

STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING THE ECONOMY OF COASTAL FAMILIES IN SERDANG BEDAGAI REGENCY BASED ON ECOPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to provide an effective strategy for improving the economy of coastal families in Serdang Bedagai Regency. Serdang Bedagai Regency has great potential in coastal natural resources, but many coastal families still face economic constraints with monthly incomes below 2.5 million rupiah. Many of them even have to work outside the area to meet their daily needs. An ecopreneurship-based economic improvement strategy is a relevant solution to overcome this challenge. This includes education, training and development of sustainable, ecologically based businesses. Collaboration with related agencies, non-governmental organizations, NGOs and educational institutions is also needed to support the implementation of this strategy. Through this ecopreneurship approach, it is hoped that coastal families in Serdang Bedagai Regency can increase their income while preserving natural resources that are important for their lives and those of future generations, as well as encouraging sustainable economic growth in the region.

Keywords: *Economic Improvement Strategy, Ecopreneurship Pesisir Family*

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has thousands of islands from Sabang to Merauke which have great opportunities in terms of tourism to become local income and income for the surrounding community. However, it cannot be managed completely well to improve the welfare of the people in tourist areas. This is what happens in Serdang Bedagai Regency which has an area of 1,900.22 Km² which has many tourist attractions, especially in coastal areas. Currently, Serdang Bedagai Regency has more than 7 beaches and other tourist attractions which are very popular with tourists, as well as natural resources which can be managed to provide income for the community. However, this cannot be fully utilized by local governments and the community so it does not have an impact on the community's economy, especially the poor, which increases every year. The number has increased based on data released by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Serdang Bedagai Regency, it was recorded that in March 2020 the number of poor people was 49.18 thousand people or 7.97 percent, which then in March 2021 was recorded to have increased to 51.16 thousand people or 8.30 percent of the total population.

This shows that poverty alleviation carried out by the district government is not effective. From the results of the pre-survey carried out, it was found that the majority of the increase in the number of poor people came from coastal areas in the Tanjung Beringin sub-district which should have excellent economic potential. From the pre-survey, it was found that many housewives were looking for work to help support the family economy, but not all of them found work. With so many coastal women looking for work, it is possible to empower coastal women based on Ecopreneurship to open businesses or employment opportunities. Ecopreneurship-based empowerment of coastal women is expected to improve the family's economic level, which is supported by previous research conducted by (Hidayah, 2022) showing that the results of this activity are the formation of production partners who produce squid crackers and their marketing, which then increases the family's economic level. Meanwhile, research conducted by (Karwati, 2017) shows the results of the PEKKA program on improving the family economy, namely improving living standards, building critical awareness, and meeting family needs.

1. Community Empowerment

Empowerment comes from the word "power" which is prefixed to the word "empowered" meaning to have or have power. Daya means strength, empowered means strength. If the word "empowered" is given the prefix pe- with the insertion -m- and the suffix -an, it becomes "empowerment" meaning to make something empowered or have strength. (Roesmidi & Riza Risianti, 2006) According to several experts in Edi Suharto's book, using the definition of empowerment looks at the goals, processes and methods of empowerment. According to Jim Iffe in building a Community Empowering People, empowerment aims to increase the power of people who are weak or disadvantaged. (Suharto, 2005).

2. Ecopreneurship

Ecopreneurship is an entrepreneurial concept that is not only profit-oriented but also cares about other aspects, especially environmental aspects. Ecopreneurship is entrepreneurial behavior that pays attention to or prioritizes the continued sustainability of the environment in the future. (Pradhita, 2013).

3. Industrial Revolution

Industrial Revolution 4.0 is an automation concept carried out by machines without requiring human power in its application. Where this is a vital thing needed by industrial players for the sake of time, labor and cost efficiency. The implementation of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 in factories is currently also known as Smart Factory. (Ahmad et al., 2017).

2. IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

In this research, researchers used qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative descriptive research is a problem formulation that guides research to explore or photograph the social situation that will be researched thoroughly, broadly and in depth. This research aims to provide strategies that can be used and carried out by local governments in strategies to improve the economy of coastal families in Serdang Bedagai district based on Ecopreneurship. Based on the research plan to be carried out, the three types of data analysis activities and the data collection activities themselves are cyclical and interactive processes (Miles et al., 2014). The three types of activities are:

1. Data Reduction (Data Reduction)

Data reduction can be interpreted as a selection process, focusing on simplifying, abstracting and transforming rough data that emerges from notes that appear in the field. Data reduction takes place while the data collection process is still ongoing. At this stage, coding activities, summarizing and creating partitions (parts) will also take place. Data reduction is also a form of analysis that sharpens, categorizes, directs, removes unnecessary, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified. This transformation process continues until the final research report is complete.

