

## **Local Wisdom of The Mentawai Tribe Community on Siberut Island in The Vicinity of Maritime Tourism Area**

**Anis Munandar<sup>1\*</sup>, Melinda Noer<sup>2</sup>, Erwin<sup>3</sup>, Rahmat Syahni<sup>4</sup>**

Andalas University, Limau Manis, Pauh District,  
Padang City, West Sumatra 25175, Indonesia.

*anismunandar507@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>*

The tourism sector plays a role in the economic development of Indonesia and serves as one of the sources of Regional Original Income. Generally, countries with potential coastal natural resources utilize maritime tourism as a tool to support their development, including in the Mentawai Islands Regency, West Sumatra Province. The tourism sector represents one of the economic development potentials in the Mentawai Islands Regency. Maritime tourism involves recreational activities conducted in marine or coastal areas, including beaches, islands, and oceanic regions, encompassing the surface, depths, and seabed. One of the potentials of maritime tourism destinations is the local wisdom specific to each region. Areas that adopt a community-based approach to the development of maritime tourism utilize social and cultural potentials as tools for its advancement. Therefore, this study focuses on the local wisdom of the Mentawai ethnic community on Siberut Island within the maritime tourism region. The research aims to identify, describe, and explain the local wisdom still applied in the daily lives of the indigenous Mentawai community on Siberut Island as a basis for the development of maritime tourism. The theory of local wisdom is used to analyze the forms of local wisdom. The research design falls under the non-experimental research design. Based on its nature, qualitative data is utilized in the study. From the discussion, it can be concluded that the South Siberut and Southwest Siberut sub-districts exhibit various forms of local wisdom. The forms of local wisdom include knowledge, technology, religious beliefs, culture, customs, and creative products of the community.

*Keywords: local wisdom, mentawai, siberut, tourism, maritime.*

*\*Corresponding author*

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## INTRODUCTION

Government-led development activities encompass all sectors, including the tourism sector. The development of the tourism sector is expected to stimulate and enhance economic growth (Spillane, 1991). This sector can also contribute to foreign exchange earnings, act as a catalyst for development activities, and generate various activities in community life (Pendit, 2002). The tourism sector plays a role in the economic development of Indonesia and serves as one of the sources of Regional Original Revenue (Ahmar et al., 2012; Novitri et al., 2017). Tourism in a region can also help improve the welfare of the local community, as seen through the opening of job opportunities and increased income for the people living around tourist destinations (Remi et al., 2017).

The development of tourism can contribute to the economic growth of communities and accelerate overall development at both regional and national levels (Hakim, 2010). It also has the potential to create employment opportunities (Sabon et al., 2018). The various positive impacts resulting from tourism development activities on regional and national development demonstrate a significant relationship between tourism and development. As stated by Yoeti (2008), tourism plays several roles in development, such as being an agent of development, an economic tool for development in developing countries, a source of foreign exchange, and a means to increase national and regional income.

The tourism sector, particularly marine tourism, is not only a key component of development in Indonesia. Generally, countries with coastal natural resources also utilize marine tourism as a tool to support their development. This is evident in countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, South Korea, Japan, Maldives, the Caribbean, Australia, Portugal, Greece, Brazil, Haiti, and many others that utilize marine tourism to support their development (Isa & Ramli, 2014; Tyrrell et al., 1999; Wilson & Tisdell, 2002; www.idntimes.com, 2019).

According to Yoeti (1997), the development of marine tourism is influenced by several factors, including the availability of tourism attractions and points of interest, accessibility through transportation infrastructure, and the presence of facilities that can provide comfort to visitors.

Satryanto and Pamungkas (2015) identified factors that affect tourism development, including: (a) suboptimal potential of attractions in marine tourism areas, (b) limited accessibility to reach marine tourism areas, (c) insufficient supporting infrastructure in marine tourism areas, (d) community support in the tourism areas, (e) decreasing number of tourists visiting marine tourism areas, (f) policy support, and (g) natural disaster threats. These statements are similar to those expressed by Indah and Susetyo (2017), who identified several factors influencing the development of marine tourism, such as the provision of infrastructure, accessibility, and the presence of attractive tourism objects at the destination.

