

Urban Green Spaces, Ecotourism, and Sustainable City Planning: A Governance Perspective

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Abstract

Urban green spaces are integral parts of sustainable cities, offering ecological, economic, and social advantages. The aim of this research is to examine the role of urban green spaces as ecotourism sites and their influence on sustainable city planning. With a systematic qualitative content analysis of secondary sources on cities, including Singapore, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Melbourne, and New York, the study identifies three critical dimensions: environmental sustainability, economic viability, and social inclusion. Results indicate that while urban green spaces enhance biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and economic development, inadequate governance can lead to over-tourism, loss of habitat, and social exclusion. Effective policies require zoning laws, public-private partnerships, and smart city systems to reconcile tourism with environmental and social sustainability. The research concludes that urban ecotourism can only positively impact sustainable urban development through multi-stakeholder governance, inclusive policies, and innovative planning frameworks. This study uniquely contributes by developing and testing an Integrated Urban Ecotourism Governance Framework that systematically links urban green spaces, ecotourism development, environmental sustainability, economic viability, and social inclusion. Specifically, this research examines how the sustainable management of urban green spaces as ecotourism destinations can simultaneously advance urban development and promote environmental justice and equitable community access, thereby contributing to sustainability.

Keywords: urban green spaces, ecotourism, sustainable city planning, environmental sustainability, governance frameworks

1. Introduction

Throughout history, Urban green spaces (UGS) have established themselves as necessary components for sustainable city planning. Urban open spaces like parks alongside botanical gardens along with urban forests and wetlands act as critical elements for bettering urban quality of life through air purification and temperature control and they serve residents with recreational spaces (Akshay, 2024). The urgent need for proper planning of green spaces and their maintenance grows more critical due to rapid urbanization and worldwide increasing environmental pressures on cities (Edeigba et al., 2024). Green urban spaces support both social and psychological well-being of urban residents because they create restful areas where people can exercise and connect with their communities.

Studies about how UGS functions as an enabler for urban ecotourism have gained increasing attention in the latest period. The traditional sites of ecotourism involve natural reserves and national parks alongside country regions which attract visitors interested in nature conservation together with cultural awareness. Ecotourism now extends beyond traditional rural areas because cities are undergoing change (Mwendwa & Giliba, 2012). City dwellers can participate in ecotourism activities that support environmental conservation and learning through sustainable nature-oriented tours in urban areas. The concept motivates travelers to explore towns where they encounter natural areas simultaneously working to preserve the environment.

Urban green spaces intersecting with ecotourism operations create both positive and challenging developments for sustainable urban development efforts. The growing population density in cities requires city planners to find solutions that fulfill goals of business development alongside both environmental sustainability and inclusiveness for all residents. When urban planning embraces ecotourism it produces economic advantages through visitor generation and job creation and environmental infrastructure investment boost (Wood et al., 2018). The sustainability approach and biodiversity education reach their goals through raising public awareness. The growth of foot traffic in UGS brings important challenges to maintain environmental preservation and avoid social discrimination.

The recognition of urban green spaces (UGS) in ecotourism activity continues to rise but scholars have not

thoroughly studied their value as tourism destinations. The majority of research examines rural regions but does not study sustainable tourism aspects involving urban green spaces (Karagiannis et al., 2014). UGS face difficulties because there are too many visitors and poor management of resources and differences in social economic status between groups. Most of the urban green spaces need improved maintenance alongside structured conservation approaches. The economic potential of urban ecotourism remains unnoticed by official policies because cities do not have complete sustainable development plans. The absence of established frameworks leads to suboptimal benefits from urban ecotourism for planners and policymakers thus reducing its sustainability and economic contribution.

This study seeks to bridge the literature gap and shed light on the urban green spaces' contribution to ecotourism and their projections for sustainable urban planning. The Research Questions of this research are:

RQ1: How do urban green spaces contribute to ecotourism?

RQ2: What are the environmental, economic, and social impacts of urban ecotourism?

RQ3: What strategies can city planners use to integrate ecotourism into urban sustainability frameworks?

The particular research objectives of this study are:

RO1: To analyze the potential of urban green spaces as ecotourism attractions by examining their ecological, social, and economic value.

RO2: To examine the implications of urban ecotourism for sustainable city planning, particularly in terms of environmental conservation, economic development, and community well-being.

RO3: To identify policy recommendations for integrating ecotourism into urban sustainability strategies, ensuring that tourism growth aligns with environmental and social objectives.

The assessment of this research will add to urban sustainability and tourism studies by broadening the knowledge of ecotourism in an urban setting. Contrary to traditional research on nature-based tourism in distant or rural locations, this study points out the potential of urban green areas to act as ecotourism destinations and their significance for urban sustainable planning.

From a policy viewpoint, the research offers real-world implications for environmental stakeholders, urban planners, and tourism managers. Through the identification of strategies to incorporate ecotourism in urban sustainability initiatives, the study will assist policymakers in creating better regulations, upgrading infrastructure, and managing urban green spaces more efficiently. This can result in:

1. Better conservation efforts for urban biodiversity.
2. Increased economic opportunities through sustainable tourism development.
3. Greater community engagement and inclusivity in urban green space planning.

The research findings will make sure about how sustainable tourism operations are vital for urban areas. Global cities must deal with their fast-paced urbanization as well as environmental destruction thus requiring research into alternative methods to achieve tourism development while protecting the environment and society. The understanding of urban park involvement in ecotourism will guide city planners to create better resilient and sustainable urban spaces through well-informed choices.