2. Data Presentation (Data Display)

The presentation of data is carried out in the form of narrative text, this is as stated by Miles & Huberman, "the most frequent form of display data for qualitative research data in the past has been narrative text" (which is most often used for presenting qualitative data in the past is narrative text form). Apart from that, presenting data in the form of charts and networks was also carried out in this research. The aim of presenting data is so that researchers can understand what happened and plan the next actions to be taken.

3. Drawing conclusions

At the beginning of data collection, researchers begin to look for the meaning of relationships, note regularities, patterns and draw conclusions. The basic assumptions and

initial conclusions stated above are still temporary, and will change as the data collection process continues.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of observations made, the number of coastal communities in Serdang Regency is 138,383 people with 34,595 heads of families with an average monthly income of under 2.5 million rupiah each month. The income obtained is not able to meet their daily needs, so many coastal communities work outside the area to improve their family's economy. From the results of observations that have been carried out by communicating with coastal communities and related agencies, Serdang Bedagai Regency is located in a coastal area that is rich in natural resources, but often faces challenges in terms of economics and environmental conservation. To overcome this problem, an ecopreneurship-based economic improvement strategy can be implemented, namely combining the concept of entrepreneurship with the principles of nature conservation. Ecopreneurship-based economic improvement strategies can be carried out by running training and education programs for coastal families. Coastal families are given knowledge about how to utilize marine resources sustainably. This includes sustainable fishing techniques, seaweed cultivation, and marine ecosystem monitoring. Apart from that, the concept of ecopreneurship is instilled in the minds of coastal families. They are taught to see sustainable business opportunities that can be done without damaging the environment. To improve the economy of coastal families based on ecopreneurship, the following are strategies that can be implemented:

1. **Education and Training:** Providing education and training to coastal families on the principles of nature conservation, marine resource management, and ecopreneurship concepts. This includes sustainable fishing techniques, seaweed cultivation, and marine ecosystem monitoring.
2. **Business Diversification:** Encourage coastal families to develop ecologically based businesses that utilize marine resources sustainably. Examples of businesses include organic seafood production, handicrafts from recycled materials, or coastal ecotourism.
3. **Cooperatives and Networks:** Support the formation of cooperatives or fishing groups to facilitate shared access to resources, product distribution and more efficient marketing. This can help increase the bargaining power of coastal families in negotiations with buyers.
4. **Access to Capital:** Facilitate coastal families' access to capital sources, such as low-interest microloans or grants to start or expand their ecological businesses.
5. **Sustainable Product Development:** Encouraging innovation in the development of sustainable products that are environmentally friendly. Support in the development, production and marketing of these products can help increase the income of coastal families.
6. **Special Ecological Areas:** Create regulations that support the development and management of special ecological areas that enable ecological-based businesses to develop.
7. **Technical Guidance:** Provide technical guidance on the latest technologies and practices in ecopreneurship, including business management, marketing, and environmental monitoring.
8. **Community Based Approach:** Encourage active participation of coastal families in decision making regarding their own economic development. This can create a greater sense of ownership and responsibility in protecting natural resources.
9. **Promotion of Sustainable Tourism:** If tourism potential exists, develop sustainable tourism that respects the environment to increase the income of coastal families.

10. Partnerships: Build partnerships with governments, NGOs, educational institutions, and the private sector to support implementation of this strategy and facilitate access to broader resources and markets. This strategy aims to improve the economy of coastal families while preserving the natural environment that is important for their lives. This can also help encourage sustainable economic growth in coastal communities.

Relevant agencies play a very important role in supporting ecopreneurship. Relevant agencies can provide access to capital resources, such as low-interest microloans, to help coastal families start or expand their businesses. In addition, setting up special areas for ecology-based businesses can help in the development and marketing of sustainable products. In this context, collaboration with non-governmental organizations, NGOs and educational institutions is also important. They can provide technical guidance, assistance with marketing, as well as more advanced entrepreneurship and ecological training programs. Through this ecopreneurship approach, it is hoped that coastal families in Serdang Bedagai Regency can increase their income while preserving natural resources that are important for their survival and that of future generations. Additionally, this will also help drive sustainable economic growth in the region.

4. CONCLUSION

Serdang Bedagai Regency has great potential in terms of coastal natural resources, however, many coastal communities still face economic constraints with monthly incomes below 2.5 million rupiah. Many of them even have to work outside the area to meet their daily needs. To overcome this problem, an ecopreneurship-based economic improvement strategy is the right step. This strategy includes training and education for coastal families about sustainable use of marine resources, as well as the introduction of the concept of ecopreneurship to see sustainable business opportunities. Support from relevant agencies, including access to capital, regulation of special ecological areas, and collaboration with non-governmental organizations, NGOs, and educational institutions, are important factors in the success of this strategy. Through the ecopreneurship approach, it is hoped that coastal families can increase their income while preserving the environment, as well as encouraging sustainable economic growth in Serdang Bedagai Regency. This is a step that can provide long-term benefits for coastal communities and future generations while ensuring the preservation of natural resources that are important to the area.

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