Almost every region in Indonesia is engaged in the development and promotion of the tourism sector, including the Mentawai Islands Regency in West Sumatra Province. The tourism sector is considered one of the economic development potentials for the Mentawai Islands Regency (Tourism Office of Mentawai Islands Regency, 2017). The tourism sector in the Mentawai Islands Regency holds an important position within the national tourism industry. Firstly, the Mentawai Islands Regency has been designated as a National Tourism Area (Daerah Pariwisata Nasional, DPN) with two National Tourism Development Zones (Kawasan Pengembangan Pariwisata Nasional, KPPN) and one National Strategic Tourism Area (Kawasan Strategis Pariwisata Nasional, KSPN). This designation is stated in the Indonesian Government Regulation No. 50 of 2011 concerning the National Tourism Development Master Plan (Rencana Induk Pembangunan Kepariwisata Nasional, RIPARNAS) for the period 2010-2025.

Referring to the RIPPAN (Regional Tourism Development Master Plan) of the Mentawai Islands Regency for the period 2017-2025, there are several tourism potentials that can be developed, including cultural and historical tourism, nature tourism, and marine tourism. Among these three types of tourism, marine tourism is the most popular attraction for tourists, especially those from abroad (Tourism Office of Mentawai Islands Regency, 2017). Marine tourism refers to recreational activities carried out in marine or coastal environments, including beaches, islands, and various marine areas such as the surface, underwater, and seabed (Yulianda, 2007).

The perceived attraction of marine tourism by foreign tourists aligns with the understanding of tourism attractions as defined in tourism legislation, which includes anything that possesses uniqueness, beauty, and value in terms of the diversity of natural resources, culture, and human-made creations that become the target or purpose of tourists' visits (RI, 2009). The uniqueness of marine tourism in the Mentawai Islands Regency lies in its diverse surfing spots. There are waves suitable for beginners, intermediate surfers, and professionals. Building on the above findings, one of the potentials of marine tourism is the local wisdom that is specific to each area within the destination.

According to Alfian (2013), local wisdom is defined as a way of life, knowledge, and strategies employed by the local community to meet their needs. In areas that adopt a community-based approach to marine tourism development, social and cultural potentials are utilized as tools in the development of marine tourism. These various development instruments form patterns or models used in marine tourism development (Salim & Purbani, 2015; Zamzami, 2016; Purwaningsih & Almegi, 2016).

Therefore, the specific form of local wisdom to be utilized for tourism development will be adjusted to the existing potentials and the interests of tourists in experiencing the attractions of the tourist objects that are based on local wisdom. Prasetyo (2021) defines local wisdom as local ideas that are wise, valuable, and well-regarded within the community, and are passed down and followed by community members accordingly.

Local wisdom refers to the various cultural riches that grow and develop based on clear reasoning, good morals, and encompass positive elements within the community's life. Quaritch Wales formulated local wisdom or local genius as "the sum of the cultural characteristics which the vast majority of a people have in common as a result of their experiences in early life." The main ideas contained in this definition are (1) cultural characteristics, (2) the cultural owners as a group, and (3) life experiences that arise from the cultural characteristics (Ratih and Suryana, 2020). Therefore, this research focuses on the local wisdom of the Mentawai indigenous community on Siberut Island, specifically in the marine tourism area.

In this context, marine tourism refers to recreational activities carried out in marine environments, specifically in coastal areas, islands, and oceanic regions that possess the cultural knowledge, beliefs, and unique technologies of the Mentawai indigenous community as forms of local wisdom. Based on the research problem, the objectives to be achieved in this study are to identify, describe, and explain the local wisdom that is still applied in the daily lives of the native Mentawai people on Siberut Island, serving as the foundation for the development of marine tourism.

