al., 2023b). Much of this foundational work, however, has been developed and tested in terrestrial or temperate-latitude contexts, particularly in Aotearoa New Zealand, where government agencies and destination management organizations have been early adopters of regenerative language in policy documents (Fusté-Forné & Hussain, 2022; Pung et al., 2024). Parallel streams of literature have examined regenerative and circular economy applications in specific island settings such as Con Dao in Vietnam (Tuyen, 2025) and the Mompurang Archipelago in Indonesia (Fauzi et al., 2024), alongside literature reviews attempting to consolidate paradigm shifts toward regenerative destination management (Budarma et al., 2025). Complementary work on low-carbon island tourism (Fakfare & Wattanacharoensil, 2022), marine litter management in the Siargao Islands (Serrona et al., 2022), and resident support

for regenerative travel in Kaua'i (Zaman et al., 2022) has begun to connect regenerative principles to the operational realities of island and marine tourism specifically. Despite this expansion, the literature remains fragmented across three largely disconnected streams: conceptual and philosophical treatments of regenerative tourism in general; empirical, single-site studies of specific islands or marine destinations; and emerging but still underdeveloped work on governance structures, indicators, and measurement systems capable of demonstrating regenerative outcomes rather than merely aspiring to them (Das & Mishra, 2026; Widari & Prasiasa, 2026).

This fragmentation creates a practical problem. Destination managers, policymakers, and academics in archipelagic nations such as Indonesia, where the tourism sector spans thousands of islands with highly heterogeneous ecological and socio-cultural conditions, currently lack an integrated framework that connects regenerative tourism's conceptual foundations to concrete governance mechanisms and measurable indicators suited to island and marine contexts (Dwi et al., 2026; Islahuddin et al., 2024). Existing systematic and narrative reviews of regenerative tourism tend either to remain at a high level of conceptual abstraction, useful for theory-building but difficult to operationalize, or to focus narrowly on single case studies that offer rich contextual insight but limited generalizability across island typologies (Mandal & Dey, 2025; Sageena & Kumar, 2025). Few reviews have systematically synthesized how regenerative principles manifest specifically across island and marine geographies, where constraints such as carrying capacity, freshwater and waste infrastructure, biodiversity sensitivity, and community land or marine tenure differ substantially from mainland and urban tourism contexts (Taufik et al., 2025; Volosiuk, 2025).

The novelty of this article lies in three contributions. First, it synthesizes the rapidly growing but scattered regenerative tourism literature published between 2021 and 2026 into a single narrative review explicitly organized around island and marine destination characteristics, rather than treating islands as an incidental case within a broader terrestrial framework. Second, it integrates three literature streams that are rarely analyzed together in existing reviews, conceptual and epistemological foundations, island- and marine-specific empirical applications, and governance and indicator-based measurement approaches, producing an applied synthesis rather than a purely theoretical account (Paddison & Hall, 2024; Hui et al., 2023). Third, it explicitly incorporates Indonesian and Southeast Asian archipelagic evidence, including studies from the Momparang Archipelago, South Sulawesi, the Gili Islands, and Bali (Fauzi et al., 2024; Islahuddin et al., 2024; Taufik et al., 2025; Widari & Prasiasa, 2026), alongside the dominant Aotearoa New Zealand-centered literature, offering a more geographically balanced foundation for regenerative tourism scholarship and practice in archipelagic developing nations. This balance matters because island typologies in the Global South face distinct constraints, including customary marine tenure, artisanal fisheries dependency, and limited waste-management infrastructure, that are underrepresented in the predominantly Western regenerative tourism canon (Amorim et al., 2023).

Guided by these gaps, this article addresses three research questions. First, what conceptual and theoretical foundations underpin regenerative tourism as distinct from sustainable tourism, and how do these foundations translate to island and marine settings? Second, what governance, community-participation, and circular-economy mechanisms have been documented as enabling regenerative outcomes in island and marine destinations specifically? Third, what indicators and measurement approaches currently exist, or are needed, to evaluate whether tourism in island and marine destinations is genuinely regenerative rather than merely sustainable in name. By answering these questions through a structured narrative synthesis, this article aims to provide both a theoretically grounded and practically applicable foundation for repositioning island and marine tourism destinations, including those within Indonesia's archipelagic tourism system, toward genuine ecological and socio-cultural regeneration.

