



# Territorial Splitting and Its Role in Promoting Sustainable Local Economic Development and Governance in Tourist Destination Areas

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**Abstract:** Territorial splitting in Indonesia has emerged as a policy response to address longstanding issues related to weak natural resource management, uneven regional development, and limited public service provision. Although this administrative restructuring has attracted scholarly attention in governance and decentralization discourse, its implications for sustainable tourism-based economic development remain underexplored. In this study, the potential of territorial splitting to catalyze sustainable local economic growth was examined, with a particular focus on Pangandaran Regency—an autonomous region formed through territorial restructuring between 2004 and 2024. Data were drawn from an extensive review of literature, empirical studies, and official policy documents. It was found that local economic development in Pangandaran has been fostered not only through the enhancement of conventional economic sectors but also through the integration of environmental conservation initiatives. Economic activities such as the promotion of local creative industries, hospitality services, tourism-based enterprises, and small-scale commerce have been integrated with the conservation of coral reefs and mangrove forests. Furthermore, a decentralized governance structure has facilitated greater community engagement in local decision-making and resource management. The findings suggest that, when implemented with strategic planning and inclusive governance, territorial splitting possesses the potential to serve as a catalyst for resilient, place-based economic systems that are harmonized with ecological preservation. This research contributes to the broader discourse on regional autonomy by highlighting the intersection between administrative restructuring and sustainable tourism development, offering policy-relevant insights for local governments and development planners seeking to optimize territorial governance in destination areas.

**Keywords:** Economies; Territorial splitting; Local development; Decentralization, Pangandaran

## 1. Introduction

The objective of decentralization is to facilitate the delivery of government and community services in a more localized manner, stimulate economic growth, and enhance regional development in order to reduce inequality (Firman, 2009). The concept of autonomy is closely related to continued participation (Sabrina, 2022), underscoring the crucial role of citizen participation in the context of autonomy. The absence of such participation can be seen as a manifestation of a lack of trust in the democratic process of government (Slaev et al., 2019). In a democracy, there are conflicts, one of which is related to regional autonomy, which involves relations with the central.

The objective of regional autonomy is to enhance the well-being of the regional community. This may be achieved, inter alia, through the administration of its natural resources. The approach proposed by Wattanakul & Watchalaanun (2017) has been implemented in several countries in Southeast Asia, including Laos. However, while natural resource wealth represents a highly attractive investment, the limited capacity of domestic investors and the absence of foreign and private investment impede economic growth in local government autonomy (Suherman et al., 2021a). The phenomenon of territorial splitting has been observed in a number of countries, including the Czech Republic. In this particular case, the number of municipalities increased from approximately

4,000 in 1990 to over 6,000 following the collapse of communism. This development is associated with areas experiencing very low tax revenues, which has consequently led to economic difficulties in the provision of public services (Ferrazzi, 2007). In Uganda, Africa, there was a significant surge in the number of new districts, representing the highest level of local government, which increased from 39 to 79 in less than a decade (Green, 2008). These new districts were utilized as instruments of patronage and as resources to support President Yoweri Museveni's fourth term (Manyak & Katono, 2011). In China, territorial splits were achieved through the amalgamation of regions and the establishment of new regions (through administrative annexation) to resolve inter-local government conflicts, with the objective of enhancing the economic development of certain central cities (Zhang & Wu, 2006). Conversely, in Japan, Jacobs (2004) posited that the territorial split areas may be more effective than the amalgamation of communities. In Western Europe, the process of territorial splits or reform has been shown to enhance the functionality of local governance, thereby increasing the opportunities and rights of local citizens to engage in local decision-making processes (Wollmann, 2004). Post-2020 decentralization through explicit territorial split practices has not been widely implemented in Asian countries; in Indonesia, because of its adherence to special autonomy, territorial splits are still underway, such as in the Papua region (Sinen et al., 2022). The practice of decentralization means reallocating administrative authority to local and regional tiers, boosting public effectiveness. Dividing territories can make this task more complex, particularly in emerging democracies, as they strive to maintain a balance between local independence and unified governance within the larger state structure (Orlov et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, the legal framework governing regional autonomy was set forth in Law Number 22 of 1999 Concerning Regional Government, which was subsequently updated to Law Number 9 of 2015 Concerning Regional Government. This updated legislation states that "in the context of implementing the principle of decentralization, provincial, regional, and local governments are formed and compiled." Furthermore, it defines regencies and municipalities as "authorized to regulate and manage the interests of the local community according to their initiative based on the aspirations of the community." This grants local governments the autonomy to manage and develop the region in a responsible manner across all fields, including social, economic, and political, with the aim of enhancing public service accountability (Rachayu, 2019). Government accountability is a principle of good governance for regional development (Sianturi & Dwicaksono, 2023).