To analyze the forms of local wisdom, the theory of local wisdom is used. Local wisdom is derived from two words, namely "kearifan" (wisdom) and "lokal" (local). In general, local wisdom or local wisdom can be understood as a set of local ideas that are wise, full of wisdom, and of good value, which are embedded and followed by members of the community (Lelly Qodariah and Laely Armiyati, 2013). According to Suhartini (2009), local wisdom is a form of environmental wisdom that exists in community life in a specific place or region. It refers to a particular locality and community.

Local wisdom or local genius is a local thought or idea that contains wise, creative, and good values, which are internally passed down through generations (tradition). These values are believed to contain truths and are followed by members of the community. This local wisdom can be referred to as the noble values (adhiluhung) of the community, which serve as the foundation for good behavior and harmonization (Kriyantono, 2014).

Haryanto (2014) states that the forms of local wisdom include the harmony of diversity in social practices based on the wisdom of culture. The forms of local wisdom in society can take the form of culture, such as values, norms, ethics, beliefs, customs, customary law, and specific rules. The noble values related to local wisdom include love for God, the universe and its contents, responsibility, discipline, independence, honesty, respect, kindness, care, self-confidence, creativity, hard work, perseverance, justice, leadership, goodness, humility, tolerance, peace, and unity.

According to Mitchell in Ndjatrijani (2018), local wisdom has six dimensions, including local

knowledge, local values, local skills, local resources, local decision-making mechanisms, and local group solidarity. Building upon the understanding of local wisdom that has been discussed, there are several forms of local wisdom possessed by the Mentawai Tribe (as the local community in the study area of marine tourism development).

## RESEARCH METHOD

Referring to the research objectives, the research design used falls under non-experimental research design. The characterization of non-experimental research design can be seen from the absence of intervention on the research subjects, the research is conducted in a natural condition, and it can be used to develop knowledge under conditions where experiments are not feasible (Brink, 2009).

Based on its nature, the data used in this research is qualitative data. Qualitative data refers to data in research that describes a phenomenon based on typically non-quantifiable factors (Sugiyono, 2016). This data is obtained from interviews, document analysis, discussion outcomes, and observation transcripts. There are also qualitative data in the form of photographs and audio or video recordings. Qualitative data is chosen because the research issue or problem needs to be explored. In this case, the research questions seek answers from specific groups of people (the indigenous Mentawai community). Through qualitative research design, the empowerment of research informants can be facilitated to provide in-depth and clear narratives. Furthermore, qualitative design allows for theory development (Creswell, 2014). Another reason for choosing a qualitative research design is that the collected data can provide meaningful insights into the statements, explanations, experiences, knowledge, and actions of the research informants regarding marine tourism and the local wisdom of the indigenous Mentawai community.

In terms of its nature, this research is classified as a case study. The selection of this research type is because a case study is considered capable of answering research questions in the form of "how" and "why". The specific type of case study used in this research is a descriptive case study because it aims to systematically, accurately, and comprehensively uncover the phenomenon related to the potential of local wisdom.

This research was conducted on Siberut Island, Kepulauan Mentawai Regency. For the case study area, it was conducted in two sub-districts: Southwest Siberut as the center of marine tourism and South Siberut as the center of cultural tourism and the place where the activities of the indigenous Mentawai's local wisdom are still practiced. The selection of these locations was done using a purposive technique, which involves selecting research locations based on considerations such as: a) These areas have internationally renowned marine and cultural tourism destinations; b) They have the potential for local wisdom that characterizes the uniqueness of the indigenous Mentawai community; c) Both sub-districts are part of the national strategic tourism area and the tourism area of Kepulauan Mentawai Regency; d) They are located within or in close proximity to the Special Economic Zone (KEK) of Kepulauan Mentawai Regency.