The urgency of this reframing is heightened by the pace at which island and marine destinations are being reintegrated into global travel demand following successive disruptions to international tourism flows. Without a coherent regenerative framework, renewed visitor growth risks reproducing the same extractive patterns that degraded these destinations in

earlier growth cycles, only at a faster rate given expanding low-cost connectivity to previously remote archipelagos (Nafi & Ahmed, 2025). Positioning regeneration as a deliberate design principle, rather than an incidental outcome of good intentions, is therefore central to ensuring that island and marine tourism development in the coming decade strengthens, rather than further erodes, the ecological and cultural foundations on which it depends.

2. Method

This article employs a systematic narrative review design, chosen because it allows a structured, replicable search and screening process to be combined with an interpretive, theme-based synthesis appropriate for a conceptually diverse and still-consolidating field such as regenerative tourism (Bellato & Pollock, 2023). The review followed a modified PRISMA-informed procedure comprising four stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion, illustrated in Figure 1.

In the identification stage, records were retrieved from Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, DOAJ, and Google Scholar using combinations of the keywords "regenerative tourism," "sustainable tourism," "island destination," "marine tourism," "coastal tourism," and "blue economy," restricted to peer-reviewed journal articles and conference proceedings published between January 2021 and June 2026. This search yielded 214 records. After removing duplicates across databases, 176 unique records remained.

During screening, titles and abstracts were reviewed against two inclusion criteria: substantive engagement with regenerative, sustainable, or circular-economy tourism concepts, and demonstrable relevance to island, coastal, or marine destination contexts either directly or through transferable governance and conceptual insight. Ninety-eight records were excluded at this stage for being off-topic, unavailable in English or Indonesian, or lacking an active, verifiable digital object identifier, leaving 78 records for full-text assessment.

At the eligibility stage, full texts were assessed against three criteria: (1) publication in a peer-reviewed journal or indexed conference proceeding, (2) publication between 2021 and 2026 to ensure currency, and (3) either an empirical or conceptual contribution specifically addressing regenerative tourism, sustainable island tourism, or marine destination governance. Forty-three articles were excluded at this stage, primarily due to thematic duplication with already-included studies or insufficient methodological or conceptual detail to support synthesis.

The final corpus comprised 35 studies, which were read in full and coded thematically using an inductive-deductive approach: an initial deductive coding frame was derived from Bellato et al.'s (2022a) regenerative tourism framework, covering living-systems thinking, place-based co-design, and transformative capacity, and was subsequently refined inductively as island- and marine-specific themes, such as circular resource management, customary marine tenure, and blue-economy indicators, emerged from the data. Coding was conducted manually in a structured synthesis matrix cross-referencing each study against four analytical themes: (1) conceptual and theoretical foundations, (2) island- and marine-specific empirical applications, (3) governance and community-participation mechanisms, and (4) measurement and indicator approaches. This matrix, summarized in the Results and Discussion section, forms the basis for the narrative synthesis presented below. Reliability of thematic coding was strengthened through iterative re-reading and cross-checking of coded excerpts against the original source text, and through triangulation across studies addressing overlapping geographies, such as the multiple Aotearoa New Zealand and Indonesian archipelagic studies included in the corpus, to identify convergence and divergence in reported findings.

