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## Tourism Potential Development Strategy Aek Milas Sosopan Sipirok

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### Abstract

*This study aims to discover the opportunities for developing the Aek Milas Sosopan bathing tourism object in Sipirok Regency and what strategies can be carried out by the community and local government in developing the Aek Milas Sosopan bathing tourism object in Sipirok Regency. The research method used is the library research method (library method). The results of the research on Aek Milas Sosopan Sipirok Baths have enormous potential besides having natural beauty with vast expanses of rice fields, exotic mountain views, and cool weather. Road access is also very good because the location is located on the edge of the Tarutung causeway. The strategies that need to be carried out are in the form of providing facilities and arrangements, maintenance, maximizing the use of internet media, and developing and expanding tourism products.*

**Keywords:** Development, Tourism, Aek Milas

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peluang pengembangan objek wisata pemandian Aek Milas Sosopan Kabupaten Sipirok dan Strategi apakah yang bisa dilakukan oleh masyarakat maupun pemerintah daerah dalam mengembangkan objek wisata pemandian Aek Milas Sosopan Kabupaten Sipirok. Metode penelolitian yang digunakan adalah metode library reseach (metode kepastakaan). Hasil penelitian Pemandian Aek Milas Sosopan Sipirok memiliki potensi yang sangat besar selain memiliki keindahan alami dengan hamparan sawah luas, pemandangan pegunungan yang eksotis dan cuaca yang sejuk akses jalan juga sangat bagus karena lokasi terletak di tepi jalan lintas Tarutung. Startegi yang perlu dilakukan berupa Pengadaan fasilitas dan penataan, pemeliharaan, Memaksimalkan pemanfaatan media internet, dan Pengembangan dan perluasan produk-produk wisata

**Keywords:** Development, Tourism, Aek Milas.

**Kata Kunci:** Pengembangan, Pariwisata, Aek Milas

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## INTRODUCTION

The Government's various efforts to encourage national economic growth have begun to show better results. One sector that has received support from the Government is the tourism sector. Proud to Travel in Indonesia is one of the Government's support programs in the National Economic Recovery (PEN) for tourism and the creative economy in the regions. The abundance of natural resources that exist in various regions of Indonesia, especially natural and beautiful tourist attractions can increase economic growth if managed optimally in accordance with the interests of the community.(Case et al., 2011).

Aek Milas Baths in Sosopan is one of the natural attractions that has not been managed optimally, even though Aek Milas Sosopan is one of the natural resources that has potential to be developed with a business orientation

Until now, residents around the Aek Milas Sosopan baths have not managed this location into ecotourism, it is proven that everything is still free, there is no need to spend money for entrance tickets to the location. Hot water in the Batak language means Aek Milas. While the word Sosopan is the name of a village located in Sipirok Regency, North Sumatra. So Aek Milas Sosopan baths can be interpreted as hot water baths located in Sosopan Village.

From the results of interviews with visitors and people who have bathed in Aek Milas Sosopan, information is obtained that bathing in Aek Milas Sosopan makes the body more relaxed, increases inspiration, increases love for nature and can even cure various diseases, especially skin diseases.

All forms of activities that bring physical and spiritual freshness by utilizing the potential of natural resources, both natural and non-natural, namely there has been human intervention in the form of cultivation with various related businesses in the field of nature called nature tourism.(Pambudi et al., 2014).

An unforgettable sensation in the aek milas pool Sosopan when we dip our hands from the fingertips to the elbows and can also slowly dip our feet into the hot water pool even though it feels hot at first, over time our bodies adapt to the temperature of the water, t as if the water temperature has changed. warm

and makes us tempted to throw the whole body.

Traveling can develop creativity, eliminate boredom, and be able to support the productivity of an individual, so it is not surprising that tourism is an activity that is in great demand by every human being. Utilization of natural resources as a place for tourism can provide high economic value and foster a sense of pride and community concern for an area if the regional human resources are able to manage the area's natural resources into a tourist location that can attract visitors both from within and outside the country.