2. Literature Review

Sustainable urban planning has established urban green spaces (UGS) as essential components because they deliver three main benefits to city residents. For a long time, urban areas maintained their value through environmental services such as air quality improvement and temperature regulation together with biodiversity promotion until they started being seen as essential for urban ecotourism activities. Urban ecotourism operates differently from traditional ecotourism because it brings nature-based travel activities to cities by using green spaces as recreational and conservation-focused destinations (Edeigba et al., 2024). The ecotourism potential of UGS has not been properly investigated although these spaces continue to gain importance.

This review investigates academic research on urban green spaces including their capability to function as ecotourism sites through an organized framework of essential goals. The evaluation assesses UGS value from an environmental, social and business standpoint when utilized for ecotourism purposes. The evaluation explores how urban ecotourism affects sustainable urban planning while examining its environmental sustainability together with its economic growth and community well-being aspects. The review explores policy recommendations that merge ecotourism practices into sustainable urban development approaches while maintaining consistency between tourism expansion and conservation goals alongside social fairness. The review analyzes academic literature with policy documents as well as case studies to create a framework which supports sustainable urban tourism development through UGS implementation.

2.1 The Potential of Urban Green Spaces as Ecotourism Attractions

Sustainable urban planning heavily relies on urban green spaces which perform three essential roles in the environment while contributing to economic development. The combination of public parks, botanical gardens, wetlands, and urban forests serves three essential functions, which include environmental protection, community well-being, and economic development. The expanding trend of urbanization now recognizes UGS as sites which fulfill recreational purposes as well as vital ecotourism destinations (Mersal, 2017). The concept of urban ecotourism promotes nature-based tourism activities to help people love nature while advancing sustainable development of cities. The integration of UGS into sustainable infrastructure requires complete knowledge about their ecological, social, and economic advantages from an ecotourism framework.

City green zones have essential ecological effects because they support biodiversity preservation, help fight climate change, and maintain clean air quality. Urban spaces draw multiple plant and animal species to live in them because they offer their habitats despite the densely populated urban condition (Revelli, 2017). The conservation of biodiversity within UGS brings increased eco-tourist value to these areas by enabling guests to observe nature and birds and participate in directed ecological walks. The carbon sequestration process occurs through green areas that capture carbon dioxide emissions while simultaneously decreasing the urban heat island effect. Urban forests with gardens enhance air quality through pollutant filtration which leads to improved livability and attraction of tourists. Ji et al. (2023) demonstrate that UGS utilization for ecological tourism succeeded in Singapore, London, and Berlin. Gardens by the Bay in Singapore serves as an exemplary case of biodiverse green spaces that provide educational experiences related to sustainability along with biodiversity conservation. The urban spaces of Hyde Park in London and Tiergarten in Berlin maintain proper management to balance visitor attractions with ecological stewardship of their parks.

The ecological advantages of urban green areas extend to social and cultural benefits that enrich urban populations in cities. Established green spaces help people interact with each other while supporting mental health along with community health through their facilities for relaxation, exercise, and recreation (Lv et al., 2024). Ecotourism in UGS operates as a platform for environmental education which provides people with organized learning experiences to study nature. Environmental education, consisting of eco-tourism activities together with nature walking while utilizing interactive displays, promotes community understanding about urban sustainability and conservation efforts for city ecosystem protection. The unique qualities of UGS attract both domestic and international visitors because they hold historical value and architectural magnificence (Bush & Hes, 2018). Urban botanical gardens, together with historic parks and restored wetlands within cities, feature cultural stories that depict the historical development of these locations.

Local community involvement is crucial in the successful conservation and maintenance of urban green spaces as ecotourism sites. Most cities have implemented participatory measures that engage the local community in the upkeep and marketing of the areas. Conservation programs and volunteer schemes led by the community guarantee that UGS are well conserved while cultivating a culture of environmental stewardship among the local population (Cho et al., 2024). In urban centers like Amsterdam and Melbourne, neighborhood community groups engage directly in urban greening initiatives, resulting in these cities being model examples of sustainable urban ecotourism. Public involvement not only increases the green space sustainability but also consolidates the social fabric through the development of shared spaces for collective use and cultural exchange.

The economic advantages of urban ecotourism are great, with well-managed green areas providing a contribution to the local and national economies through tourist income, employment, and environmentally friendly business development. Urban ecotourism in UGS can act as an impetus for economic renaissance, especially in urban centers that capitalize on their natural endowments to draw tourists (Akshay, 2024). Income earned from entrance charges, guided tours, and nature-friendly lodging supports the financial viability of urban gardens and parks. Moreover, the availability of such green spaces adds value to property and promotes investment in the surrounding area, producing ripple effects in the economy.

The implementation of ecotourism forms an essential component for creating employment as it establishes jobs throughout environmental education and hospitality. The incorporation of ecotourism into urban sustainability plans enables metropolitan areas to create business prospects for their local business operators who join artisans with tourism service providers. The economic principles support both inclusive development and sustainable development practices. Ecotourism has allowed multiple cities to use their urban green areas as economic growth platforms (Abu Kasim et al., 2019). The tourist earnings from New York City's Central Park enable ecological conservation through its various ecological functions. The Vondelpark in Amsterdam brings millions of visitors to its economic and cultural center every year, thus benefiting local businesses.

Urban planning requires sustainable assessments of economic value in green areas because these evaluations help policy-makers demonstrate the need for funding ecological preservation projects and green infrastructure development. Research analysts utilize three main analytical approaches to quantify UGS economic value:

ecosystem service valuation, visitor expenditure assessment, and cost-benefit analysis (Du & Zhang, 2020). Urban green spaces generate more economic value for cities than their basic monetary value alone. Both healthcare expense reduction, elevated air quality, and improved city durability emerge as benefits that UGS facilities provide (Mersal, 2017). Cities that weave UGS integration into their tourism strategies will achieve extended economic sustainability together with their environmental and social obligations.