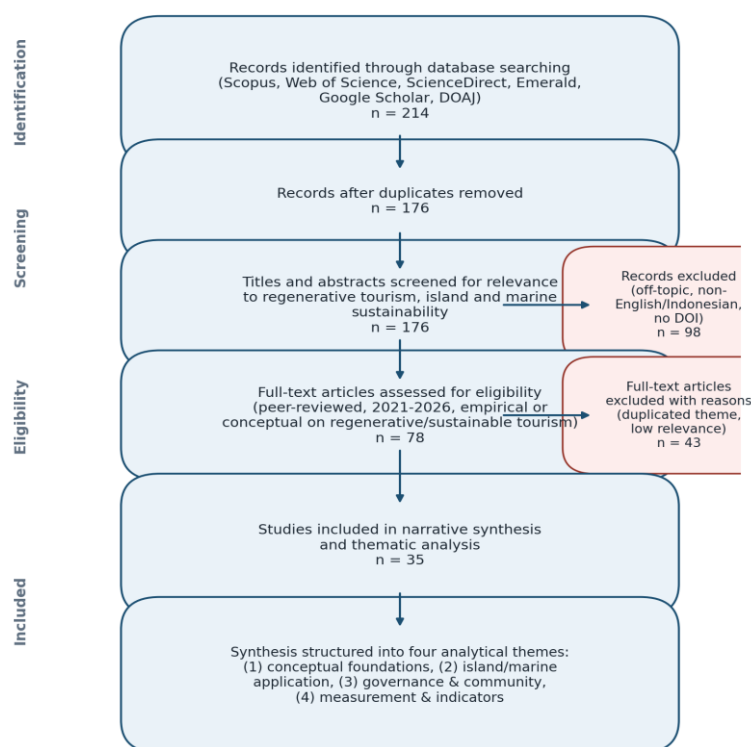


Figure 1. PRISMA-informed flow diagram of the article identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion process

3. Results and Discussion

The thematic synthesis of the 35 included studies produced four interrelated findings, summarized in Table 1 and elaborated in the discussion that follows: (1) regenerative tourism rests on conceptual foundations that differ fundamentally from sustainability, (2) island and marine applications reveal both convergence and context-specific adaptation of these foundations, (3) governance and community mechanisms determine whether regenerative aspirations translate into practice, and (4) measurement and indicator systems remain the least developed component of the field.

Conceptual foundations: from managing harm to cultivating vitality

Across the corpus, the most consistent theoretical claim is that regenerative tourism represents an epistemological break from sustainability rather than an incremental extension of it (Dredge, 2022; Bellato & Pollock, 2023). Where sustainable tourism frameworks treat destinations as systems to be optimized within fixed ecological limits, regenerative tourism treats destinations as living systems possessing their own agency, memory, and capacity for renewal, echoing regenerative development theory imported from architecture and permaculture into tourism studies (Bellato et al., 2022a). This shift has significant implications for island and marine destinations specifically, because coral reef and mangrove ecosystems are widely characterized in the literature as possessing threshold dynamics: below a disturbance threshold, passive protection allows recovery, but beyond it, ecosystems can shift into degraded stable states that do not self-correct without active restoration (Alvarez, 2023; Duarte et al., 2024). Sustainability's harm-minimization logic, in other words, is poorly matched to ecosystems that require active regenerative intervention once degradation has already occurred.

A second recurring conceptual theme concerns the transformative role tourism actors are expected to play. Bellato et al. (2022b) argue that hosts, visitors, and destination managers must adopt "living systems thinking," reframing their roles from service providers and consumers to stewards and co-creators of place. Iddawala and Lee (2025) extend this by mapping the conceptual variation across the regenerative tourism literature, finding that despite terminological convergence around words such as "regeneration" and "flourishing," authors differ substantially in whether they treat regeneration primarily as an ecological outcome, a community-empowerment process, or a spiritual and relational reorientation toward place. This conceptual plurality, while intellectually generative, was identified across multiple studies as a barrier to operationalization, since destination managers reviewing the literature encounter inconsistent guidance on what regenerative practice concretely requires (Bellato et al., 2023b; Sageena & Kumar, 2025).

A third theme concerns decolonial and epistemic critique. Bellato et al. (2023b) argue that much regenerative tourism scholarship, despite its transformative rhetoric, continues to reproduce Western, techno-managerial assumptions about knowledge and expertise, marginalizing indigenous and local ecological knowledge systems that have historically sustained island and marine environments. This critique carries direct relevance for archipelagic nations such as Indonesia, where customary marine tenure systems, such as sasi in Maluku or awig-awig in Bali and Lombok, already encode regenerative principles, including rotational harvesting and marine closures, that predate the academic regenerative tourism literature by generations (Widari & Prasiasa, 2026; Taufik et al., 2025).