One of the practices of regional autonomy in Indonesia is territorial splitting. This occurs due to a number of problems, including poor local government governance, unfair access to public services such as health and education (Fitriani et al., 2005), lack of overall justice for regional development (development disparities) and community welfare (Suherman et al., 2021b), and income inequality between regions (Sambanis & Milanovic, 2014). In addition, the people in the regions are unable to enjoy the natural resources that are available (Elvawati, 2015). However, in addition to these considerations, the splitting of regions has also resulted in the emergence of new challenges, including issues pertaining to relations between regions and communities (Hakim et al., 2017). In a 2016 study by Maman et al., indeed, the territorial splits have even resulted in violent conflicts within these enlarged regions. Just 20% of the cases were considered effective, according to the President's State Speech on August 16, 2010, which evaluated the district/city government's implementation. This implies that 80% of the newly expanded districts/cities were unsuccessful in implementing governance and development in the new autonomous regions (Melmambessy & Achmady, 2020).

A significant gap remains in the literature regarding the phenomenon of territorial splitting, which has not yet been subjected to a comprehensive and systematic academic inquiry. The majority of previous studies have focused on decentralization and regional autonomy in general, rather than on the specific topic of territorial splitting. This is an important area that requires further investigation, particularly with regard to the potential for local economic development. It is important to consider that the new region receives budget support from the central government, which can assist in regional development. The capacity to enjoy economic power and control over existing resources is a defining feature of autonomous regions (Barter & Wangge, 2022). This research makes a theoretical contribution to the field by examining the role of regional leadership capability and natural resource governance in cross-sector and institutional collaboration and its impact on regional economic growth, with a particular focus on newly formed regions (new autonomous regions). The empirical contribution demonstrates that territorial splitting is not inherently detrimental to local economic development. Instead, it depends on the support of various actors, including the government, community, private sector, and others, and can optimize available resources, including natural, human, and financial resources.

The objective of this study is to describe the phenomenon of territorial splitting in Indonesia in several regions that can facilitate sustainable local economic development and governance, with the potential to impact regional development and community welfare in the future. The research question is as follows: how can territorial splitting in several regions of Indonesia open up opportunities for local economic development and governance?

This research is also highly relevant and significant with regard to the involvement of local governments in improving good governance in the region by establishing direct relationships with the community. This approach encourages active community participation in collaboration with local governments to address existing development problems (Bokayev et al., 2024). It is essential to create transparency and enhance community

involvement in governance (Moolnearn & Kraiwanit, 2024). Consequently, the Indonesian decentralization process, which has been ongoing for an extended period, aims to optimize regional potential through administrative arrangements (Fauzan & Ardhanariswai, 2023).

The structure of this study is as follows: A comprehensive overview of the relevant literature is provided in Section 2. The subsequent section (Section 3) details the methodology employed in the study, encompassing its scope, the data collection process, and the analytical procedures undertaken. The empirical results of the research and the phenomena under discussion are reviewed in Section 4. The research findings are presented in the final section, Section 5, along with a discussion of the study's limitations and suggestions for additional research.

State and local government agencies actively seek to foster economic development based largely on the attraction of industry and investment from established regions (Cobb, 1993). Economic concerns, including employment, income, and growth, have traditionally been the primary focus of local development initiatives. It is evident that a social and territorial approach to development encompasses not only economic elements but also the creation of employment opportunities, the reduction of poverty, the enhancement of quality of life, and the sustainability of the environment. It is predicated on the notion of empowering local communities to exercise democratic and participatory influence over the future development of their respective regions. Consequently, economic concerns such as growth, income, and employment have historically prevailed in the context of local development. Local development has a very important role for regions, including reducing poverty and inequality and increasing growth and income (Armstrong & Taylor, 2000). Local development in a broader sense is about reducing social inequalities, preserving the environment, inclusive governance, and cultural diversity (Counsell & Haughton, 2004).

Local successes, failures and development are framed and shaped by the processes and politics of governance and government (Keating et al., 2003). The renewal of local and regional development politics hinges on questions of who governs and how power is exercised in determining what types of institutions and resources are needed (Pike et al., 2007). Local development has an important role for regions, including reducing poverty and inequality (Turok & Mykhnenko, 2007). Roads, telephone lines, potable water, and power are all essential components of infrastructure for regional economic growth (Firman, 2013). To improve the economy in the region is very important so that people do not migrate to the city to make a living. It depends on the local government utilizing the budget so that it is properly allocated for regional development (Pierskalla, 2016) because it determines whether or not the local economic growth of the new region develops. In a 2018 study by Sutriadi (2018) planning and governance in the new era, it is not just that urbanization has made cities the most desirable places to live and do business.

Local economic development must be based on participation and locality, including needs and resources (Hidayat & Safitri, 2019). A primary concern and objective of enhancing the welfare of autonomous areas that aim to raise the standard of living for the populace and secure the existence of future generations is the process of sustainable local economic development. In this context, the facilitation of investment opportunities emerges as a pivotal strategy to stimulate employment and investment (Castanho et al., 2020). The implementation of regional autonomy cannot be separated from the involvement of the private sector that takes part to collaborate with the government financially in making development efforts (Sutriadi & Miftah, 2020). Local economic development is to assist practitioners at the central and regional levels in formulating better strategies by understanding their regional economies more deeply (Malizia et al., 2021). Local economic development is seen based on several aspects, including target groups, location factors, policy focus and synergy, sustainability, process management, and governance (Utomo et al., 2020). Local economic development is the ability of a region to develop its economy so as to improve its quality of life and economic level in the future by utilizing its natural resources to produce added value that increases the production of potential community products (Ayunda et al., 2024). In this regard, the significance of the relationship between actors in the triple helix – that is to say, the relationship between the government, business and civil society (Ranga & Etzkowitz, 2013) – is of particular importance in the development of the tourism sector in the territorial splits. The government's role is pivotal in formulating suitable regulations to protect tourist areas and ensure the provision of adequate services for tourists. A similar responsibility is incumbent upon the business, which must ensure that existing tourism sectors are harmonized with existing regulations, thus preventing pollution of marine ecosystems and beach attractions. Furthermore, civil society must collaborate to manage and protect existing local tourism, thereby facilitating local economic development in Pangandaran Regency due to territorial splits.