2.2 Implications of Urban Ecotourism for Sustainable City Planning

The implementation of ecotourism in sustainable urban systems creates hurdles as well as possibilities that affect urban planning methods. Urban parks alongside green spaces function as fundamental resources that enhance environmental preservation, generate economic development, and maintain social wellness for communities. Sustainable tourism practice demands focusing on ecological preservation and community engagement because cities continue expanding and urbanizing (Mirsanjari & Mirsanjari, 2012). Planning urban ecotourism requires expertise to achieve sustainable outcomes by preventing environmental harm, along with economic differences and social displacement of communities.

The influence of ecotourism on environmental sustainability creates one of the vital effects for urban planning initiatives. The foundation of city planning depends on urban green infrastructure because it integrates natural elements into urban environments to build ecological resilience. Well-planned urban green areas fulfill their roles as tourism draws and operate as essential ecological systems that safeguard biodiversity and clean air pollutants and control city temperatures (Putra et al., 2022). The religious expansion of ecotourism brings new obstacles for urban areas because visitor volume growth provides both conservation hurdles and ecological decline risks. The volume of visitors to urban green spaces causes plant destruction alongside littering events, which produce valuable impacts on ecosystems, making it difficult to execute conservation programs (Shammi et al., 2023). When commercialization and management of ecotourism in urban parks are ineffective or irresponsible, it leads to increased environmental deterioration instead of sustainable development.

Urban planners need to develop suitable strategies to decrease the adverse environmental effects that urban tourism creates. Zoning policies serve as an effective solution by setting apart particular sections of urban green belts for ecotourism activities before blocking the entrance to sensitive natural areas. By enforcing zoning protocols, cities can maintain their conservation activities alongside tourism development while protecting the environmental quality of their green areas (Raghubanshi, 2024).

Visitor management systems through capacity control allow both the protection of environments from overpopulation and the prevention of crowded conditions. Various cities now require visitors to book ahead of time to access natural areas through either time-specific reservations or entry limits that restrict crowd sizes. Urban landscapes practice sustainable methods that combine native plant use and environmentally friendly trails and ecosystem infrastructure elements to increase space resilience and support eco-friendly tourism activities (Bibri, 2020). When constructing urban ecotourism plans, one should implement green building principles as an effective strategy. By establishing visitor facilities with environmentally friendly designs and water-efficient infrastructure in landscape areas, urban centers achieve green zone sustainability through ecotourism programs.

Sustainable urban planning benefits greatly from urban ecotourism through its economic impacts. The economic earnings from ecotourism enable cities to obtain funds needed for conservation work, along with infrastructure construction and neighborhood job creation. Cities must strike the right balance between economic growth and sustainability to avoid the excessive over-commercialization of urban green areas (Mohd Nor & Sahrir, 2024). Without proper regulations, the combined pressure from tourism developments can negatively affect green space quality while causing decreased accessibility. Urban green spaces should establish income-generating models that respect both ecological preservation standards and sustainable tourism practices so cities can implement them.

Urban green spaces used for tourism functions best through financial management partnerships established between government entities and private sector organizations. Sustainable ecotourism projects are made possible by public-private partnerships between governing bodies, NGO organizations, and private investors (Dale et al., 2012), which support green preservation without local government strain. Urban areas develop partnerships with environmentally-focused companies that enable the acquisition of financing for preservation and upkeep tasks, along with educational programs (Newton & Franklin, 2011). Green space preservation and regional economic stability find funding through ecotourism admission fees and tourism packages.

Through the Gardens by the Bay venture in Singapore, the city achieves sustainable economic growth and attracts large visitor numbers while maintaining environmental protection (Sadikin, 2023). The popular New York attraction Central Park attracts tourists who contribute to revenue generation while nurturing its natural heritage (Liu & Thanapauge Chamaratana, 2024). Through cultural performances and outdoor markets, and visited by tourists, Vondelpark serves as a model showing how urban green spaces create economic development

for Amsterdam. The examples prove how urban areas achieve economic development combined with sustainable environmental practices through ecotourism.

Urban ecotourism creates social effects that affect individual well-being, together with social relationships and place quality standards. Tourism development in green spaces can create unfair advantages and disadvantages to different groups because of the absence of inclusive policies (Ogato, 2014). Cities need to work toward social equity by providing equal access to ecotourism benefits alongside fairly distributing resources.

The prevention of gentrification remains a primary obstacle because increasing property values and rising living costs force low-income residents from areas surrounding popular green spaces (Joss, 2015). Urban planning should include strategies that promote municipal equality through affordable housing programs combined with equitable land policy standards and interactive tourism initiatives to reduce negative outcomes.

Tourism programs based in communities let local inhabitants control the operations of sustainable tourism activities. Locally directed programs such as eco-tour operations, gardening activities, and craft market activities produce financial gains while improving visitor satisfaction (Cabral & Dhar, 2019). The former unattended spaces in Medellín, Colombia, underwent transformation into prominent ecotourism centers because of volunteer community work.

Open access to green spaces must be available to the public at large. The establishment of inclusive ecotourism requires no-cost admission policies in addition to wheelchair-accessible infrastructure and bilingual educational programs (Yee et al., 2021). The focus on social inclusivity allows urban ecotourism to facilitate sustainable urban growth that supports everyone in society.