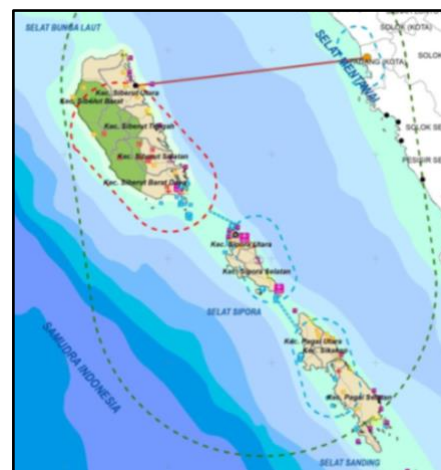


Figure 1. Position of Research Location on Siberut Island Southwest Siberut and South Siberut Districts

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines the forms of local wisdom among the indigenous Mentawai community around marine tourism in the district of Siberut Barat Daya (Southwest Siberut). The local wisdom referred to in this study is a form of environmental wisdom that exists in the community's way of life in a specific place or region, thus referring to a specific locality and community (Suhartini, 2009).

### Local Wisdom in the Form of Knowledge

Referring to Alfian's (2013) opinion, one of the forms of local wisdom is knowledge. Knowledge can be defined as the result of human perception, whether through sight, hearing, smell, taste, or

touch, towards an object, which eventually leads to understanding. Knowledge can take the form of physical objects, its understanding is achieved through perception, both through the senses and through reason. It can also involve ideal objects or relate to psychological matters.

Based on interviews and observations, there are several types of knowledge possessed by the local community regarding the development of marine tourism. Table 1 provides an overview of these different forms of knowledge.

Table 1. Indigenous Mentawai Community's Knowledge Varieties Related to Marine Tourism Development

No	Knowledge Groups	Informant Statement Resume
1.	Environmental Conservation	The Mentawai people believe in the existence of spirits or spirits that inhabit plants, animals, and soil. They also believe that there is a ruler who regulates water, air and forests. Therefore, they uphold the attitude of preserving nature and the environment.
2.	Treatment	Treatment of various types of diseases by using leaves as medicinal ingredients. People who are able to do this are called Sikerei.
3.	Biodiversity of Game Animals	The Mentawai people who have the ability to hunt animals can determine the type of animal they hunt from the sound of the animal they hear. Besides that, it is also able to know the age and sex of the hunted animals from the sounds made by the hunted animals.
4.	Disaster Management	The Mentawai people are not justified in cutting trees excessively and carelessly, because they must get directions and permission from the tribal chief or sikerei. This action allows them to avoid floods and landslides. In addition, they also have knowledge regarding building houses that are made earthquake-friendly. Their house is called <i>umma</i> .

Source: Results of interviews with informants, 2021

The four forms of knowledge possessed by the Mentawai indigenous community, as shown in Table 1, can be utilized to optimize the development of marine tourism. The Mentawai people have knowledge about the environment, which can be used to determine the location of

marine tourism development that does not harm the environment. It is essential for stakeholders involved in marine tourism development to collaborate with the local community in selecting suitable locations for marine tourism development.

Furthermore, the Mentawai people have knowledge about medicinal practices using various leaves and plants. Although only a small portion of them, known as Sikerei, possess this knowledge, it can still be utilized to optimize the development of marine tourism. At the very least, their traditional medicinal knowledge can provide first aid for tourists who experience illness during their visit to marine tourism sites. Additionally, the healing rituals performed by Sikerei can become unique tourist attractions that showcase the cultural heritage of the Mentawai people.

The Mentawai indigenous community also possesses knowledge about the diversity of game animals. This knowledge can be used as a tourist attraction for visitors to marine tourism destinations. The various knowledge about game animal species and how they determine the gender and age of game animals through their sounds can be incorporated into educational tourism as an additional attraction in marine tourism. Tour operators can provide opportunities for tourists to learn about game animals and their hunting techniques from the Mentawai community.