Island and marine applications: convergence and context-specific adaptation

Empirical studies applying regenerative principles specifically to island and marine destinations reveal both convergence with, and meaningful departure from, the predominantly Aotearoa New Zealand-centered conceptual literature. In Vietnam, Tuyen (2025) documents how circular economy practices, including plastic-waste reduction cooperatives and community-based marine debris collection, function as an entry point for regenerative tourism on Con Dao Island, suggesting that circularity can serve as a practical, measurable proxy for regeneration even where the broader philosophical framework remains unfamiliar to local operators. In Indonesia, Fauzi et al. (2024) describe a regenerative marine tourism strategy for the Momparang Archipelago in East Belitung built around ecosystem carrying-capacity zoning, community-led reef monitoring, and revenue-sharing arrangements designed to reinvest tourism income into habitat restoration, illustrating how regenerative principles can be embedded into destination-level spatial planning rather than remaining abstract policy language.

Comparable dynamics appear in the Philippines, where Serrona et al. (2022) show that marine litter accumulation in the Siargao Islands stems less from tourist behavior alone than from inadequate municipal waste infrastructure interacting with tourism-driven consumption growth, implying that regenerative interventions in island settings must address infrastructural regeneration alongside behavioral and ecological regeneration. Similarly, Fakfare and Wattanacharoensil (2022, 2024) find that low-carbon tourism initiatives in Thai island destinations gain the most traction when bundled with visible community benefits, such as local employment in waste-management cooperatives, rather than being framed solely as environmental obligations. In Hawai'i, Zaman et al. (2022) provide quantitative evidence that resident support for regenerative travel initiatives on Kaua'i Island is moderated by perceptions of travel-shaming and foreign-tourist attractiveness, indicating that regenerative narratives can generate social friction if introduced without careful attention to host-community sentiment.

Within Indonesia specifically, Islahuddin et al. (2024) quantify the economic value of coastal and small-island tourism in South Sulawesi, providing baseline data against which regenerative reinvestment strategies could be benchmarked, while Taufik et al. (2025) document persistent sustainability implementation gaps in the Gili Islands, including weak waste segregation and inconsistent enforcement of marine protected area boundaries, that regenerative frameworks would need to address structurally rather than through voluntary guidelines alone. Widari and Prasiasa (2026) offer a particularly relevant case in Serangan,

Bali, explicitly assessing the gap between regenerative aspiration and community-participation reality, finding that regenerative narratives in destination marketing frequently outpace the extent to which local communities are genuinely empowered as co-decision-makers rather than service labor.

Governance, community participation, and circular-economy mechanisms

The literature converges strongly on the claim that governance structure, rather than conceptual sophistication, is the primary determinant of whether regenerative tourism produces genuine outcomes. Becken and Kaur (2021) analyze how government agencies attempt to "anchor" regenerative tourism value within existing policy instruments, finding that regenerative language is frequently adopted in strategic documents well before corresponding budgetary, regulatory, or institutional mechanisms are established, producing a persistent implementation gap. Pung et al. (2024) reinforce this finding through interviews with New Zealand destination planners, who reported that regenerative tourism is widely endorsed rhetorically but constrained in practice by short political cycles, fragmented land and marine jurisdiction, and limited technical capacity for ecosystem monitoring.

Community participation emerges as a second critical governance dimension. Multiple studies emphasize that regenerative outcomes depend on shifting community roles from consultation to co-design and shared decision-making authority (Bellato et al., 2023a; Amorim et al., 2023). Das and Mishra (2026) propose a destination-scale framework explicitly integrating circular-economy resource loops with community-resilience indicators, arguing that regeneration requires closing material and economic loops locally, keeping tourism revenue, waste-management contracts, and food-supply chains within the destination community, rather than allowing value and materials to leak to external operators. This circular, locally anchored model resonates strongly with the Con Dao and Momparang Archipelago cases described above, suggesting a degree of convergence between conceptual governance frameworks and empirical island-level practice.

