

## **Islands apart: the delicate dance of sustainable tourism in paradise**

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## 1 Introduction

Sustainable tourism allows future generations to benefit from resources by preventing the deterioration of the environment in which people continue to live for an indefinite period (Butler, 1999). Clark and Chabrel (2007) elucidate a correlation between sustainable tourism and the Pareto optimum, emphasizing its requisite dimensions encompassing economic, environmental, and socio-cultural aspects.

In the economic dimension, metaverse tourism emerges as a significant tool to foster the development of sustainable tourism and enhance the profitability of tourist destinations (Go & Kang, 2023). Additionally, employment generation also represents a significant contribution of sustainable tourism to the economy (Sobral et al., 2007; Takasago & Guilhoto, 2010). In the environmental dimension, the significance of sustainable tourism for biodiversity preservation can be highlighted (Cristiano et al., 2020), along with best practices for achieving sustainability (Burbano et al., 2022). Lastly, in the sociocultural dimension, information about sustainability attributes significantly affects socio-environmental well-being.

Given its benefits, sustainable tourism has been a popular research topic in recent years (Alonso-Muñoz et al., 2023; Ek Styvén et al., 2022; Gkoumas, 2019; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Richards, 2020). Much has been researched concerning its benefits (Apak & Gürbüz, 2023), challenges (Milano, 2019; Streimikiene et al., 2021), and best practices (Burbano et al., 2022; Cristiano et al., 2020). Nevertheless, literature covering the implementation of sustainable tourism in specific places is still lacking despite its importance (Geng et al., 2024) considering that approaches to implementing sustainable tourism in different locations may vary.

Taking into consideration the specific context of sustainable tourism in islands, its relevance translates into geological and ecological factors (H. Chen, 2020; Fu et al., 2019), cultural and historical uniqueness (Graham, 2021), natural beauty and recreation aspects (Lewis-Cameron & Brown-Williams, 2022; J. Wang et al., 2023) and sociological and anthropological angles (Freer & Kherfi, 2020).

Although challenges such as diseconomies of scale and traditional land conflicts have been highlighted (Griffiths, 2024) and correlations between marketing means and economic outcomes have been traced (Mo & Ren, 2020), there remains a theoretical gap concerning holistic sustainable tourism strategies for islands that integrate environmental conservation, community engagement, and cultural heritage preservation (Agius et al., 2019; Batista et al., 2022; Grilli et al., 2021). Therefore, the present study answers the call by Geng et al. (2024), who highlight the need for more studies on sustainable tourism for islands, particularly given the critical juncture of island destinations in the post-pandemic period (Lewis-Cameron & Brown-Williams, 2022), leading to a pronounced necessity to optimize tourist attraction potential.

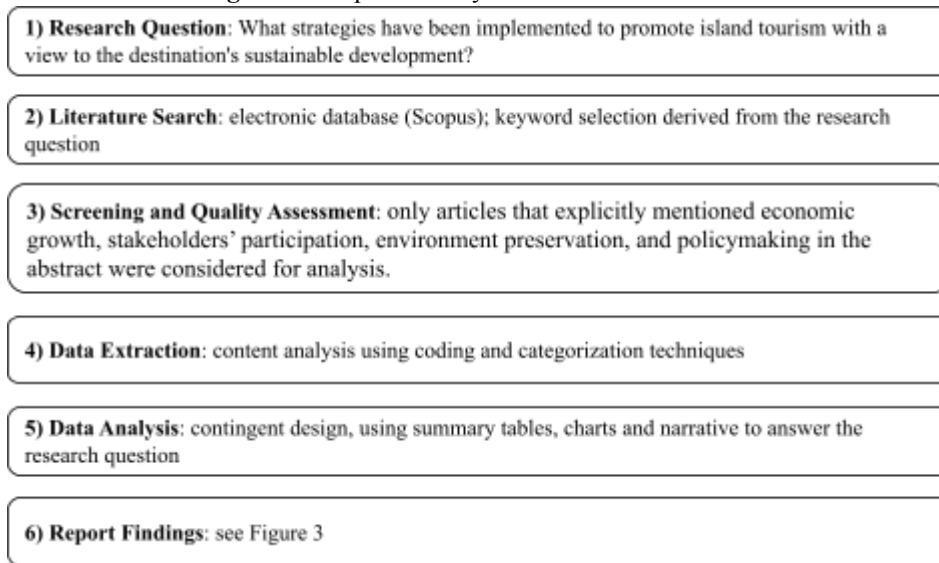
Thus, this article aims to identify strategies to promote tourism on islands for sustainable development through a systematic literature review. Therefore, the following research question is proposed: What strategies have been implemented to promote island tourism with a view to the destination's sustainable development?