Another knowledge possessed by the Mentawai people is related to disaster resilience. It is well-known that the Mentawai Islands are prone to natural disasters. To minimize the impact of these natural threats, the local knowledge of the Mentawai people can be utilized. For example, the construction techniques used by the community in building their houses can be adopted by stakeholders in marine tourism development to create earthquake-resistant structures.

#### Local Wisdom in the Form of Technology

Another form of local wisdom generated by the Mentawai indigenous community is technology. Technology is considered one of the fundamental elements of culture ([Herskovits & Malinowski, 1997](#)), which is a form of local wisdom. According to Anglin ([1991](#)), technology is the application of behavioral sciences, natural sciences, and other knowledge in a systematic and organized manner to solve human problems. The technology referred to in this discussion is the

equipment used by the Mentawai people in their daily lives. This technology is the result of the cultural practices of the Mentawai community.

In reality, the Mentawai tribe is a group of people who live, settle, and thrive in the wilderness of Siberut Island. From the island, they spread to other areas or islands in the Kepulauan Mentawai

Regency. They travel by using canoes made from selected tree trunks.

As the oldest indigenous community in the world, they certainly have technology or equipment used to meet their basic needs, such as food. Various types of technology or equipment produced by the cultural practices of the Mentawai tribe are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Variety of Technology/Equipment from Mentawai Tribe Community Culture

No	Technology/Equipment Group	Name	Informant Statement Resume
1.	Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Bogolu Knabat</i> is a type of war boat.</li> <li>• <i>Sampan</i></li> </ul>	In the past, the Mentawai people had war boats called the Bogolu knaba. But now the boat is no longer in use. Most Mentawai people make small canoes that can accommodate 1-3 people and goods.
2.	Food Fulfillment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Rourou</i> (arrow)</li> <li>• <i>Lulak</i> (dish)</li> <li>• <i>Pepecle</i> (wooden clamp),</li> <li>• <i>Letcu</i> (bracelet from Mentawai made of rattan),</li> <li>• <i>Gigiok</i> (grater from ruyung branch thorns),</li> <li>• <i>Luklak</i> (Traditional Mentawai tray made of wood),</li> <li>• <i>Tutuddu</i> (wood stacker)</li> </ul>	Quite a lot of equipment made by the Mentawai people themselves is related to the fulfillment of their food. The equipment is used for hunting animals in the forest, grating sago, and kitchen utensils.
3.	Clothing and jewelry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Kailabak feathers, goukgouk feathers</i> (chicken feathers),</li> <li>• <i>luat</i> (headband),</li> <li>• <i>inu</i> (beaded necklace),</li> <li>• <i>sikaira</i>,</li> <li>• <i>Middle lai-lai</i>,</li> <li>• <i>coma</i> (Skirt),</li> <li>• <i>Sabbok</i>,</li> <li>• <i>sikairat and lakka</i>.</li> <li>• For men, they use <i>laigak leleu</i> (ginger that grows in the forest) as an additional accessory.</li> </ul>	The original clothes of the Mentawai tribe are made from natural materials. Men's clothing does not have too many components when compared to women's clothing.
4.	Hunian	<p><i>Umma</i></p> <p>Lalep Rusuk</p>	<p>Mentawai people's houses are built by family members. Houses are made of natural materials obtained from the forest. The construction of the building is strong and flexible enough to withstand earthquake shocks.</p> <p>A family home where the marriage is not legal Special accommodation for young people, widows, and people who have been expelled from the village.</p>
5.	Komunikasi	<i>Tuddukat</i> (kentongan) <i>Kajeuma</i> '(tifa),	The Mentawai tribe creates mass communication tools to communicate important news to village communities. In every house of the Mentawai tribe there is a kentongan instrument which functions to convey the message of what has been hunted and even to inform if a family member has died.
6.	Kesenian	<i>Lilipat patitik</i> (Tattoo Making Equipment) <i>Kateuba</i> (percussion) <i>Jejeineng</i> (genta) <i>Ngonongngonong</i>	In general, artistic equipment owned by the Mentawai tribe is used to accompany dance activities.