2.3 Policy Recommendations for Integrating Ecotourism Into Urban Sustainability Strategies

To successfully combine ecotourism with urban sustainability planning, governments need a set of detailed policies that maintain equal weight between tourism growth and environmental protection alongside social fairness. The recognition by urban administrations of UGS value in ecotourism has created a paramount need for strategic policy development (Liu & Thanapauge Chamaratana, 2024). The establishment of effective policies requires sustainability principles from around the world to develop through collaborative engagement among stakeholders via innovative methods, which create sustainable tourism practices that protect urban ecosystems. A well-defined policy framework needs to exist to protect urban ecotourism from becoming unsustainable because environmental degradation, social disparities, and economic imbalances will otherwise occur.

Various national and international policy guidelines offer strategies for incorporating ecotourism into urban sustainability. Various agencies like UN-Habitat, the European Union, and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) have developed policies focused on sustainable urban development, green tourism, and conservation of the environment (Mirsanjari, 2013). The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are themselves actively encouraging sustainable cities (SDG 11) and responsible production and consumption (SDG 12), underpinning ecotourism values. The sustainable tourism policy of the European Union emphasizes measures for green urban tourism, promoting those policies that reduce over-tourism and promote green infrastructure (Rivera & Gutierrez, 2018). These frameworks act as a platform for cities aiming to integrate ecotourism into their city planning policies.

It is the responsibility of municipal governments to implement such global guidelines in local tourism and environmental policies. Most cities have been able to incorporate ecotourism into city development plans by incorporating sustainability concepts into zoning laws, conservation programs, and tourism infrastructure development planning (Salman et al., 2020). Copenhagen, for instance, has instituted a green infrastructure development system in tandem with eco-tourism practices to ensure that green spaces continue to be accessed while maintaining biodiversity. Melbourne's urban sustainability policies focus on using eco-public transport, green building codes, and regulated visitor entry to nature reserves (Zorlu & Yilmaz, 2020). Tokyo's green tourism model incorporates community participation, smart city technology, and creative ecotourism experiences with low environmental footprint. These cities show how ecotourism can be embedded within the larger sustainability agendas of urban governments through effectively designed policy interventions.

Governance and stakeholder cooperation are crucial for guaranteeing the sustainability of urban ecotourism. Multi-stakeholder governance occurs through collaboration among local governments, private enterprises, NGOs, and community organizations to guarantee policies are inclusive and responsive to multiple interests. In the absence of effective governance structures, green areas in the city may end up being over-commercialized or poorly maintained, resulting in long-term ecological degradation (Raúl, 2023). Good governance guarantees that the benefits of ecotourism are shared equally and that environmental conservation is prioritized.

Local authorities are primarily responsible for managing urban ecotourism, but collaboration with private sector actors and NGOs increases financial sustainability and conservation (Rahmawati et al., 2024). Public-private partnerships enable municipalities to secure investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure, including

eco-lodges, renewable energy facilities, and low-impact visitor facilities. Public-private partnerships also enable cities to adopt best practices in waste management, water conservation, and responsible visitor behavior (Rahmawati et al., 2024). NGOs are very important in the sense that they ensure that ecotourism is conservation-oriented through promoting more stringent environmental protections, offering educational programs, and monitoring biodiversity.

One of the most important features of good governance is encouraging public involvement and citizen participation in ecotourism policy-making. Urban parks are owned by local people, and their management should respond to residents' needs and values. The involvement of local communities during tourism planning strengthens sustainability because policies are developed to match social and cultural demands. The adoption of community-based tourism (CBT) models by multiple cities enables local residents to take charge of the ecotourism activities, including nature walk organization and conservation program management (Koens et al., 2019). This method promotes both environmental conservation and benefits all tourism income to local residents.

Studies demonstrating success illustrate the beneficial relationship between public agencies and private investors and local communities as they maintain urban green spaces for tourism purposes. Holding collaboration between government agencies, private investors, and environmental organizations as the core governance structure, Gardens by the Bay in Singapore works toward sustainability (Jakaitis & Kazimieras Paliulis, 2013). Multi-stakeholder governance enables this initiative to achieve integrated development of urban greening and ecotourism with active public participation, thereby driving urban sustainability. Green space management policy in Berlin utilizes local organizations and businesses in maintaining parks while running tourism programs to keep ecotourism both ecologically safe and socially welcoming for all interested parties.

Urban ecotourism sustainability depends on cities using eco-certification systems that follow internationally recognized standards. Tourism-related facilities that win LEED and GSTC standards achieve sustainable performance through environmental and social sustainability assessments (Kim et al., 2011). Cities will promote the adoption of green building guidelines together with ecological waste management and energy conservation solutions as part of their tourism authority objectives through certification programs. By setting sustainable targets, urban planners gain the capability to monitor and direct ecological decision-making that protects natural areas.

Green infrastructure investment represents a fundamental policy instrument devoted to developing sustainable tourism. Urban areas need to establish environmentally friendly transportation systems that decrease their carbon emissions and provide better accessibility to urban nature areas. Green space destinations connect better to tourism spots through bicycle lanes alongside electric buses and pedestrian-friendly corridors that decrease vehicle congestion and pollution (Candrea et al., 2017). The use of sustainable waste management principles through park recycling programs and composting practices stops ecotourism from creating urban environmental issues. Urban tourist destinations, including Amsterdam and Vancouver, utilize effective green urban designs to connect sustainable transportation systems with waste management programs, which increase the value of their environmental tourism industry.

Effective management of tourism demands strategic balancing for the protection of conservation goals to avoid damaging the environment. Tourism pressure in urban green areas results in the loss of habitat and creates an accumulation of litter and disrupts indigenous ecosystems (Pasape et al., 2013). The control of tourism requires municipalities to establish systematic tourism administration through limits on visitor numbers and eco-tourism fee collections, as well as arranging tourism paths that spread visitors between different locations. Urban areas use short-term visitor caps and automatic pricing changes to manage tourist numbers in order to avoid crowding problems in popular ecological sites.