This study benefits stakeholders involved in island tourism, including local authorities, residents, tourism entrepreneurs, and researchers by providing insights into management strategies for sustainable tourism. The findings will offer theoretical and practical guidance on integrating stakeholder needs for a more balanced and sustainable approach to island tourism, promoting economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation.

## 2 Method

As previously mentioned, this study adopts a systematic literature review method following the PRISMA guideline (Page et al., 2021; Rethlefsen et al., 2021). The method section is crucial for a systematic literature review, as it establishes procedures, assuring quality and trustworthiness (Snyder, 2019). Furthermore, it also has the function of preventing researchers' bias (Page et al., 2021). Hence, we followed the eight-step guide for conducting a rigorous literature review proposed by Xiao and Watson (2019). We made two adaptations: we removed the conceptual model and mixed screening and quality assessment into one single step, as they are similar to each other. Figure 1 shows a summary of the process.

**Figure 1** - Steps for the systematic literature review



Source: elaborated by the authors based on Xiao and Watson (2019).

### 2.1 Data collection

Following the steps mentioned before, comes the search strategy. We used the Scopus database (DB) because, along with Web of Science (WoS), it is the most widely utilized DB when it comes to performing a systematic literature review (Pranckutė, 2021). Furthermore, it contemplates more journals than WoS (Singh et al., 2021).

The following search string was used for the initial sample of articles to be analyzed: *TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Sustainable Tourism" OR "Ecotourism" OR "Eco-Tourism" OR "Green Tourism" OR "Responsible Tourism" OR "Nature Tourism") W/3 ("Island\*" OR "Island Tourism" OR "Island Destinations" OR "Island Conservation" OR "Peninsula\*" OR "Archipelago\*") AND ("Development" OR "Econom\* Development" OR "Econom\* Growth")*. Before utilization, the search string was validated by four specialists.

### 2.2 Sample

The search was carried out in May 2024 for an initial sample of 167 documents. After that, a filter was applied to include only articles (109) and reviews (4), which reduced the sample to 113 documents. Then, as suggested by Snyder (2019) and Paul & Criado (2020), we restricted the results by language and time, applying a filter to include only documents published in English and within the last 20 years (from 2004 on). As a consequence, the sample used for the screening step consisted of a total of 103 documents.

Screening is a process that often involves reading each document's abstract individually to see if they are adherent to the research question or not (Xiao & Watson, 2019). To do that, one must establish some inclusion and exclusion criteria, which can be based on characteristics such as unit of analysis, geographic region, and type of research. Since we are looking for strategies to implement sustainable development, only articles that explicitly mentioned economic growth, stakeholders' participation, environment preservation, and policymaking in the abstract were considered.

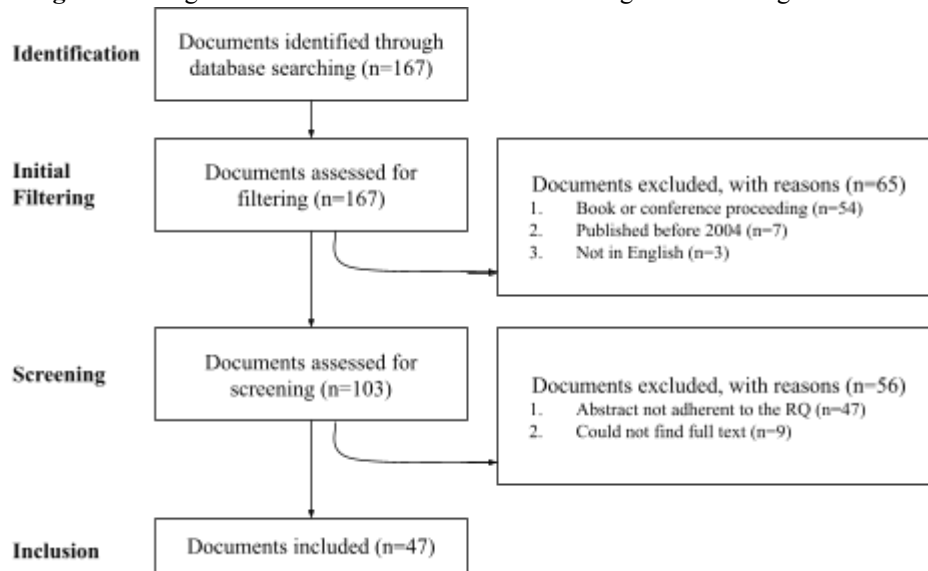
After this, we tried to access the full text of the documents remaining (56). Nine of them were not available, so the final sample consisted of a total of 47 documents.