*Ngong  
Jajaok*

Source: Results of interviews with informants, 2021

The entire range of equipment produced by the Mentawai tribe's culture can be used as additional instruments for tourism attractions. In reality, tourists who enjoy marine tourism attractions come from foreign countries. They have likely never seen the equipment or technology possessed by the indigenous people of the Mentawai tribe. This uniqueness of each piece of equipment becomes its own distinct feature. The uniqueness of each item can be used as authentic Mentawai souvenirs.

### **Local Wisdom in the Form of Beliefs/Religion**

From an ideological perspective, religion relates to the extent to which individuals accept beliefs and have faith in the principles of a religion, including concepts of faith, the existence of God, fate, and matters that are dogmatic and doctrinal. Anything related to God or the sacred is understood as religion (Rahmat, 2003).

The religion practiced by the Mentawai ethnic group is Arat Sabulungan, which is a variation of beliefs regarding the various powers possessed by ancestral spirits or ketsat. In their religious belief system, several names are known that are related to the supernatural, such as:

1. Simagre is a spirit that causes people to live.
2. Sabulungan is a spirit that occasionally leaves the body, sometimes considered to temporarily leave (e.g., during moments of surprise).
3. There are also spirits that do not stray far from human dwellings, such as those residing in the earth, water, air, large trees, mountains, forests, and so on.
4. Tai ka bagat koa Dewa is a deity who resides in water and the sea. This deity provides resources from rivers and the sea, such as fish, turtles, sea cucumbers, and more. Additionally, this deity also brings about hurricanes and storms.

Basically, the Mentawai people do not have a specific term to refer to their belief system (Juniator, 2012). They base their daily activities on their belief in the spirits of nature, known as

sabulungan. The entire life of the Mentawai community is colored by various taboos (*keikei*). Activities such as sago processing, pig and chicken farming, hunting, making poison arrows, creating medicine, constructing houses, and crafting canoes all have associated taboos that must be followed. The Mentawai people adhere to these taboos to protect themselves from danger or calamity.

According to the beliefs of the Mentawai people, misfortune or disaster can occur when there is a conflict between human activities and the spirits of nature. By engaging in their daily activities and observing the taboos, the Mentawai people strive to establish a harmonious existence with the spirits of the natural world. They believe that everything they do is to maintain the harmony between humans and the spiritual realm within nature. The spirits of nature provide everything that humans need to live, and it is only fitting for humans to express gratitude by adhering to the existing taboos for the sake of a sustainable and balanced life. This is the way of life for the Mentawai people, known as *alam sabulungan*.

Based on the beliefs held by the Mentawai people, those involved in the development of marine tourism in the Mentawai Islands, particularly in Siberut Island, need to respect the local taboos. This is done to maintain harmony between marine tourism activities and the beliefs held by the local community. Furthermore, the beliefs and taboos upheld by the Mentawai people can serve as additional considerations for those involved in the development of marine tourism in utilizing the natural environment of the tourism area.

Marine tourism attractions can also be enhanced by incorporating the religious rituals practiced by the Mentawai people. The religious activities conducted by the Mentawai community can be a unique draw for international tourists. The distinctiveness of their beliefs, which often involve the use of leaves and foliage as ritual media, adds to the uniqueness of the religious practices of the Mentawai people.

### **Local Wisdom in the Form of Culture**

Culture encompasses everything related to the mind, creation, feeling, and imagination.

According to the Indonesian Dictionary, culture is defined as the mind, intellect, results, customs, or something that has become a difficult-to-change habit. It is a way of life that develops and is collectively owned by a group of people, passed down from generation to generation. Culture is formed by various complex elements, including religious and political systems, customs, language, tools, clothing, buildings, and artworks (Gunawan, 2000; KBBI, 2000). Hawkins (2012) describes culture as something that encompasses knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, customs, as well as human abilities and habits as part of a social community.