Apart from high economic value, tourism can grow and increase pride in the nation so that people who care about a nation will grow. Tourism is considered as one of the potential assets in improving the economy in areas that have potential tourist objects(Rahmatika, 2021).

In the current era of social media, the number of people taking selfies or selfies in various areas is a great opportunity for progress in the field of tourism. Therefore, much needs to be done to develop tourism potentials, especially nature tourism(Wirawan et al., 2022). The location of the Sosopan Sipirok aek milas bathing pool in the form of a pond with a size of approximately 100m<sup>2</sup> is located at the Sosopan Mosque. Because the location of the pool is a religious area, the female and male bathing pools are separated.

It is undeniable that the lack of bathing facilities at Aek Milas Sosopan cannot make visitors expect much. Visitors can only soak and stretch their muscles in the bathing pool. However, because the location of the Sosopan Mosque is in the middle of rice fields, visitors can enjoy the beauty of the beautiful rural atmosphere. This spot area because of its natural beauty and atmosphere has the potential to attract visitors. The Angkola and Mandailing ethnicity say the sipirok atmosphere is very nauli which means beautiful.

This is also because Sipirok is a cold, small town with an aura of serenity. Although ethnic groups and religions are diverse, tolerance in this city, which is a division of South Tapanuli Regency, is very intertwined. In addition to natural beauty, one of the considerations for visitors to visit tourist sites

is the high tolerance of local residents (Rahmatillah et al., 2019).

Many factors encourage someone to travel, other than just recreation or relaxation, including wanting to see the beauty of God's creation, wanting to visit places that have never been, wanting to do something that can't be done at home, looking for beautiful air and wanting to observe and immortalize something (Sandyarini & Bhaskara, 2022). Various factors are considered in general, natural conditions are very dominant in determining, such as climate, natural scenery, flora and fauna, mineral water sources and others (Rusvitasari & Solikhin, 2017).

The next factor that determines visitors to choose a particular tourist location is the habits of the local community such as culture, traditions and customs, historical objects, dances and also traditional ceremonies in the form of siluluton (death rituals) or siriaon (happy party events) for the local Batak community. Therefore, the government and community leaders (traditional leaders, religious leaders, young people) must work together in developing natural tourism objects as the main attraction for tourists (Hudiono, 2022).

Everything that has uniqueness, value in the form of diversity of natural wealth, culture, and natural beauty as well as man-made products that are the choice of tourist visits is a tourist attraction (Ginting et al., 2020).

Hot water in the pool of the Sosopan Mosque flows from the active mountain of Sibual-buali. Many young people in Sipirok are also curious about the existence of the hot water. That's why many teenagers who are growing up go to climb Mount Sibual-buali and when they reach the Haritte crater, there is a strong smell of sulfur. Information obtained from the public is that the temperature of the hot water that bursts from the crater can make chicken eggs ripen in a few seconds. The beauty of Mount Sibual-bulai and the Haritte crater is an additional attraction when visiting Sipirok.

Due to the potential of the Aek Milas Sosopan bathing tourism object, it still needs to be developed again in order to become the most desirable tourist destination in the city of Sipirok, a tourism development strategy is needed that is really carefully structured with good management from the village

government and local community leaders. . Based on this description, it is necessary to realize that the local government, in this case the Culture and Tourism Office of Sipirok Regency, has a very important role in developing a tourist attraction in Sipirok, especially Aek Milas Sosopan.

In order to achieve goals, both long-term goals and short-term strategies become very important for the development of an organization or company (Pamularsih, 2020). In optimizing the existing potential and increasing significant tourist visits, various strategies must involve the local community, where this strategy is captured through the perceptions of tourists and local communities (Slamet, 2019). In addition to maintaining sustainability in the development of tourism sites, innovative new strategies are expected to be able to optimize and answer the needs of tourists and increase local people's income (Kurniawati, 2022).