Smart city technologies will lead urban ecotourism forward by creating sustainable practices that deliver superior visitor engagement. Real-time environmental surveillance systems combined with AI-powered visitor management applications and digital eco-guide technology allow cities to monitor eco-tourism patterns and maintain environmental sustainability, according to Qingbiao et al. (2024). Urban visitors can utilize mobile applications to explore interactive tours and augmented reality content alongside real-time sustainability recommendations for modern education on conservation and elevated space dedication. Barcelona displays innovative, intelligent tourism programs that show cities can use digital solutions to develop sustainable tourism services while safeguarding their environment over the long term.

2.4 Research Gap

In spite of the growing popularity of urban green spaces as ecotourism destinations, much research is still lacking in their incorporation into sustainable city planning. The majority of ecotourism studies have centered on rural and natural areas, neglecting the ways in which urban spaces can best facilitate sustainable tourism. While

the existing literature emphasizes the ecological, social, and economic advantages of urban green spaces, there is scarce empirical examination of how cities can integrate ecotourism systematically into urban development policies, governance systems, and green infrastructure planning. In addition, there are a few studies that examine the long-term sustainability of urban ecotourism, especially in visitor impact management, gentrification mitigation, and equitable access to green spaces. Furthermore, the contribution of smart city technologies and digital innovation to the development of urban ecotourism is also under-researched. Closing these gaps is essential to formulate comprehensive policy recommendations that can ensure ecotourism benefits sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban environments.

3. Methodology

This research applies a qualitative content analysis design of secondary data to examine the potential of urban green spaces (UGS) as ecotourism products and their consequences for sustainable urban planning (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Through methodical reviews of the literature, policy texts, case studies, and industry reports, the research seeks to determine best practices and policy guidelines for incorporating ecotourism into urban sustainability planning.

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative research design is appropriate for this research since it provides a way of exploring in depth how urban green spaces are involved in sustainable ecotourism. This design provides a thematic synthesis of the available studies, determining the most important environmental, economic, and social aspects of urban ecotourism. The methodology centers on three main components:

1. Content Analysis of Secondary Data: Examining existing literature and reports to extract recurring themes related to urban ecotourism.
2. Policy Review and Analysis: Evaluating sustainability policies, urban planning frameworks, and governance strategies that integrate ecotourism.
3. Comparative Case Study Analysis: Investigating cities that have successfully incorporated UGS into their ecotourism strategies.

This data source triangulation guarantees a thorough grasp of the subject, allowing the study to make well-supported conclusions. The study does not incorporate primary data collection (e.g., surveys or interviews) because it is concerned with available information from academic and policy sources.

3.2 Data Sources

The research relies on multiple secondary data sources, categorized as follows (see Table 1):

Table 1. Data Sources

Data Source	Description	Examples
Academic Literature	Peer-reviewed journal articles and books on urban sustainability, tourism, and ecotourism.	Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Urban Forestry & Urban Greening, books on urban environmental planning.
Policy Documents	Reports from international organizations and government bodies outlining policies on urban green spaces and ecotourism.	UN-Habitat, UNESCO, World Bank, national and municipal tourism strategies.
Comparative Case Study	In-depth analyses of cities that have successfully integrated UGS into ecotourism and sustainability frameworks.	Copenhagen, Singapore, Melbourne, New York, Amsterdam.
Media and Industry Reports	Reports from tourism and urban development organizations providing insights into urban ecotourism trends.	World Travel & Tourism Council reports, industry white papers, news articles.

Through the use of a wide array of secondary sources, the research guarantees that findings are supported by existing research, pragmatic policy recommendations, and empirical case studies.

3.3 Data Collection Strategy

In order to maintain systematic and stringent data gathering, a structured process of literature review is employed:

3.3.1 Search Strategy

This study performs a systematic review of previously published reports and articles with the mentioned search specifications:

1. Databases Used: Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect.
2. Search Date Range: January 1, 2010 to December 15, 2025 (15-year window selected to capture the emergence and development of urban ecotourism scholarship while remaining manageable in scope)
3. Search String: ("urban green space*" OR "green infrastructure" OR "urban park*" OR "urban forest*" OR "urban wetland*") AND (ecotourism OR "nature-based tourism" OR "green tourism" OR "sustainable tourism") AND (sustainab* OR "sustainable development" OR governance OR "sustainable planning")
4. Search Operators: Boolean operators such as AND, OR, NOT are used to refine search results (Finfgeld-Connett, 2013).

3.3.2 Selection Criteria

This research includes certain criteria to ensure data relevance together with reliability through these selection guidelines (see Table 2):

Table 2. Selection Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeframe	Publications from the last 15 years (2010-2025).	Studies published before 2010, unless highly relevant.
Relevance	Research directly related to urban green spaces, ecotourism, and sustainable city planning.	Studies on general tourism or rural ecotourism without urban focus.
Source Credibility	Peer-reviewed journals, government reports, reputable industry publications.	Non-peer-reviewed sources, opinion-based articles.
Geographic Scope	Studies focusing on cities with developed ecotourism strategies.	Research focused exclusively on remote or non-urban areas.

The systematic approach to data selection maintains the entrance of only high-quality data that directly relates to the research.

The systematic literature selection process is illustrated in Figure 1, following PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The initial search across three databases (Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect) identified 2,847 records. After screening titles and abstracts, 547 articles advanced to full-text review. The final analysis included 123 peer-reviewed studies, supplemented by 52 additional policy documents and grey literature reports, for a total of 175 sources.