### 2.3 Data analysis

Data extraction was carried out through content analysis. According to Bardin (2011), content analysis consists of a set of increasingly subtle methodological instruments in constant improvement, applied to extremely diverse discourses. In this sense, we employed two techniques: coding and categorization. Regarding the first, Bardin (2011) states that it consists of a transformation - carried out according to precise rules - of the raw data from the text. As for the second technique, Bardin (2011) states that it is an operation of classification of constitutive elements of a set by differentiation and then by regrouping according to the genus (analogy), with previously defined criteria.

Following data extraction, we have the analysis and synthesis conducted with summary tables, charts, and narratives, as suggested by Xiao and Watson (2019). It is worth noting that we adopted the contingent design, to group the studies and directly answer the research question. Last but not least, there is the report findings step. For this, we made Figure 2, which shows a diagram with a detailed description of each criterion and its rationale.

**Figure 2** - Diagram with the rationale used for including and excluding documents



Source: elaborated by the authors based on Xiao and Watson (2019).

### 3 Results

In this section, the 47 articles included for analysis are discussed. The articles were allocated to one of four groups based on location. Table 1 presents the group's name, abbreviation, and number of studies.

**Table 1 - Study groups**

Group name	Abbreviation	Group authors	Studies
Asia-Pacific Alliance	APA	Walter (2009), Bhuiyan et al. (2011), Wong & Fung (2016), Chao & Chao (2017), Eslami et al. (2018), Chen (2019), Hsu et al. (2019), Chen et al. (2020), Graci & Van Vliet (2020), Grilli et al. (2021), Zhang et al. (2022), Fuchs (2022), Wang et al. (2024), Fernandez-Abila et al. (2024)	14
Euro-Mediterranean Union	EMU	Cantallops (2004), Petrić & Pranić (2010), Michalena & Tripanagnostopoulos (2010), Karatzoglou & Spilanis (2010), Yasarata et al. (2010), Boukas & Ziakas (2014), Agius et al. (2019), Lopes et al. (2020), Krajnović et al. (2021), Agius & Briguglio (2021), Agius et al. (2021), Batista et al. (2022)	12
Indonesia	IND	Aswita et al. (2018), Lelloltery et al. (2018), Adrianto et al. (2021), Lukman et al. (2022), Purwoko et al. (2022), Singgalen (2022), Kabalmay et al. (2022), Sayuti (2023), Hakim et al. (2023), Meldayanoor et al. (2023), Vipriyanti et al. (2024)	11
American Islands and Others	AIO	Scheyvens & Momsen (2008), Cole & Razak (2009), Cusick et al. (2010), Huisamen et al. (2011), Rengarajan et al. (2014), Mathis & Rose (2016), Walker (2019), Rio-Cortina et al. (2020), Burbano & Meredith (2021), Silva & Roque (2024)	10
<b>Total</b>			<b>47</b>

Source: elaborated by the authors.

It is worth noting that Indonesia is categorized separately due to numerous studies focusing specifically on its unique significance. As an archipelago of thousands of islands, each with distinct geographical, ecological, and cultural characteristics, Indonesia warrants independent analysis.

### 3.1 The APA group

The APA is the largest group, consisting of 14 studies, all considering islands located in Asia or the Pacific Ocean. Sustainable tourism in islands involves economic growth (APA7, APA10), environmental conservation (APA10), and social dynamics (APA2, APA4, APA7, APA9). APA10 emphasizes pro-environmental attitudes on tourists' preferences and the importance of policy-making to attract visitors and private funding. Additionally, APA6 advocates for measures to control tourist numbers, employ professional guides, and enhance recreational facilities to maintain ecological balance while improving tourist experiences. APA13 mirrors this approach by proposing regulations to preserve natural environments and developing diverse tourist routes to balance ecological protection with economic benefits.