According to Koentjaraningrat (1992), the elements found in culture include religious systems, social organization systems, knowledge systems, livelihood systems, technology and human equipment systems, language, and arts. Culture is a way of life that develops and is collectively owned by a group of people, passed down from generation to generation. Building on the theoretical understanding above, this research includes culture as one of the forms of local wisdom held by the Mentawai people.

Referring to theories that discuss culture, there are several cultural products owned by the Mentawai indigenous community as seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Various Cultural Products of the Mentawai Tribe Community in Siberut

No	Cultural Elements	Cultural Products
1.	Religious system	<i>Arat Sabulungan</i> , Sabulungan consists of various kinds of spirits that inhabit objects and have certain roles among them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Taikamanua</b>, spirits that live in the sky and air.</li> <li>• <b>Taikapolak</b>, a spirit who lives on earth.</li> <li>• <b>Taikabaga</b>, spirits that live in the ground.</li> <li>• <b>Taikaleleu</b>, the guardian spirit of several land animals.</li> <li>• <b>Taikbagakoat</b>, spirits that protect some sea animals.</li> </ul>
2.	Social organization system	The Mentawai people are patrilineal and their social life within the tribe is called "uma"
3.	Knowledge system	Knowledge passed down from generation to generation. His knowledge system has a lot to do with supernatural knowledge, fulfilling the needs of clothing, shelter and food.
4.	Livelihood system	Farming, hunting, gathering and raising livestock
5.	Technological systems/equipment of human life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Rourou</i> (arrow)</li> <li>• <i>Lulak</i> (dish)</li> <li>• <i>Pepecle</i> (wooden clamp),</li> <li>• <i>Letcu</i> (bracelet from Mentawai made of rattan),</li> <li>• <i>Gigiok</i> (grater from ruyung branch thorns),</li> <li>• <i>Luklak</i> (Traditional Mentawai tray made of wood),</li> <li>• <i>Tutuddu</i> (wood stacker)</li> </ul>
6.	Language	Mentawai language with 3 dialects namely (1) North Siberut dialect, (2) South Siberut dialect, and (3) Sipora Pagai dialect
7.	Art	<i>Lilipat patitik</i> (Tattoo Making Equipment) <i>Kateuba</i> (percussion) <i>Jejeineng</i> (genta) <i>Ngonongngonong</i> <i>Ngong</i> <i>Jajaok</i>

Source: Results of interviews with informants, 2021

The cultural products produced by the Mentawai indigenous community can be used as additional attractions for marine tourism. This allows marine tourism activities to not only revolve around the utilization of nature but also utilize the diversity of cultural products owned by the local community. Nurcahyanti (2020) states that coastal communities have different characteristics and artifacts compared to communities in lowlands and mountains. The natural climate and geographical conditions naturally drive humans to

adapt and create cultural products as specific defense mechanisms. Local wisdom contains problem-solving elements to address the difficulties humans face when adapting to environmental conditions.

### Local Wisdom in the Form of Customs and Traditions

Customs and traditions are social habits that have long existed in a society with the aim of regulating order. Customs and traditions are also known as



traditions. Customs refer to the daily habits performed by the local community in carrying out their activities and interacting with other members of the community. These activities are passed down from generation to generation within the community. The customs and traditions referred to in this study are the hereditary customs and repeated practices that have become traditions or distinctive characteristics of a region, including a set of social values, norms, rules, and beliefs that grow and develop along with the growth and

development of the community, which are still embraced and preserved by the community ([Ibrahim, 2010](#); [Koentjaraningrat, 1992](#)).

Based on the findings obtained from the research, several social customs (traditions) can be grouped as practiced by the Mentawai indigenous community, as shown in

Table 4.