Measurement and indicators: the least developed dimension

The weakest and most underdeveloped theme across the corpus concerns measurement. Several reviews explicitly note that regenerative tourism currently lacks standardized indicators capable of distinguishing genuinely regenerative destinations from those merely rebranding conventional sustainability practices (Bellato & Pollock, 2023; Budarma et al., 2025). Where indicators do exist, they tend to be drawn from adjacent fields, ecological restoration metrics such as coral cover recovery or mangrove replanting survival rates, circular-economy metrics such as waste-diversion percentages, and socio-economic indicators such as local revenue retention, rather than being purpose-built for tourism regeneration. Hui et al. (2023) offer a partial exception, proposing media-richness and eco-literacy indicators linked to pro-environmental behavior change among tourists, though this remains focused on visitor-side outcomes rather than destination-level ecological regeneration. The absence of validated, destination-level regenerative indicators represents the most significant gap identified in this synthesis and directly informs the applied framework proposed in this article's conclusion.

Table 1 summarizes how each analytical theme manifests across the general conceptual literature compared with island- and marine-specific applications, highlighting where convergence is strong and where island and marine contexts demand distinct governance or measurement responses.

Table 1. Synthesis matrix comparing regenerative tourism themes across general and island/marine-specific literature.

Analytical Theme	General / Conceptual Literature	Island & Marine-Specific Application	Representative Sources
Conceptual foundations	Regeneration framed as living-systems thinking; epistemological break from harm-minimization sustainability.	Applied to threshold-sensitive ecosystems (coral reefs, mangroves) requiring active, not passive, restoration.	Bellato et al. (2022a); Dredge (2022); Alvarez (2023)
Island & marine applications	Case-study evidence largely from Aotearoa New Zealand policy and destination contexts.	Circular-economy and zoning strategies in Con Dao, Momparang Archipelago, Siargao, Gili Islands.	Tuyen (2025); Fauzi et al. (2024); Serrona et al. (2022); Taufik et al. (2025)
Governance & community participation	Emphasis on co-design, transformative roles, and decolonial critique of top-down planning.	Customary marine tenure (sasi, awig-awig) and revenue-sharing as locally anchored governance tools.	Becken & Kaur (2021); Bellato et al. (2023b); Widari & Prasiasa (2026)
Measurement & indicators	Indicators borrowed from ecological restoration, circular economy, and visitor behavior fields.	Limited destination-level indicators; ecological and community-retention metrics remain underdeveloped.	Bellato & Pollock (2023); Hui et al. (2023); Budarma et al. (2025)

Practical implications for island and marine destination management

The synthesis carries several practical implications. First, destination management organizations in island and marine settings should treat regeneration and sustainability as complementary rather than interchangeable strategies: sustainability instruments such as carrying-capacity limits and eco-certification remain necessary for containing further harm, while regenerative instruments, including reef restoration financing, community-owned circular-economy enterprises, and customary-tenure recognition, are required to actively rebuild ecological and social capital already lost (Arrambide et al., 2026; Grilli et al., 2021). Second, the recurring implementation gap between regenerative rhetoric and institutional capacity documented by Becken and Kaur (2021) and Pung et al. (2024) suggests that regenerative tourism policy in archipelagic nations should be paired from the outset with dedicated financing mechanisms and long-term monitoring budgets, rather than being introduced as an unfunded strategic aspiration. Third, the strong convergence around community co-design across the corpus indicates that Indonesian destination managers should prioritize formal recognition of customary marine institutions, such as sasi and awig-awig systems, as regenerative governance mechanisms in their own right, rather than treating community involvement solely as a consultation requirement layered onto externally designed tourism plans.