Community participation and education emerge as critical components of sustainable tourism (APA2, APA4, APA7, APA9), although mass tourism on islands may overwhelm local communities (APA1). APA2 asserts that without locals' involvement, sustainable ecotourism development is impossible. APA4 suggests that longer tourist stays and interaction with residents can enhance locals' understanding of ecotourism, fostering environmental stewardship among them. APA9 recommends enhancing stakeholders' participation in tourism-related decisions, suggesting voluntary funds, and the appointment of environmental coordinators as initiatives. APA7 supports this by revealing that maximizing community participation positively impacts residents' support for sustainable tourism.

However, several studies highlight the challenges of achieving sustainable tourism. APA14 points out that resource-poor islands experience diseconomies of scale, with limited space and connectivity complicating sustainable development. Ineffective policies, lack of local participation in decision-making, and environmental impacts are significant obstacles. APA12 emphasizes certain islands' dependency on international tourism and the necessity of balancing environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects. These challenges highlight the need for strategies that address the circumstances of each island (APA8, APA12, APA14).

Environmental management and restoration measures are essential for sustainable ecotourism (APA8, APA11). APA8 argues that weak environmental awareness among residents can hinder ecotourism development, stressing the importance of comprehensive tourism management and environmental education. APA11 highlights the fragility of island ecosystems and the need for tourist activities that minimize ecological impact, supported by tools to evaluate and manage landscape perceptions. The importance of utilizing technological and planning tools is further demonstrated by APA3 through the enhancement of ecotourism planning by identifying suitable sites for recreational activities.

APA5 explores the socio-economic impacts of tourism on residents' quality of life, finding that while perceived environmental impacts do not significantly affect residents' way of life, socio-cultural impacts do. Looking forward, APA6 and APA13 stress the importance of regulations on the preservation and utilization of the natural environment, offering experiences to maximize tourism resources while generating employment opportunities.

### **3.2 The EMU group**

The EMU group is composed of 12 studies, considering European and/or Mediterranean islands. Seasonality and mass tourism have long defined the tourism sector in many islands, particularly those relying on the appeal of sun, sand, and sea (EMU1, EMU10). This type of tourism creates a strong spatio-temporal concentration of visitors, which can overwhelm local infrastructure and resources during peak seasons. For example, the Balearic Islands have developed a model based on volume and price competition, heavily relying on tour operators for distribution (EMU1). However, this approach often leads to environmental degradation and a compromised quality of life (EMU4, EMU9).

Studies highlight the benefits of ecotourism as an alternative to mass tourism (EMU7, EMU10, EMU12). Ecotourism can mitigate seasonality by offering activities year-round, thus reducing peak-season pressures (EMU7, EMU10). This is particularly relevant for smaller, less populated islands that experience limited anthropogenic impact, making them ideal ecotourism destinations (EMU7). Additionally, stakeholders see the potential of ecotourism in addressing connectivity challenges faced by remote islands, with improved inter-island connectivity being essential to enhance their competitiveness and attractiveness (EMU11).

The COVID-19 pandemic has further shifted tourism dynamics, highlighting the rise of rural tourism (EMU3, EMU12). The Azores, for instance, saw a significant increase in rural tourism as visitors sought more nature-oriented travel experiences (EMU12). This shift underscores the potential for rural and ecotourism to play a larger role in island tourism strategies. Additionally, leveraging renewable energy sources, such as solar energy, can further promote sustainable tourism by reducing environmental impacts and attracting environmentally-conscious tourists (EMU3).

Sustainability remains a critical concern across all types of tourism (EMU2, EMU8, EMU9). Islands are especially vulnerable to environmental degradation due to their limited size and resources (EMU2). Sustainable tourism development requires an integrated approach that balances economic benefits with the preservation of natural and cultural heritage (EMU8,

EMU9). In this context, tools such as the Destination Environmental Scorecard can help local businesses measure and improve their sustainability practices (EMU4).

The involvement of local communities in tourism planning is crucial for achieving sustainable development (EMU2, EMU5). Engaging local populations in the planning process ensures that tourism development aligns with community needs and aspirations, fostering long-term success (EMU2, EMU5).