Table 4. Some Customary Forms of the Mentawai Tribe on Siberut Island

No	Various Customs of the Mentawai Tribe Society	Information
1.	Pointed teeth	This tradition is carried out by adult Mentawai women. The purpose of sharpening teeth for beauty.
2.	Processing sago	Done by men. Sago is one of the staple foods of the Mentawai tribe. One sago stalk can meet the needs of a family for 6 months.
3.	Concocting arrow poison	Poison made to be smeared on arrows as a tool for hunting animals in the forest.
4.	Alak Toga	The cauldron is a form of dowry from the man to the woman's family
5.	Tatto	Tattoos or pictures on the body made by the Mentawai people aim to show their position or degree of self. Tattoos are made by selected people and carried out with traditional ceremonies by fulfilling customary requirements such as pigs and chickens.
6.	Treatment	Traditions of traditional medicine carried out by people who are believed to have medicinal abilities.
7.	Wedding	Every uma in the Mentawai tribe will establish good relations with other umas through an arranged marriage process between men in one uma and women in another uma through a marriage process. If the man dies first, the widow will return to her original uma again.

Source: Results of interviews with informants, 2021

The entire tradition held by the Mentawai indigenous community is derived from long-standing customs. These unique traditions make the Mentawai people distinct compared to other ethnic groups in Indonesia and the world. Therefore, the traditions of the Mentawai community can contribute to the diversity of tourist attractions and the development of marine tourism in Mentawai.

### Local Wisdom in the Form of Creative Products by the Community

The creative products produced by the local community around the marine tourism area can serve as souvenirs for tourists. Creative products represent the skills possessed by the local community in generating ideas, concepts, and innovations to create innovative products. These products have economic value and can be utilized as business opportunities by the community.

Creative products emphasize that what is produced through the creative process is something new, original, and meaningful. To

generate these creative products, creativity is required. It encompasses actions or abilities to produce new ideas by utilizing available resources to create something useful, which is understood as creativity ([Todaro, 2000](#)).

In reality, the Mentawai indigenous community has produced many creative products that are used in their daily lives. After conducting observations and interviews, several forms of creative products produced by the Mentawai community were discovered. The variety of creative products produced by the community includes:

1. Palitte (sword-shaped carvings)
2. Pendayung (wall decorations in the shape of paddles)
3. Balukbuk-patterned wall decorations (traditional medicine storage)
4. Korabi (Mentawai tattoo designs)
5. Miniature Mentawai paddle boats

6. Miniature Mentawai traditional houses (Uma)
7. Miniature surfboards
8. Arrows
9. Spears
10. Letcu bracelets
11. Turtle shell bracelets
12. Shell crafts
13. Baklu bags made from sago palm sheaths
14. O'orek bags or backpack baskets.

All the creative products mentioned above are produced by the Mentawai community. Generally, these products are sold directly to tourists by the local people. They are also sold in souvenir shops. This condition demonstrates that the region has a variety of creative products that can be utilized to support the development of marine tourism in the Mentawai Regency, both in general and specifically in the research area of Southwest Siberut District.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that the South Siberut and Southwest Siberut districts have various forms of local wisdom. The local wisdom in the form of knowledge includes knowledge about the environment, traditional medicine, biodiversity of hunted animals, and disaster management. Another form of local wisdom is related to technology or tools used in daily activities, such as transportation equipment, tools for food procurement, clothing, housing, communication devices, and artistic equipment. In terms of belief systems, the Mentawai community has a form of local wisdom known as Arat Sabulungan. The specific culture of the Mentawai community is also considered as a form of local wisdom possessed by the local people. Local wisdom can be observed from the aspects of religious systems, organizational and societal systems, knowledge systems, livelihood systems, technology systems, communication systems, and artistic systems. Additionally, the customary practices of the Mentawai community, such as wedding ceremonies, healing rituals, tooth

sharpening, and Mentawai tattoos, are also forms of local wisdom. Moreover, the region also offers a variety of creative products that hold economic value and can be utilized to support the development of marine tourism in the Mentawai Regency, particularly in the Southwest Siberut District.

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