The synthesis also surfaces two limitations that shape how confidently these findings can be generalized. First, the evidence base remains geographically uneven: Aotearoa New Zealand accounts for a disproportionate share of conceptual and governance-focused studies, while Indonesian and broader Southeast Asian evidence, though growing rapidly and increasingly visible in the 2024 to 2026 publication window, remains comparatively concentrated in a small number of destinations, including the Momparang Archipelago, South Sulawesi, the Gili Islands, and Bali. Findings drawn from this literature should therefore be read as indicative of emerging patterns rather than as fully representative of Indonesia's more than seventeen thousand islands. Second, because this review relies on a narrative synthesis

of secondary literature rather than new primary fieldwork, it cannot independently verify the extent to which regenerative claims made in the reviewed studies reflect measurable ecological or social outcomes on the ground, reinforcing the article's core finding that standardized, independently verifiable regenerative indicators remain an urgent research priority rather than a solved methodological problem.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the consistency of findings across geographically and methodologically diverse studies, spanning conceptual reviews, single-site case studies, and quantitative resident-perception surveys, lends reasonable confidence to the article's central claim: regenerative tourism, when anchored in living-systems thinking, genuine community co-design, circular resource governance, and eventually robust outcome indicators, offers island and marine destinations, including those within Indonesia's archipelagic system, a substantively different and more ecologically ambitious pathway than conventional sustainability alone can provide

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

This article set out to synthesize the fragmented regenerative tourism literature into an integrated framework applicable to island and marine destination sustainability, addressing conceptual foundations, island- and marine-specific applications, governance mechanisms, and measurement gaps through a systematic narrative review of 35 studies published between 2021 and 2026. The synthesis demonstrates that regenerative tourism differs from sustainable tourism not merely in degree but in kind: where sustainability seeks to minimize harm within existing ecological limits, regeneration seeks to actively rebuild the ecological, cultural, and social vitality of destinations already under strain. For island and marine geographies, where coral reef and mangrove ecosystems exhibit threshold dynamics that make passive protection insufficient once degradation has occurred, this distinction is not merely semantic but practically consequential for how destination management strategies should be designed.

The evidence reviewed indicates that regenerative outcomes in island and marine settings depend on three interlocking conditions: governance structures that pair regenerative policy language with concrete financing and monitoring capacity, community-participation mechanisms that grant local and indigenous institutions genuine co-decision authority rather than consultative status, and circular-economy arrangements that retain tourism-generated resources and revenue within the destination community. Cases from Con Dao, the Mompang Archipelago, Siargao, and Kaua'i illustrate that these conditions are achievable but remain unevenly implemented, while Indonesian evidence from South Sulawesi, the Gili Islands, and Bali suggests that customary marine governance institutions offer an underutilized foundation for regenerative practice that complements, rather than requires wholesale replacement by, imported regenerative frameworks.

The clearest gap identified in this synthesis concerns measurement: the field currently lacks standardized, destination-level indicators capable of distinguishing genuinely regenerative outcomes from rebranded sustainability practices. Closing this gap should be treated as a priority for future research, particularly research co-produced with island and archipelagic communities themselves, so that indicators reflect locally meaningful notions of ecological and cultural vitality rather than externally imposed metrics alone. Future studies could productively pursue longitudinal, place-based research that tracks specific island destinations, including those within Indonesia's archipelagic system, over multiple tourism cycles to empirically test whether regenerative interventions produce measurable improvements in reef health, community wellbeing, and local economic retention relative to conventional sustainability approaches.

For policymakers and destination management organizations, this article's practical contribution is a reminder that regenerative tourism cannot be adopted through rhetorical repositioning alone. It requires deliberate investment in institutional capacity, genuine redistribution of decision-making authority to local and customary institutions, and a long-term commitment to monitoring outcomes that extends well beyond typical political and investment planning cycles. Approached in this way, regenerative tourism offers island and marine destinations, including Indonesia's vast archipelago, a credible and theoretically grounded

paradigm for achieving sustainability beyond mere damage control, positioning tourism as an active contributor to, rather than a passive beneficiary of, the ecological and cultural systems on which these destinations ultimately depend.

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