Political and governance issues also play a significant role in sustainable tourism development (EMU5, EMU6). Understanding the political landscape and the interests of key actors is essential for effective policy implementation (EMU5). Moreover, small island states must understand the interrelated dimensions of crises and their impact on tourism, enabling policymakers and stakeholders to respond to changes and maintain sustainability (EMU6).

### **3.3 The IND group**

The IND group has a total of 11 studies and takes into account only islands situated in Indonesia due to the large number of studies focused on its unique archipelago. A recurring theme is the significance of local wisdom and community knowledge in maintaining environmental sustainability (IND1, IND5, IND6, IND8). In this context, IND1 highlights that these factors play a crucial role in ecological, social, and religious intelligence, aiding in the preservation and sustainability of the environment and underscoring the unique ways in which communities interact with nature (IND6). A similar emphasis on the importance of local involvement is echoed by IND5 and IND8, who stress community empowerment and stakeholder engagement as vital to sustainable tourism initiatives.

The concept of carrying capacity is another aspect discussed extensively (IND2, IND3, IND7). IND3 argues that determining the carrying capacity of small islands is vital for managing tourism sustainably, ensuring that both the ecological and social impacts are considered. Similarly, IND2 emphasizes the importance of regulating the number of tourists and implementing measures like boat moorings to protect marine ecosystems, particularly coral reefs. IND7 further suggests that applying carrying capacity principles can safeguard natural and cultural tourist areas, indicating a broad consensus on its importance.

Mangrove ecosystems receive particular attention as valuable assets for ecotourism (IND 6, IND9, IND10, IND11). IND9 discusses the potential of mangrove conservation on Bintan Island to attract tourists and promote sustainable development, proposing strategies such as ecotourism development and community participation. This is aligned with the findings of IND10, who emphasize the need for a comprehensive feasibility assessment of ecotourism attractions using criteria such as natural environment and infrastructure. Furthermore, there are strategies for balancing economic benefits with conservation functions in mangrove ecosystems, emphasizing the improvement of tourist infrastructure and the promotion of conservation-based tourism activities (IND11).

Community involvement and empowerment are also highlighted as key components of sustainable tourism (IND5, IND6, IND8). IND5 proposes strategies for developing orangutan ecotourism on Sumatra Island that include community empowerment and the integration of local wisdom. Similarly, IND6 advocates for community-based mangrove conservation programs, demonstrating how local participation can enhance ecological and economic outcomes. IND8 supports this view, noting that sustainable tourism development requires the involvement of various stakeholders, including local communities, to be effective.

The economic benefits of tourism, while significant, must be balanced with conservation efforts (IND4, IND11). IND4 examines the perceptions of local communities in Karimunjawa and finds positive socio-cultural and economic impacts of tourism but negative environmental impacts. IND11 echoed this sentiment, suggesting strategies to balance

economic benefits with conservation functions on small islands, emphasizing infrastructure improvement, stakeholder cooperation, and conservation-based tourism activities.

### 3.4 The AIO group

The AIO group contains 10 studies, including islands in America and other locations that were not previously addressed. Developing sustainable ecotourism in small islands demands an approach that integrates environmental (AIO3, AIO4, AIO5, AIO6, AIO9), economic (AIO1, AIO8, AIO10), and social dimensions (AIO2, AIO7, AIO10) since it involves challenges due to size and dependency on the industry (AIO1, AIO7, AIO10). In this sense, the engagement of local stakeholders in tourism planning is paramount to ensure alignment with community needs and priorities (AIO6, AIO9).

In terms of natural preservation, balancing different types of tourism is crucial to prevent overexploitation of local resources. Sustainable tourism management requires careful consideration of high-end regulated tourism alongside low-cost informal tourism to avoid straining delicate ecosystems (AIO5, AIO9). By maintaining this equilibrium, destinations can maximize economic opportunities while safeguarding their environmental integrity.

Addressing infrastructure and service needs is also vital for enhancing the quality of life for local communities and supporting sustainable tourism development. Providing basic services, healthcare, and education not only improves resident well-being but also contributes to creating a welcoming environment for visitors (AIO5, AIO9). Additionally, investing in eco-friendly infrastructure, such as resorts and public conveniences, helps minimize the environmental footprint of tourism activities (AIO10).