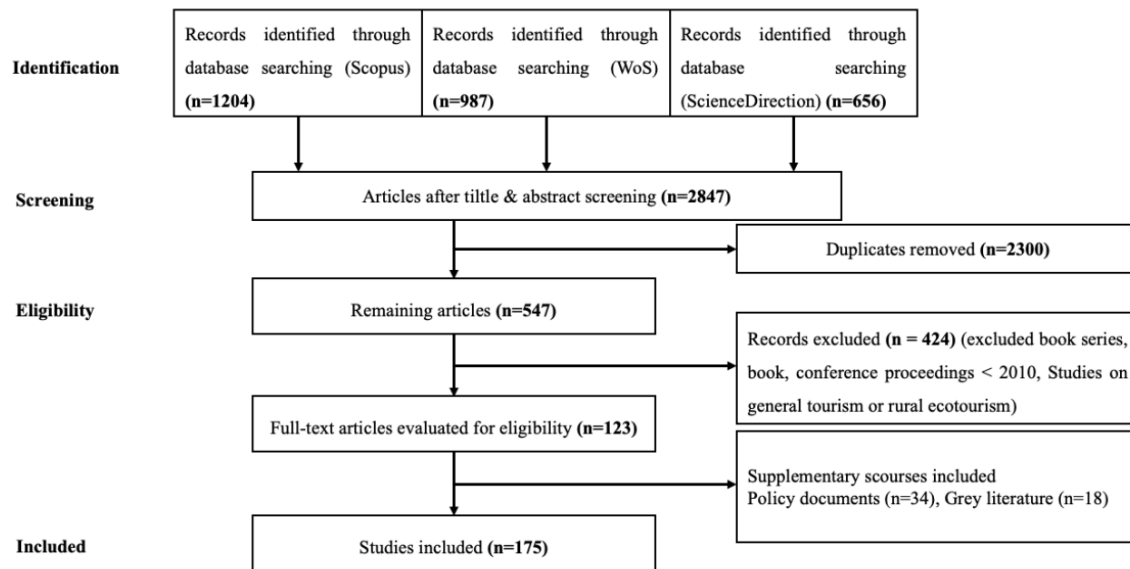


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram for Literature Selection on Urban Green Spaces and Sustainable Ecotourism

3.4 Data Analysis Approach

The study employs three primary methods for analyzing the collected data:

3.4.1 Thematic Content Analysis

Nickla's method functions to extract essential themes from literature and policy documents throughout research. Common themes include (see Table 3):

Table 3. Themes Identified

Theme	Description
Environmental Sustainability	Ecological benefits of UGS, conservation policies, biodiversity management.
Economic Contributions	Job creation, local business development, tourism revenue impacts.
Social Inclusion	Community engagement, accessibility challenges, cultural significance.
The analysis of different sources measures recurring patterns across themes which results in a unified comprehension of urban ecotourism.	

3.4.2 Comparative Case Study Analysis

The research examines cities that have mature urban ecotourism strategies to determine successful approaches and relevant policy insights (see **Table 4**).

Table 4. Comparative Case Study Analysis

City	Urban Ecotourism Strategy	Key Takeaways
Copenhagen	Integrated green infrastructure, sustainable tourism policies.	Balanced tourism and conservation model.
Singapore	Gardens by the Bay, eco-tourism innovation.	Technology-driven sustainability in tourism.
Melbourne	Green urban planning, public-private partnerships.	Strong governance in urban tourism management.

The research investigates various urban situations to find successful approaches that other municipalities can use.

3.4.3 Policy Review and Synthesis

An evaluation of urban sustainability policies is conducted through analysis of appropriate policy documents (see Table 5).

Table 5. Synthesis of Policy Review

Policy Framework	Key Elements
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Guidelines on sustainable cities and responsible tourism.
EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy	Focus on eco-tourism, green infrastructure.
Municipal Tourism Plans	Local-level governance of ecotourism activities.

The review presents a policy-oriented explanation of how urban areas achieve sustainable tourism growth.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

The conduct of this research aims to deliver an extensive study about urban ecotourism sustainability approaches yet multiple restrictions exist (see Table 6).

Table 6. Limitations of the Study

Limitation	Description
Dependence on Secondary Data	The study relies on existing sources, which may lack updated or region-specific information.
Generalizability Concerns	Findings are based on select case studies; results may not apply universally to all cities.
Lack of Direct Stakeholder Perspectives	Absence of interviews with policymakers, tourists, and local communities limits first-hand insights.

The study limitations can be resolved by implementing primary data collection methods such as surveys, expert interviews, and field observations in future research.

4. Findings

This research's conclusions reveal a broad analysis of the contribution of urban green spaces (UGS) towards ecotourism and its implications on sustainable city planning. Based on secondary sources analyzed via thematic content, three overarching themes have emerged: environmental sustainability, economic contribution, and social inclusion. These reflect the multidimensional advantages of ecotourism attractions that include urban green spaces and the complexity of managing them. The research also emphasizes the need for integrative planning, governance, and policy responses to align urban ecotourism with more comprehensive sustainability objectives.

4.1 Environmental Sustainability

Urban green spaces (UGS) are important for promoting environmental sustainability through their roles as ecological buffers that promote biodiversity, combat climate change, and enhance urban resilience. Incorporation of UGS into ecotourism schemes promotes conservation activities and raises the level of awareness about environmental matters among the general public. Yet, tourism expansion in these environments poses challenges in the form of habitat degradation, pollution, and overuse of resources, making sustainable management strategies imperative (Cho et al., 2024).