Based on the findings of the literature review and previous research, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1: Territorial splitting in some regions of Indonesia presents opportunities for local economic development and governance, contingent on the resources available in the region.

## 2. Methodology

An exploratory descriptive approach was employed in this research, with the objective of analyzing and presenting data in a thorough, in-depth, and systematic manner (Amin & Isharyanto., 2022). Inquiries, which seek

to ascertain the who, what, and where of events or experiences, as well as to elicit informant perspectives on a topic that is not well known, were found to greatly benefit from qualitative description (Kim et al., 2017). Additionally, the approach endeavors to explain or describe a situation, event, or object under study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This research endeavors to describe and interpret empirically territorial splitting in Indonesia. To this end, it seeks to understand the phenomenon of decentralization and regional autonomy that has developed in Indonesia periodically, from the inception of the decentralization policy in Indonesia to the present. In the context of territorial splits, exploratory qualitative research methods were employed to ascertain the depth of the phenomenon, particularly in Indonesia. Periodically, a transition from centralistic to decentralized governance was observed, most notably in 1999 when President Soeharto relinquished his position to his vice president, President Baharudin Jusuf Habibie, marking the onset of a new era of decentralization. The practice of splitting began to accelerate significantly from 1999 to 2014. Despite the implementation of a moratorium policy or termination of territorial splitting, the aspiration to pursue territorial splitting persists. The data collection technique employed is a literature study, whereby information pertinent to the subject of territorial splitting in Indonesia was collated. The focus of this study is Pangandaran Regency, a region that has emerged as a result of the splitting of Ciamis Regency in the West Java Province of Indonesia.

The information can be obtained from library materials related to the research problem, including books and scientific articles related to territorial splitting and local economic development, Pangandaran territorial splitting documents, and previous studies related to decentralization and regional autonomy, and regional splitting. The data collected pertains to the phenomenon of territorial splitting in Indonesia, with a particular focus on the splitting of the Pangandaran district. It encompasses the period from the inception of the Pangandaran splitting process at the beginning of 2000 to the subsequent development of the local economy of Pangandaran in the period between 2012 and 2024. The data was then subjected to content analysis (Forman & Damschroder, 2007), which entailed textual data analysis to reorganize the data in order to enable the depiction of the object under study and the drawing of conclusions. The results of the previously obtained data regarding the territorial splitting of the Pangandaran district, which became the practice of regional autonomy in Indonesia, were presented in this study.

The data analysis undertaken in this study employs an interactive analysis model approach (Miles, 2014). The data analysis activities encompass four distinct components. Firstly, at the data reduction stage, the classification, focus, direction and discarding of unnecessary data were carried out, especially data related to regional splitting, both from interview data, questionnaires and documents obtained by researchers. Second, at the data presentation stage, this data analysis was carried out from the data reduction process, which facilitated the ability of researchers to act and draw conclusions. Thirdly, qualitative data was presented in narrative form, while quantitative data was presented through diagrams/graphs. The conclusion/verification stage is essentially a step in obtaining validity from research data conducted by triangulation, aiming to verify evidence carried out on the conclusions obtained, both confirming the results of primary data sources and connecting the researchers' review with the opinions of stakeholders in territorial splitting who are directly involved, and data and information references from observations, and mass/electronic media news. Research on the splitting of the Pangandaran region involves collecting historical data before and after the splitting of 2007-2024. This was achieved by using longitudinal data so that specific individuals, groups, or phenomena can be observed repeatedly over a defined period of time. This methodological approach is designed to capture changes or developments that occur over time, thereby enabling researchers to analyze patterns or causal relationships in a dynamic temporal context (Menard, 2002). This methodological approach is instrumental in fostering a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between cause and effect, thereby facilitating the identification of the influence of specific factors on the observed changes or outcomes over an extended timeframe (Frees, 2004).

### **3. Results**

#### **3.1 Local economic development through territorial splitting**

The phenomenon of territorial splitting in Indonesia was shown to encourage local economic development based on several aspects, including target groups, location factors, policy focus and synergy, sustainability, process management, and governance (Utomo et al., 2020). Firstly, the location factor is of paramount importance, given that Pangandaran is a splitting area with a strategic position as a tourism location in West Java, which is well known. Secondly, policy synergy in local economic development in Pangandaran has received attention from the Governor of West Java, which helps in the governance of the Pangandaran tourism sector, which is encouraged to become a world-class tourism sector. Third, sustainable development in Pangandaran also considers various aspects, with particular attention to environmental considerations. This is evidenced by the Pangandaran Regent Regulation Number 43 of 2014 Concerning the Zoning Plan for Coastal Areas and Small Islands of Pangandaran Regency. This regulation includes the preservation of coral reefs, mangrove forests, and other natural resources, demonstrating the commitment to environmental stewardship in the future. Fourth, the management process in reorganizing Pangandaran, which had experienced the tsunami disaster in 2006, presented a significant challenge



to the local economy in its efforts to recover from the downturn. However, the region has demonstrated resilience and continued to demonstrate positive growth. And fifth, governance, particularly at the local government level in Pangandaran, has gradually evolved in a more positive direction, with the construction of road and bridge infrastructure that is easily and quickly traversed by local and external communities.