Another way to alleviate pressure on popular destinations is promoting tourism in less concentrated areas, seeking economic diversification, and reducing environmental strain (AIO2, AIO5). By creating new entry points and showcasing the unique attractions of different regions, destinations can attract visitors while preserving authenticity and beauty.

Furthermore, protecting natural resources and promoting environmental conservation are fundamental to sustainable tourism. Establishing policies and regulations to govern ecotourism development is essential to ensure that activities are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner (AIO3, AIO4). By designating protected areas and managing human interference, destinations can safeguard biodiversity and maintain the ecological balance of their ecosystems.

Leveraging cultural events and heritage can also contribute to sustainable tourism development. By showcasing local traditions and fostering community engagement, destinations can create authentic experiences that resonate with visitors (AIO7). Finally, raising awareness of the importance of conservation through campaigns and initiatives can encourage responsible tourism practices (AIO1, AIO8). Table 2 shows this comparison.

**Table 2 - Groups comparison**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Differences</b>	<b>Similarities</b>
APA	With a highly diverse group, APA does not seem to have any large difference in comparison to the other groups. Most of the challenges and solutions identified here fall into general aspects like local participation and stakeholders' education (which appears to be one of the main concerns). This is the only group not to have an unique strategy for its own.	Directly or indirectly, all groups share general concerns and strategies to address sustainability issues. For illustration, each group has at least one study mentioning local community participation and
EMU	Being largely composed of developed countries, the EMU group is the only to cite renewable energy sources and fixed costs sharing as a form of dealing with sustainable challenges. Furthermore, this group has an issue not mentioned by the others: seasonality, mostly because many islands here	



	depend on sun, sand and sea tourism.	ecosystem protection. Other interventions such as proper policy-making, stakeholders education, ecotourism and tourist number threshold are broadly mentioned as well.
IND	Like the others, this group has a strong focus on community participation. However, due to its unique archipelago, this group is the only one to mention marine ecotourism and mangrove conservation.	
AIO	Encompassing some of the most isolated islands in the world, the AIO group faces unique challenges such as the overexploitation of resources and an economy heavily reliant on tourism. This is one of the reasons why this group is the only to mention strategies regarding SIDS	

Source: elaborated by the authors.

### 3.5 Framework

For summary purposes, the strategies discussed are highlighted in Table 3.

**Table 3 - Tourism strategies summary**

Strategy	Scale	Perspective	SDG Contribution	Frequency	Practical Examples	Authors
Local Community Participation	Global	Sociocultural	1, 8, 10 and 11	16	Locals in the Philippines engage in monitoring, enforcement, and rehabilitation efforts, fostering a sense of ownership and ensuring the sustainable use of resources.	APA2, APA4, APA7, APA9, APA12, APA14, EMU2, EMU9, EMU12, IND1, IND4, IND5, IND6, IND9, AIO7, AIO9
Ecosystem Protection and Restoration	Global	Environmental	13, 14 and 15	10	In Indonesia, locals replant mangroves to protect shorelines and enhance biodiversity.	APA6, APA8, APA11, EMU7, EMU12, IND4, IND5, IND9, IND11, AIO8
Establishing Proper Regulations and Policies	Global	Sociocultural and Economic	11, 12 and 16	10	Orchid Island visitor's limitation proposal and Seychelles' fishing quotas to prevent overfishing and protect marine life.	APA6, APA10, APA13, EMU1, EMU5, EMU6, EMU8, AIO3, AIO4, AIO6
Environmental Awareness and Stakeholders' Education	Global	Sociocultural	4, 12 and 13	9	St. Lucia's workshops on sustainable practices for locals and tourists and Bahamas' regular beach clean-ups involving residents and tourists.	APA1, APA4, APA8, APA9, APA12, IND8, AIO7, AIO8, AIO9
Ecotourism to Mitigate Seasonality, Mass Tourism and Environmental Damage	Local	Economic and Environmental	8, 12, 14 and 15	8	Galapagos Islands' guided wildlife tours (limiting environmental impact) and Jamaica's off-season cultural festivals to attract eco-conscious tourists.	EMU10, EMU11, EMU12, IND5, IND6, IND9, IND10, AIO5
Tourist Numbers Threshold to Suit the Island's Carrying Capacity	Local	Sociocultural	11, 12 and 13	6	Palau's permit system to limit the number of tourists visiting popular sites. Iceland does the same for fragile areas such as Blue Lagoon.	APA6, IND2, IND3, IND7, IND11, AIO2
Resident's Satisfaction and Perceived Quality of Life	Local	Sociocultural	3, 8 and 11	4	Malta enhances public transport to reduce traffic and pollution.	APA5, APA7, EMU2, IND3
Geo-Information (Technological) Tools and Infrastructure Improvement	Local	Economic and Environmental	9, 11 and 17	3	Caribbean Islands use GIS to manage natural resources and the Philippines uses geo-tech for early disaster warning systems.	APA3, EMU3, AIO10
Marine Ecotourism	Local	Environmental	8, 14 and 15	2	The Azores offer regulated dolphin-watching tours, ensuring marine life protection.	IND2, IND3
Fixed Costs Sharing	Local	Economic	8, 9 and 17	1	Samso Island shares solar panel costs among residents, reducing energy expenses.	EMU4
Positive Conceptualizations of SIDS	Local	Sociocultural	10, 11 and 17	1	Pacific Islands form alliances to advocate for SIDS' sustainable development.	AIO1