Based on this description, the authors are interested in conducting research with the title "Aek Milas Sosopan Sipirok Tourism Potential Development Strategy". The formulation of the problem in this study is How are the opportunities for developing Aek Milas Sosopan bathing tourism objects, Sipirok Regency and what strategies can be done by the community and local governments in developing Aek Milas Sosopan baths, Sipirok Regency?

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method used by the author is the Library Research Method (Library Method). Research library research (library) is a research method by collecting data from various literatures to collect data. The literature studied is also in the form of journals, newspapers, documentation materials, magazines, and is not limited to books. The emphasis of library research is to find various theories, laws, propositions, principles, opinions, ideas and others that can be used to analyze and solve the problems studied (Sugiyono, 2010).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Sosopan Village is approximately ±15 km from the town of Sipriok and takes around ±10-15 minutes by motorized vehicle/car. The complete address of the Aek Milas Sosopan

Baths, to be precise, is at Jl. Tarutung - Padang Sidempuan No.19, Parsorminan, Parsorminan, Kec. Sipirok, South Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra 22742

Table 1 Estimated Number of Visitors in the Last 5 Years on Eid holidays (3D)

No	Year	Amount
1	2017	± 250-300 people
2	2018	± 200-250 people
3	2019	± 70-100 people
4	2020	± 50-70 people
5	2021	± 400-450 people

Source: Local Residents

Fewer visitors in 2019 and 2020 were due to the implementation of the policy (PPKM) for Imposing Restrictions on Community Activities due to the Covid 19 outbreak which was at its peak. In 2020 the outbreak of the corona virus disease or what is called covid-19 caused the temporary closure of regional tourism which resulted in the closure of tourist attractions in various zones. The estimated number of visitors is known based on the number of parked vehicles and visitors who visit lopo (warung) around the site.



Figure 1. Aek Milas Entrance Gate

To enter the location of the hot springs visitors park the vehicle on the side of the road then pass through the polite Aek Milas gate and walk down the stairs



Figure 2 Polite Mosque

The location of the polite Aek Milas bath is in the mosque where the location of the mosque is right in the middle of the community's rice fields.



Figure 3 Aek Milas Bathing Pool

The Aek Milas bathing pool is rectangular in shape ±3 meters and wide ±1.5 meters is located behind the mosque and adjacent to the toilet as well as the place of ablution for the congregation of the mosque



Figure 4 Aek Milas Bathing Pool Temperature

The temperature of the Aek Milas polite bathing pool ranges ±40°C, this temperature can not be higher during the day. according to information from several visitors that visitors who come to bathe cannot immediately throw themselves into the pool because it will be fatal to health, especially the respiratory department. The following are reviews from visitors to Aek Milas Polite:

- The closest hot spring therapy around North Sumatra, free entry fee, my advice is to go there in the morning before noon because the water is still quiet and clear, the local residents are also friendly. The pool temperature is up to 44°C.
- Hopefully it's kept clean. There are trash cans for leftover plastic wrap for shampoo, soap, toothpaste containers, etc. especially for visitors, especially,

- all fatigue immediately disappears, it's not useless to come all the way. Anyway, highly recommended
- The location is strategic, the bath is below and you have to go down the stairs first. But it's not too comfortable here, there's no place to change clothes, and it's close to a landfill. If it's crowded this area makes traffic jams,
- Too bad the place is not maintained. And some are made for washing, washing clothes. All the soap goes into the water. And the trash is not cleaned up.
- Not to mention, the women's section is next to a mountainous landfill,
- Many things are very unfortunate, starting from the lack of parking space, places that are not managed properly, changing rooms and dirty toilets,
- The place is less clean, because maybe it's free here. But as long as it's managed properly, the ticket price is okay.

The SWOT analysis of Aek Milas Sosopan baths provides an overview of opportunities and strategies that will be implemented to increase visitor interest in tourism management.

**Opportunities for the development of the Aek Milas Sosopan bathing tourism object in Sipirok Regency, namely:**

The Aek Milas Sosopan bath has enormous and iconic potential as an alternative for family recreation for the community because this location has its own beauty with beautiful expanses of rice fields and exotic views of mountains and cool weather.