With regard to this, it is anticipated that increased economic development will overcome various kinds of fundamental problems, namely unemployment, poverty and regional development inequality (Imelia et al., 2011). Therefore, economic growth is the ability of a country to provide a multitude of economic goods for its citizens, which are driven by technological progress and the institutional and ideological adjustments it necessitates.

Local economic development is concerned with the distinctive characteristics of space, which can be divided into three categories: the type of space as defined by the plan, space as a force field, and space as a homogeneous aggregate (Malizia et al., 2021). Additionally, geographical advantage, migratory agglomeration, and capital traffic movement between regions are the main variables determining regional economic growth. In the neoclassical theory of regional economic growth, three key factors are identified as being of significant importance: labor, the availability of capital, and technological progress. These three factors serve to determine the level of regional income and economic growth, and to explain the income gap between regions (Imelia et al., 2011).

The Klassen regional typology is a framework that describes the pattern and structure of regional economic growth. It divides regions into two main categories: regional economic growth indicators and regional per capita income indicators. The regional typology comprises four classifications: (a) areas with economic growth rates and per capita incomes above the regional average are considered fast-growing regions; (b) areas having a higher per capita income but a slower rate of economic growth is considered developed yet depressed; (c) areas with growth rates but below-average per capita rates are considered fast-developing regions; (d) a relatively underdeveloped area has a low level of economic growth and per capita income.

**Table 1.** Regional economic sector typology (Rizal et al., 2017)

Quadrant I	Quadrant II
Developed and growing well	Developed regions but depressed
Quadrant III	Quadrant IV
Regions that can still develop with fast	Relatively underdeveloped areas

As illustrated in Table 1, the association between territorial splitting and the regional economic sector allows for the description of the expanded area. The region in question possesses a range of potential and resources, which subsequently falls into the aforementioned quadrant. This outcome must be considered in the context of regional progress resulting from the splitting.

In terms of local economic development, territorial splitting is anticipated to facilitate the advancement of regional potentials and the management of these resources, thereby creating opportunities to unlock economic potentials that have been underappreciated. It is similarly anticipated that territorial splitting will facilitate the emergence of new economic growth centers, thereby promoting accelerated economic development in the regions (Widada et al., 2014). There are two principal motivations for pursuing the splitting of Indonesian regions. Firstly, as an initiative to enhance the quality of public services, the outcomes of the splitting will be more effective and efficient in comparison to the parent region, as it aligns with local requirements. Secondly, the acceleration of economic growth, facilitated by regional splitting, is capable of accelerating regional economic growth by leveraging the potential of local resources (Rachim & Sasana, 2013).

The local economic development rate is observed across various sectors, particularly in the context of economic characterization, which is a valuable tool for understanding the leading sector. In essence, sectors experience periods of rapid growth, driven not only by discontinuities in the production function but also by high price elasticity and income demand. The determination of leading sectors is influenced by not only changes in the flow of technology and the willingness of entrepreneurs to accept available innovations but also by the type of demand that has demonstrated high price and income elasticity. The development of a country's economy is conducted through a series of stages, including (a) the traditional society stage, (b) the prerequisites for take-off, (c) the take-off stage, (d) maturity, and (e) a period of high consumption. The transition from the prerequisite stage for take-off to the take-off stage represents a pivotal moment in the economic development of a country. This period marks the formation of the foundations for future growth, which determines the trajectory of the subsequent stage. A country has reached the take-off stage when it exhibits the following characteristics: (a) a rise in net national product from 5% or less to 10% in productive investment; (b) the development of several industrial sectors with high growth rates; (c) the establishment of a fundamental political, social, and institutional structure that promotes the division of the contemporary sector and the expansion of the external economic sector, which has an impact on the process of sustainable economic growth (Rostow, 1959).

A different perspective is offered by neoclassical economics, which posits that labor can be a significant factor in economic growth (Widada et al., 2014). A region's population expansion can have an impact on its economic

growth, which is influenced by the interactions between output, capital accumulation, population growth, and technical advancement. This is because the number of workers is largely determined by the population in an area. An increase in the number of workers in an area also results in an increase in the number of goods produced. However, this will impede economic development if the increase in the number of workers is not directly proportional to the growth of employment opportunities.