Among the most significant environmental advantages of UGS is that they have the potential to facilitate biodiversity conservation. The green areas act as a habitat for various plants and animals, ensuring species diversity within the urban area. Urban nature parks, wetlands, and botanical gardens are used as sanctuaries by migratory birds, insects, and plants, thus ensuring ecological equilibrium (Du & Zhang, 2020). Studies have shown that well-managed urban parks can maintain biodiversity levels equal to those of conserved natural reserves. Singapore, Berlin, and London are among the cities that have incorporated biodiversity conservation into their urban planning programs successfully. Singapore's Gardens by the Bay and Botanic Gardens are examples of ecotourism sites that not only draw tourists but also promote species conservation and

environmental education (Newton & Franklin, 2011).

In addition to biodiversity, UGS contribute to climate change mitigation by sequestering carbon and regulating temperature. Urban vegetation and trees trap carbon dioxide, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating the urban heat island effect (Putra et al., 2022). Research shows that cities with mature green infrastructure have lower mean temperatures than those with sparse vegetation. Also, green areas help in enhancing the quality of air by purifying airborne pollutants, thus making environments healthier for residents and visitors.

In spite of these ecological benefits, the sustainability of UGS is now under growing threats due to unregulated tourism activities. Large numbers of visitors lead to erosion of the soil, trampling of vegetation, and garbage collection, which all finally belittle conservation processes (Salman et al., 2020). Cities have taken measures by adopting zoning laws, carrying capacity restrictions, and eco-certification schemes to maintain ecologically sensitive areas. For example, Copenhagen and Amsterdam have implemented strategic visitor management systems in their city parks, restricting visitors to particular areas while promoting responsible tourist behaviors (Du & Zhang, 2020).

4.2 Economic Contributions

The chosen studies highlight the economic importance of urban green spaces (UGS) in facilitating sustainable development by way of tourism income, job creation, and appreciation of real estate values. Cho, Cheon, and Kang (2024) examine how the economic advantages of UGS differ among urban cities, affecting property prices and local enterprises. Du and Zhang (2020) point out the economic vs. social trade-offs of urban greening, wondering if green infrastructure investments are mostly motivated by financial returns or support wider community well-being. Newton and Franklin (2011) present a Chinese case study of how ecotourism-driven economic models can promote community resilience. Putra et al. (2022) promote green city planning strategies, incorporating UGS into urban economies for long-term financial sustainability. Salman, Jaafar, and Mohamad (2020) undertake a worldwide synthesis of ecotourism models, determining the best practices in reconciling economic development and conservation. Together, these studies bring out the transformative economic function of UGS in urban sustainability models (see Table 7).

Table 7. The Literatures Extracted for Theme 2 Economic Contributions

Author(s)	Title	Journal
Cho, C.-J., Cheon, K., & Kang, W. (2024)	Assessment of the spatial variation of the economic benefits of urban green spaces in a highly urbanized area.	Land
Du, M., & Zhang, X. (2020)	Urban greening: A new paradox of economic or social sustainability?	Land Use Policy
Newton, J., & Franklin, A. (2011)	Delivering sustainable communities in china: Using a sustainable livelihoods framework for reviewing the promotion of 'ecotourism' in anji.	Local Environment
Putra, R. W., Anisa, L., Sherra, B. E., Edison, E. I F., Syah, N., Heldi, & Catri, I. (2022)	Approach to Development Sustainable Green City.	EXTRA TERITORIAL
Salman, A., Jaafar, M., & Mohamad, D. (2020)	Strengthening sustainability: A thematic synthesis of globally published ecotourism frameworks.	African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure

The practice of urban ecotourism creates multiple financial possibilities that generate employment positions and stimulate business startups and tourism financial growth. The strategic addition of urban green spaces to urban tourism economies produces substantial financial advantages to support sustainable economic development. The main obstacle to ongoing economic success consists of maintaining environmental health and social balance without causing ecological damage or social inequality (Cho et al., 2024).

One of the key economic benefits of UGS is their capacity to increase tourism earnings. Cleanly maintained parks, gardens, and urban ecological reserves draw domestic and foreign tourists, earning revenue through entrance fees, guided tours, recreational activities, and environmentally friendly accommodations (Du & Zhang, 2020). Research has shown that urban parks greatly enhance the value of nearby properties, promoting real estate investment and earning local tax revenues. Metropolises like New York, Melbourne, and Singapore have successfully incorporated UGS into overall urban tourism initiatives, proving its worth as economic resources

(Newton & Franklin, 2011).

In addition to direct income generation, urban ecotourism facilitates employment in several sectors, ranging from environmental education and park management to hospitality and tourism services. Employment opportunities span from park rangers and conservation experts to eco-tour guides and sustainable business entrepreneurs. Global tourism reports indicate that nature-based tourism is a major contributor to employment, particularly in cities focusing on green infrastructure development. The existence of UGS also promotes entrepreneurship to develop small ventures like eco-café, cycling tours, and artisan markets, thereby opening up new economic opportunities for locals (Putra et al., 2022).

However, commercialization of UGS should be handled cautiously to avoid over-commercialization and unsustainable development. Over-commercialization may result in the privatization of public areas, the eviction of residents, and the loss of environmental value. A few cities, like Barcelona and Venice, have been grappling with over-tourism, where too many tourists have put pressure on urban parks, resulting in environmental degradation and social tensions (Salman et al., 2020). To address these risks, some cities have embraced sustainable funding models such as public-private partnerships, conservation funds, and eco-certifications. For instance, Copenhagen finances its green areas from corporate sponsorships as well as government grants, guaranteeing long-term financial stability without too much dependence on tourism income (Du & Zhang, 2020).