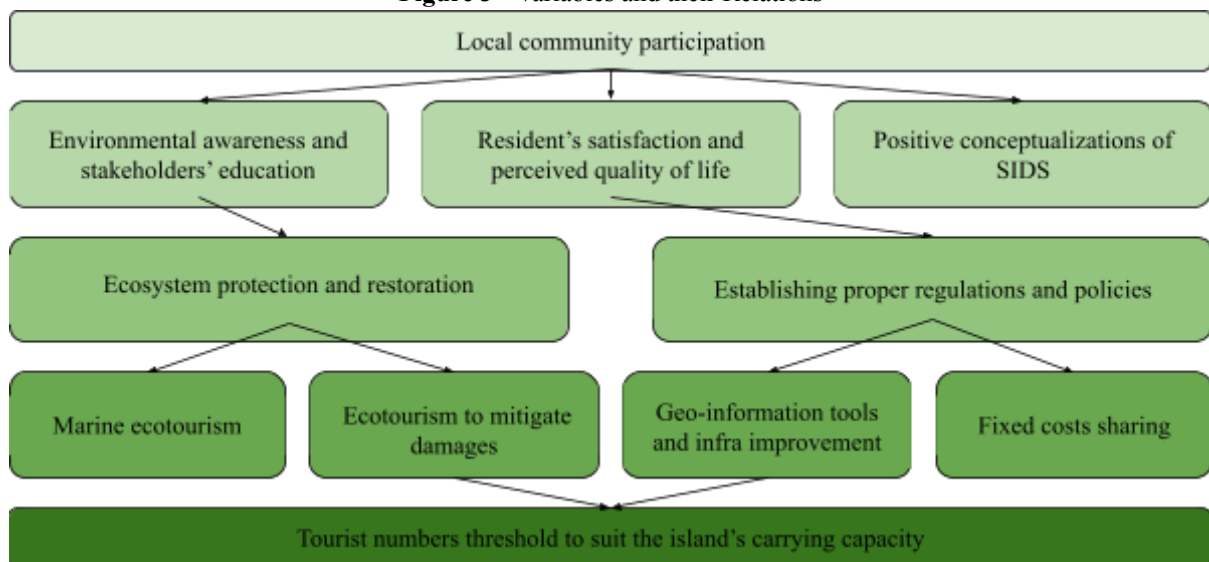
Source: elaborated by the authors.

Firstly, the table presents a diverse set of strategies aimed at promoting sustainable development, each varying in scale, perspective and SDG contribution. By comparing these aspects, we can gain insights into why certain strategies are globally implemented while others are more context-specific, and why some SDGs are more addressed than others.

When it comes to globally used strategies, they tend to address issues that have widespread relevance. Strategies such as local community participation and ecosystem protection are crucial in a wide range of contexts, since they can be applied to almost every possible scenario. This happens due to the universal need for this type of intervention to achieve sustainable development. The frequent mention of SDGs 11, 12 and 13 underlines the global urgency to combat climate change, irresponsible consumption and unsustainable cities.