The territorial splitting of Pangandaran Regency from Ciamis Regency can be regarded as a strategic endeavor within the framework of local economic development, which emphasizes the empowerment of local potential, community involvement, and increased economic capacity based on regional strengths. This strategic initiative aligns with Rostow's stages of economic growth, particularly in the transition phase from the preconditions for take-off to the actual take-off stage (Thaha & Galib, 2022). In this context, territorial splitting serves as the catalyst for the establishment of pivotal preconditions, including infrastructure development, institutional reform, and augmented investment in pivotal sectors such as tourism and agriculture. The implementation of policies that promote regional autonomy and participatory development planning has the potential to expedite Pangandaran's transition to the take-off stage, characterized by sustained economic growth and diversification. It is therefore important to note that territorial splitting is not merely an administrative matter but rather a strategic element of local economic development that is integrated with the overarching macroeconomic growth framework.

In the context of regional splitting, the separation of the region from the parent region results in a decrease in population, which subsequently leads to a decrease in the number of workers. Nevertheless, if the region resulting from the splitting can leverage and optimize the diverse potential of the region through the dominant economic sector, thereby creating more employment opportunities, this will undoubtedly stimulate positive or enhanced regional economic growth. This is evidenced by the average economic growth of the cities/districts resulting from the splitting during the period 2008-2010, as reflected in the average Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP). The cities/districts resulting from the divisions demonstrated an increase every year. Notwithstanding the decline in the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rate in 2009, the average GRDP rate of cities/districts resulting from splitting remained positive. Furthermore, the value of government spending and the number of job opportunities for cities/districts resulting from the division increased annually between 2008 and 2010. These findings indicate that government spending and labor have a positive and significant impact on the economic growth of cities/regencies resulting from splitting (Widada et al., 2014).

Furthermore, in the context of regional splitting, numerous actors are involved in the triple helix, quadruple helix, and penta helix (Ranga & Etzkowitz, 2013) with the objective of fostering economic growth in new regions. Firstly, civil society actors and community actors exert influence over the formulation of government policy (Virgy et al., 2020). The involvement of the public in the sustainability development process is of great importance (Flint, 2013). Abraham (2017) asserted that community participatory planning is a crucial aspect of the sustainable development process and posited that the most fundamental form of participation is intervention, which aims to facilitate humanist social change and contribute to the community as a citizen.

Secondly, government actors, specifically local governments, exert considerable influence over future development planning and the allocation of budgetary resources for local economic development, which are derived from both local revenue and incentives from the central government. Thirdly, academic actors are similarly crucial in the process of regional splitting. They provide scientific studies that can inform the government's local economic development policies, which aim to minimize failure, particularly for new autonomous regions that require continued attention and supervision. Fourthly, the entrepreneur actor (business) is presented with the opportunity to create new economic growth as a result of the splitting of the region. This, in turn, creates a favorable environment for investment in new areas, which will have a positive impact on the creation of employment opportunities and the reduction of unemployment and poverty. It is evident that encouraging local economic development cannot be the sole responsibility of the government. It is imperative to establish collaborative partnerships with other key stakeholders to achieve this goal.

### **3.2 A Case Study of Territorial Splitting of Pangandaran Regency**

The Pangandaran Regency is one of the regions resulting from the splitting of the Ciamis Regency, which is part of the West Java Province. Ciamis is one of the districts in West Java, with a very extensive area of approximately 2,424.71 km<sup>2</sup>. The population in 2011 was approximately 1,746,795, comprising 36 sub-districts and 353 villages. The extensive area of Ciamis Regency presents a challenge in the delivery of public services to residents who are geographically isolated, such as those in Pangandaran and Cijulang. It typically takes at least three hours to travel to Ciamis for the purposes of obtaining a SIM (driving license) or NPWP (taxpayer identification number). Furthermore, from the perspective of regional development in Ciamis Regency, 36 sub-districts are deemed inadequate due to the vast expanse of the region and the constraints imposed by limited financial resources. The region's untapped economic potential and inadequate infrastructure have prompted ten districts in Pangandaran to pursue the formation of new autonomous regions, with the aim of securing access to public services and achieving a more equitable standard of living by leveraging their inherent capabilities (Afandi,

2013).

Another rationale for the Pangandaran Regency's division into a new autonomous region is the inadequate management of natural resources and marine resources (Afandi, 2013). The potential of Pangandaran has not been optimally exploited. Despite the considerable contributions made to Ciamis through local revenue derived from the tourism sector, hotel taxes, restaurants, and others, the reciprocity obtained by Pangandaran is not directly proportional to the large contribution given. This has led to the conclusion that Pangandaran should be managed independently. The potential of natural resources owned could be utilized to optimize regional development by branding the region as a tourism city. Another factor that contributed to the division of the Pangandaran district was the need for equitable economic distribution, as the region was not as prosperous as other areas within Ciamis. Despite this, Pangandaran is an area that contributes the largest regional original income to Ciamis (Amani, 2017).

The split of Pangandaran Regency was inaugurated on October 25, 2012, which consists of ten sub-districts, namely, Cigugur, Cimerak, Cijulang, Kalipucang, Mangunjaya, Langkaplancar, Padaherang, Pangandaran, Sidamulih, and Parigi (Himayah et al., 2023). The aspiration of the Pangandaran region, also known as the southern Ciamis area, to become an autonomous region was first expressed in 2002. The formation of the Pakidulan Community Association Forum (PMP) has enabled the Pangandaran community to pursue the objective of separating themselves from Ciamis (Afandi, 2013). The Pangandaran Regency has the potential to develop a new economy following the division of the region, should it utilize its local resources. A review of the literature indicates that the tourism potential of Pangandaran Regency can be optimized following the division of the region into several sectors. The tourism sector in Pangandaran Regency is in a state of stable economic growth, with the large number of potential tourist attractions representing a significant factor. The establishment of a new autonomous region is also a key driver of this growth.