The location of the Aek Milas Sosopan bath is located on the edge of the Tarutung causeway unlike most natural tourist sites with difficult road access. The Aek Milas Sosopan bathhouse access road to the location is very adequate which makes this place a mainstay of the Sosopan people's tourist attractions.

Table 2. SWOT Analysis Results

Strengths (S)	1. Comfortable and safe environment. 2. The people around are friendly.
Weaknesses (W)	1. Cleanliness is not considered. 2. Human resources are not capable enough to become ecotourism. 3. Parking area is less extensive. 4. Changing room. 5. Toilets are still traditional
Opportunities (O)	1. The potential of visitors increases every year. 2. Good road access. 3. Nerada's strategic location beside the Tarutung causeway
Threats (T)	1. There are 3 Aek Milas bathing locations in other villages which are not too far away namely Aek Milas Padang Longitude, Aek Milas Parausorat, and Aek Milas Sibadoar. 2. Technology has not been used optimally. inadequate facilities and infrastructure.

**Strategies that can be carried out by the community and local government in developing the Aek Milas Sosopan bathing tourism object in Sipirok Regency include**

Provision of facilities and arrangement. In terms of polite Aek Milas bathing facilities, it still needs a lot of development, such as inadequate toilets and arrangement of changing rooms (MCK), it is undeniable that bathing and washing outhouses is one of the public facilities that are non-negotiable, always needed in any condition. Procurement of organic and inorganic waste bins. One of the complaints of tourists when visiting the polite Aek Milas location is the lack of seats to relax.

One form of service that can be offered to tourists visiting tourist sites is adequate and good facilities and infrastructure (Suryani et al., 2020). the better the existing facilities and infrastructure, the level of tourist satisfaction will increase and will give the impression of being abandoned by tourists towards good tourist sites visited (Amelia & Prasetyo, 2022).

Maintenance of areas that need to be immediately touched by the government, such as repairing roads to the location, providing resting places, making stairs more attractive, and all things that can provide convenience, calm, comfort and safety for tourists. It is necessary to create a tourism-aware society,

namely a society that is fully aware and responsible for acting and behaving as a polite host, wearing clothes covering the rules of bathing in daily life in order to achieve the goals of tourism development by promoting (Delita et al., 2017).

Maximizing the use of internet media apart from being a media promotion requires the development of technology-based tourism. In the future the use of technology can be applied so that Aek Milas bathing tours can be accessed through online reviews. In the digital era, with the rapid advancement of technology and the internet, it has caused changes in human lifestyles (Princess, 2020).

Development of marketing of tourism services and tourist attractions by building regional tourism websites and also developing tourist visit materials through videos, slides and browsers.

The development carried out is made into a forum for the elderly and by exploring the creative role of the younger generation as human resources in promoting the tourism sector (Iskandar, 2022).

The development and expansion of tourism products in this case optimizes all existing tourism potential by conducting surveys of tourist expectations, auditing tourism potential, and developing the quality and packaging of regional specialties. Tourism if managed properly is a large industry that can contribute to increasing the income of the people of a region or country. (Laipi, 2020). Improving Human Resources, namely the Sosopan village community.

Because in addition to optimizing existing natural resources, human resources also really need to be maximized because the resources that are well taken will make them aware of the importance of tourism being able to produce economic improvements from a tourist attraction that is memorable in the eyes of visiting tourists. Human resources are one of the supporting factors for the development of tourist objects in the form of conditions that are able to grow a program (Cornelis, 2019).

## CONCLUSION

Aek Milas Sosopan Sapirook bathhouse has enormous potential besides having natural beauty with wide expanses of rice fields, exotic mountain views and cool weather, road access is also very good because the location is

located on the edge of the Tarutung causeway. Strategies that need to be carried out are in the form of procurement of facilities and arrangement, maintenance, maximizing the use of internet media, and development and expansion of tourism products.

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