In contrast, other strategies are locally scaled. These strategies are tailored to the unique environmental and economic contexts of specific regions, such as the Mangrove Ecosystems in Indonesia, which require specific approaches and tourist threshold policies. The localized nature of these strategies ensures they are adapted to the carrying capacity and conservation needs of the area, which are not applicable on a broader scale. For this reason, the SDGs associated with local scaled strategies are hugely diversified - although some like 8 (decent work and economic growth) and 11 (sustainable cities and communities) appear more often. Figure 3 illustrates each variable in the framework and how they relate to each other.

**Figure 3 - Variables and their Relations**



Source: elaborated by the authors.

In summary, globally used strategies often address universal sustainability challenges, emphasizing community involvement, ecosystem protection, and regulatory frameworks. On the other hand, locally specific strategies are designed to meet the needs of particular regions, focusing on targeted environmental and economic outcomes.

## 4 Conclusion

The conclusion is structured into two subtopics: implications and future research and limitations.

### 4.1 Implications

Our study advances the theoretical framework and practical applications of sustainable tourism, particularly in island destinations. The research validates the importance of community involvement and local stakeholder engagement, highlighting participatory governance and local empowerment as crucial for sustainability. Engaging local communities in decision-making enhances both sustainability and resilience. Additionally, the study contributes to the understanding of carrying capacity in sustainable tourism, illustrating that

regulating tourist numbers and activities can prevent environmental degradation. This underscores carrying capacity as an essential tool for sustainable tourism planning.

Furthermore, the study identifies effective sustainability strategies specific to island tourism, such as integrating renewable energy sources, implementing water conservation measures, and promoting local culture and products. These strategies not only support the theoretical discourse on sustainable tourism but also provide actionable insights for stakeholders. Practical implications include the necessity for local authorities, residents, tourism entrepreneurs, and researchers to actively involve local communities in shaping tourism policies, infrastructure development, and marketing strategies. This ensures alignment with community needs, enhancing long-term sustainability and resilience.

Moreover, the research emphasizes managing carrying capacity by regulating tourist numbers, controlling visitor activities, and protecting fragile ecosystems. Establishing carrying capacity thresholds and implementing visitor management strategies help mitigate environmental degradation and preserve natural resources. Finally, the study suggests investing in renewable energy infrastructure and supporting local artisans and cultural events, which can reduce environmental impact and offer authentic visitor experiences. Overall, our findings offer valuable insights for future research and practical applications, enhancing the understanding and implementation of sustainable tourism strategies in diverse island contexts.

## **4.2 Future research and limitations**

Future research in island tourism can build on the insights from this study, exploring emerging technologies and their applications in sustainable tourism management. Investigating the roles of blockchain and artificial intelligence could offer innovative solutions for environmental monitoring, visitor management, and community engagement. Comparative studies across various island contexts, such as the Asia-Pacific, Euro-Mediterranean, Indonesia, and American islands, can help identify context-specific factors influencing sustainability initiatives.

Longitudinal studies are recommended to track the implementation and outcomes of sustainability initiatives over time. By examining the evolution of tourism development and its impact on island environments and communities, researchers can assess the long-term sustainability of current practices and identify areas for improvement or intervention. Additionally, interdisciplinary research that incorporates socio-economic, cultural, and political dimensions can provide holistic perspectives on the drivers and implications of tourism development. Integrating insights from anthropology, sociology, political science, and other disciplines would guide more inclusive policy and planning efforts.

Despite its contributions, this study has limitations that future research could address. The literature review scope may have been limited by the search strategy and selection criteria, potentially excluding valuable insights from non-English language publications and pre-2004 studies. This could have overlooked alternative sources or historical contexts. The generalizability of the findings may also be restricted due to the focus on island destinations with diverse socio-economic, cultural, and environmental characteristics. Although the study aimed to capture this diversity, variations in governance structures, development trajectories, and stakeholder dynamics might limit the transferability of strategies.

Moreover, the reliance on secondary data sources may have introduced biases or gaps in the analysis. Despite efforts to ensure thoroughness and transparency in the process, the interpretation of findings is inherently subjective and influenced by the authors' perspectives and expertise. Finally, the study's focus on sustainable tourism strategies may have overlooked broader systemic issues like economic inequalities and climate change. Future research should adopt a holistic approach, considering the interconnections between tourism, development, and environmental sustainability in island contexts.

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