Furthermore, Pangandaran Regency has a significant opportunity to expand its economy due to the increasing prominence of the tourism sector in Pangandaran, which is also a destination for international tourists (Fauzi et al., 2019).

The superior tourism potential of Pangandaran represents a significant basis for the development of new economic growth in the region as a result of the aforementioned division. The region's natural resources include potential for agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, and forestry. Table 2 shows the major tourist attractions and their locations in Pangandaran Regency.

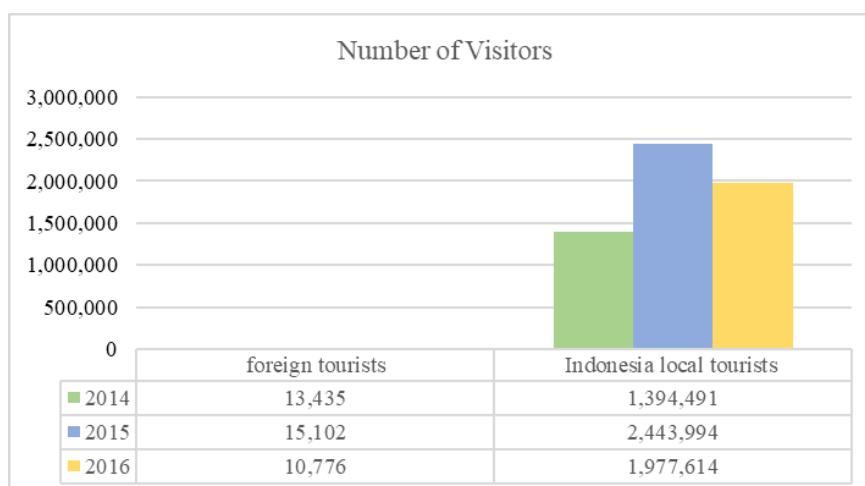
**Table 2.** Major tourist attractions and their locations in Pangandaran Regency (Afandi, 2013)

Major Tourist Attractions	Locations
Cukang Taneuh (Green Canyon)	Kertayasa, Cijulang Subdistrict
Pangandaran Beach	Pananjung Village, Pangandaran Subdistrict
Citumang River	Bojong Village, Parigi Subdistrict
Batu Hiu Beach	Ciliang Village, Parigi Subdistrict
Panunjang Nature Preserve	Pangandaran Village, Pangandaran Subdistrict
Karang Tirta Beach	Sukaresik Village, Sidamulih Subdistrict
Cagar Pangandaran Water Park	Putrappinggan Village, Kalipucang Subdistrict
Saung Muara	Kondangjajar Village, Cijulang Subdistrict
Batu karas Beach	Batukaras Village, Cijulang Subdistrict
Mandasari Beach	Masawah Village, Cimerak Subdistrict
Keusik Luhur Beach	Kertamukti Village, Cimerak Subdistrict
Madasari Beach	Masawah Village, Cimerak Subdistrict
Karang Nini Beach	Emplak Village, Kalipucang Subdistrict

Following the splitting of Pangandaran Regency, there has been an increase in the number of tourists visiting Pangandaran, both from abroad and within Indonesia. This is due to fluctuations in the tourism industry. Based on data of the Pangandaran Regency Central Statistics Agency, Pangandaran Regency received 1,407,926 tourists in 2014, of whom 13,435 were foreign visitors and 1,394,491 were Indonesian citizens. In 2015, there was a notable increase in the number of tourists, with a total of 2,459,096 visitors. In 2016, the number of tourists decreased to 1,988,390, including 10,776 from abroad and 1,977,614 from Indonesia. Figure 1 shows a graph of the number of visitors to Pangandaran.

Following its establishment as a new autonomous region in West Java, numerous developments have facilitated the emergence of a more robust economic growth trajectory, particularly through the reinforcement of local capabilities through a tourism-centric approach. Additionally, Gunawan Undang, chairman of the South Jabar Forum, asserted that Pangandaran Regency represents a successful territorial splitting model in Indonesia, demonstrating an ability to stimulate regional economic growth. This is consistent with the assertion made by the Governor of West Java (Ridwan Kamil), who stated that Pangandaran's diverse natural scenery, encompassing rice fields, rivers, mountains, and beaches, positions it as a potential leader in tourism, with the potential to significantly

contribute to the economic growth of West Java (Jabarjuara.co., 2020).



**Figure 1.** Number of visitors to Pangandaran

According to an interview with a member of the Pangandaran County Presidium in May 2023, Pangandaran at that time possessed revenue potential that could contribute significantly to the local government revenue of Ciamis. In the regional budget of Ciamis during that period, this potential was considerable; however, its management strategy was quite limited. This limitation is what prompted Pangandaran to seek splitting. The region is supported by four sub-districts that exhibit tourism potential. Currently, the tourism prospects have expanded into the Parigi area, which includes activities such as white-water rafting and other attractions. Numerous natural tourist sites, particularly rivers, have emerged. It appears that nearly all of the ten sub-districts are now contributing, as there are various tourism programs being implemented.

The governance of Pangandaran tourism city has undergone significant changes following its division into a new autonomous region. This has led to a period of rapid and positive development, as evidenced by the observed changes in infrastructure and governance of Pangandaran tourism. These changes can be attributed to the region's transition from a regency to an autonomous region (Rizal et al., 2021). This is also an effort to attract tourists, including foreign tourists, to Pangandaran. This will undoubtedly impact the economic growth sector, leading to increased local revenue and the creation of new economic opportunities for the community, ultimately enhancing their quality of life. The objective is to facilitate local economic development in a region, thereby enhancing the quality of life and economic level in the future. Local economic development has an impact on the welfare of local people who were initially in the lowest income group, resulting in an improvement in their overall well-being (Leigh & Blakely, 2016). This will be achieved by leveraging the region's natural resources to generate added value (Ayunda et al., 2024).

According to the interviews with the Ciamis Regional Development Planning Agency in May 2023, it is imperative that sustainable tourism development be implemented from the outset, with students educated on waste management. For instance, coffee packaging is repurposed as wallets, a practice that has garnered attention from the United Arab Emirates. Furthermore, the empowerment of mothers in the production of similar crafts has been observed. The Pangandaran Tourism Plan was developed through a collaborative effort by various community organizations across multiple locations. This plan was developed through a participatory approach and was funded by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), which has expressed significant concern regarding the sustainability of tourism destinations. Pangandaran has been recognized as a tourism destination by UNWTO with the slogan sustainable tourism. Consequently, the development of Pangandaran must be conducted in accordance with specific standards and adjusted accordingly. The construction of large factories is to be avoided, and support for the tourism industry must be considered, such as the provision of clean water for hotels and restaurants, which should not be done carelessly so as not to have a negative impact on the availability of clean water.

Territorial splitting is a strategy employed to stimulate regional economic growth by optimally leveraging existing potential. When effectively managed, it can significantly accelerate economic growth, fostering new local-based economic growth initiatives that engage the community directly and improve the overall quality of life. The novelty contribution of this research is the proposition that the success of local economic development in newly established regions is contingent upon the quality of regional governance. Effective governance is associated with favorable outcomes in line with the anticipated outcomes of regional expansion. This also demonstrates that territorial splitting is not solely a political motive to gain power but rather a driving force for individuals with a strong regional identity bond who seek a better quality of life through the optimal governance of local resources.



As shown in Table 3, a comparative analysis of Pangandaran's economic development before and after becoming a new autonomous region was conducted, based on data from Pangandaran Dalam Angka 2013-2024, Annual Report on Tourism Sector Performance 2015-2023, Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) 2016-2021 and 2021-2026, Regional Investment Report 2015-2023, Data on Transfers to Regions and Village Funds (TKDD) 2013-2023, Pangandaran Regency UMKM Profile 2014-2023, and Pangandaran Regional Economic Study 2016-2023.

**Table 3.** Comparative analysis of Pangandaran's economic development before and after becoming a new autonomous region

Aspect	Before becoming a New Autonomous Region (Part of Ciamis Regency)	After becoming a New Autonomous Region
GRDP	Rp 1.35 trillion (2012)	Rp 4.12 trillion (2023)
Per capita income	Rp 12.7 million/year (2012)	Rp 28.3 million/year (2023)
Economic growth	4.1% (2012)	6.7% (2023)
Tourism sector contribution	24% of GRDP (2012)	41% of GRDP (2023)
Number of tourists	1, 8 million visitors/year (2012)	5.2 million visitors/year (2023)
Number of hotels/lodges	127 (2012)	356 (2023)
Open unemployment rate	8.3% (2012)	5.1% (2023)
Poverty rate	12.7% (2012)	7.8% (2023)
Road infrastructure	486 km total road length, with 42% in good condition (2012)	712 km total road length, with 78% in good condition (2023)
Number of micro small businesses	2, 450 (2012)	6,820 units (2023)

Based on the comparative analysis, there are key factors influencing the change. The first factor is budget and management autonomy. As a new autonomous region, Pangandaran has full authority in managing the budget and determining economic development priorities in accordance with regional needs. The second factor is focus on the tourism sector. The Pangandaran Regency government established the tourism sector as the main locomotive of the regional economy with significant investment in tourism infrastructure and promotion programs. The third factor is infrastructure improvement. Improved accessibility through the construction and improvement of transportation infrastructure (roads, bridges, and terminals) supports economic growth. The fourth factor is improvement of human resources quality such as the implementation of training and education programs to increase the capacity of local communities in managing tourism and creative economy businesses. And the fifth factor is cooperation with private parties such as collaboration with private investors in the development of tourist destinations and supporting facilities.

#### 4. Discussion

Following its official establishment as an autonomous region, Pangandaran Regency initiated the formulation of a developmental trajectory with the enhancement of fundamental infrastructure serving as the primary foundation for regional advancement. The local government allocated a significant proportion of its budget to the construction of roads and bridges and the development of network systems to improve connectivity between regions within the district. Furthermore, the provision of public facilities, including hospitals, educational institutions, government offices, and other public service spaces, was implemented in a phased manner to address the fundamental needs of the community and to stimulate local economic activities. This development strategy constitutes the initial phase in achieving equitable development and enhancing the quality of life of the Pangandaran community following the splitting.

The geographical potential of the Pangandaran area, which boasts a lengthy coastline and abundant marine ecosystems (Nuranisa & Mulyanie, 2024), is also a contributing factor. The strategy's emphasis on marine tourism is intended not only to augment local revenue but also to serve as a sustainable development strategy that engages the local community in the service sector, conservation, and creative economic activities (Parmawati et al., 2022). Consequently, Pangandaran aspires to cultivate its distinct local identity as a preeminent marine-based tourist destination, while concurrently upholding the sustainability of both the local environment and culture.

Empirically, in the local development of the new autonomous region of Pangandaran, i.e., coastal and marine tourism development, this development concept is implemented by ensuring that coastal tourism encompasses a

range of tourism, recreation, and leisure activities that occur in the coastal zone and offshore waters (Miller & Auyong, 1991). This approach offers a novel perspective on the neoclassical growth theory, which was pioneered by Robert Solow and Trevor Swan in the 1950s. This theory focuses on the role of capital, labor, and technology in the process of economic growth (Solow-Swan growth model) (Dowrick & Rogers, 2002). The influence of regional characteristics and typology of development on the theory of growth is a key consideration. The typology of coastal and marine tourism development is also a salient factor, as it needs collaboration between the government, local communities, and the private sector to create policies that not only protect the environment but also encourage sustainable economic development practices. These practices focus on improving institutional governance and strengthening the regulatory framework. It is therefore vital that coastal and marine ecosystems are recognized as valuable local assets for future generations.

This research possesses interdisciplinary significance and impact, particularly with regard to the relevance of urban planning and political science studies. The research contributes to the concept of local development by enriching knowledge about the typology of coastal and marine tourism development in local development. This includes aspects of ecology, socioculture, economy, institutions, spatial planning, infrastructure, local communities, environmental carrying capacity, and risk management. Furthermore, it provides a complex picture of the context of decentralization through regional expansion practices, by considering various aspects that influence it. The role of actors involved in the regional expansion process has an impact on local development both before and after a region becomes autonomous. The study demonstrates that not all regions undergoing expansion inevitably succumb to failure; some are capable of gradual development. The development of these regions is influenced by a variety of actors, including individuals, groups, and institutions involved in institutional governance and local development.

## 5. Conclusions

The splitting of the new autonomous region can stimulate the region to create new economic growth by developing local economies, such as strengthening and optimizing the potential of its resources, so that it can support the regional economy by relying on superior sectors as selling points or attractions. However, this also cannot be separated from the growth pole as the beginning of the regional economic development by focusing on one location that has its charm. Pangandaran is one example of the variety of regional splitting, which influences local economic development. Of course, this cannot be separated from the various actors involved in the process of forming the Pangandaran Regency. The aforementioned splitting of the region, when conducted in an optimal and sustainable manner, has the potential to enhance the quality of life and well-being of the community. This may be achieved by leveraging the region's existing superior resources, including its creative industries. The splitting of the region, when conducted in a manner that is both sustainable and optimizes the potential of existing superior resources, can encourage the improvement of the quality of life and welfare of the community. This may include the development of local creative industries, restaurants, hotels or lodging, tourism services, local markets and shops, and the conservation of coral reefs and mangrove forests, among other initiatives.

This research is of great importance in the future, as it provides an overview of the relationship between the growth of local economies and the management of autonomous regions. It demonstrates that regions that are well managed can encourage local economic growth, while regions that are poorly managed cannot benefit from abundant natural resources. The present study is limited in scope, as it focuses exclusively on the level of regional development of Pangandaran Regency, without discussing further the success of expansion in national development. Additionally, the reliance on secondary data collection imposes limitations on the study's scope. To address these limitations and further explore the topic, future research may consider employing a combination of primary and secondary data, utilizing longitudinal studies to conduct more specific analyses. The findings of this research have implications for local government policy in Pangandaran. In particular, the Pangandaran Regent Regulation Number 43 of 2014 Concerning the Zoning Plan for Coastal Areas and Small Islands of Pangandaran Regency should be continued to encourage sustainable local development that is not only concerned with the economy but also concerned with natural preservation. Furthermore, it is imperative to facilitate discourse on the agenda policy by conducting a review and making adjustments to the substance of the Government Regulation Plan on Regional Arrangement and the Grand Design of Regional Arrangement, which have not yet been approved. Despite the ongoing national moratorium, the issue of regulations governing territorial splitting persists, thereby impeding regional aspirations to expand without encountering regulatory impediments. Consequently, the government must be prepared with effective regulations that provide opportunities for regions genuinely requiring splitting for rational and feasible reasons.

## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, D.S.; methodology, D.S.; formal analysis, D.S., R.S. & A.D.; investigation, D.S.; writing—original draft preparation, D.S.; writing—review & editing, D.S. & A.D.; supervision, R.S., T.F. & A.D. All

authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## Data Availability

The data used to support the research findings are available from the corresponding author upon request.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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