4.3 Social Inclusion

The chosen studies investigate the social inclusiveness of urban green spaces (UGS) in ecotourism with a focus on community participation, accessibility, and sustainable governance of tourism. Cabral and Dhar (2019) present an integrative review of the literature on ecotourism in India, with a focus on the significance of inclusive tourism systems that respond to local communities. Kim, Han, and Zoh (2011) explore public-private partnerships (PPPs) in the management of urban parks, showing how collaborative governance increases community access and involvement in urban green areas. Koens et al. (2019) present the Smart City Hospitality Framework, providing insights into sustainable overtourism management to provide social inclusivity in ecotourism sites. Ogato (2014) explores challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism development, with an emphasis on fair tourism benefits in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Finally, Yee et al. (2021) evaluate socio-geographical ecosystem services in ecotourism, employing a participatory geographic method to analyze community accessibility. These studies altogether highlight the significance of fair access and community-based approaches in sustainable urban ecotourism (see Table 8).

Table 8. The Literatures Selected for Theme 3 Social Inclusion

Author(s)	Title	Journal
Cabral, C., & Dhar, R. L. (2019)	Ecotourism research in india: From an integrative literature review to a future research framework.	Journal of Ecotourism
Kim, Y.-G., Han, S. Y., & Zoh, K. (2011)	A study of urban park development and management through public-private partnership.	Journal of the Korean Institute of Landscape Architecture
Koens, K., Melissen, F., Mayer, I., & Aall, C. (2019)	The Smart City Hospitality Framework: Creating a foundation for collaborative reflections on overtourism that supports destination design.	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management
Ogato, G. S. (2014)	Planning for sustainable tourism: Challenges and opportunities for ecotourism development in addis ababa, ethiopia.	American Journal of Human Ecology
Yee, J. Y., Loc, H. H., Poh, Y. L., Vo-Thanh, T., & Park, E. (2021)	Socio-geographical evaluation of ecosystem services in an ecotourism destination: PGIS application in tram chim national park, vietnam.	Journal of Environmental Management

The social aspect of urban ecotourism plays an important role in guaranteeing that tourism activities benefit local people fairly. Successfully managed urban green spaces (UGS) help improve the lives of communities, preserve culture, and unite people socially. Challenges of accessibility, affordability, and gentrification have to be overcome to ensure inclusivity (Cabral & Dhar, 2019).

Urban parks are crucial in promoting quality of life through offering areas for recreation, physical activity, and mental well-being. Research has proven that exposure to green spaces decreases stress levels, enhances cognitive performance, and improves emotional health. Furthermore, UGS are also sites of environmental education and preservation of cultural heritage, where tourists can interact with the natural environment through learning about local ecosystems as well as sustainable practices (Kim et al., 2011). Local-led tourism activities like volunteer conservation efforts, city gardening initiatives, and cultural events fortify social bonds and promote ecological stewardship among the locals (Yee et al., 2021).

Though such advantages exist, making urban green spaces accessible in an equitable manner to all communities is a fundamental challenge, especially for marginalized ones. Studies suggest that low-income communities tend to lack access to quality UGS, limiting their potential to take part in ecotourism activities in cities (Ogato, 2014). Furthermore, the gentrification of neighborhoods where UGS is located can evict long-standing residents as property prices and business development push prices out of affordability. Urban areas like London and San Francisco have been accused of green gentrification, where investment in park construction has disproportionately favored more affluent communities while leaving economically vulnerable residents behind (Koens et al., 2019).

In order to address these challenges, inclusive tourism policies prioritizing affordability, accessibility, and community participation should be enforced by urban planners. Integrated public transport connections to UGS, low-cost or no-cost entry programs, and community-led tourism approaches can guarantee everyone's benefits from ecotourism programs (Cabral & Dhar, 2019). Participatory planning methods ensuring the participation of local communities in decision-making also contribute to formulating equitable and socially conscious urban ecotourism policies (Koens et al., 2019).

5. Discussion

The research outcomes demonstrate that urban green spaces function on multiple levels in ecotourism operations and supply sustainable development solutions for urban planning. Developing urban ecotourism requires detailed management strategies because UGS present substantial environmental, economic, and social advantages. The research findings are analyzed through this discussion to determine an effective approach for UGS-based ecotourism integration into urban policies alongside governance frameworks and sustainability strategies (Bibri, 2020; Salman et al., 2020).

Proof from studies indicates that urban green spaces provide essential value to sustainability by protecting biodiversity while reducing climate risks and environmental pollutants. The escalating number of tourists generates environmental problems because it leads to habitat destruction together with pollution and dangerously high traffic levels. Zoning regulations, together with eco-friendly infrastructure and visitor access control systems, allow cities such as Singapore, Copenhagen, and Melbourne to achieve sustainability while growing tourism, as reported by Bush and Hes (2018). The study verifies implementing green infrastructure planning throughout urban ecotourism initiatives as an essential requirement to protect the environment (Edeigba et al., 2024).

Proper access to well-maintained urban green spaces remains limited because most poor communities are excluded (Mwendwa & Giliba, 2012). According to Koens et al. (2019), the success of UGS depends on participatory planning and inclusive policies for universal citizen accessibility. The involvement of communities during ecotourism planning through advisory committees, educational programs, and conservation initiatives helps protect the environment and achieve development that aligns with community expectations (Cabral & Dhar, 2019). The regulatory systems must be strong enough to prevent residents from getting displaced because of gentrification or rising property values surrounding green areas (Ogato, 2014).

Urban ecotourism sustainability goals depend on effective governance systems for their consistent application. The research underlines how effective sustainability outcomes require multiple stakeholders to collaborate between governments, private businesses, NGOs and local communities (Rahmawati et al., 2024). The implementation of policy guidelines should include carrying capacity analysis along with eco-certification and sustainable tourism standards for both visitor management and ecological conservation (Raghubanshi, 2024). The implementations of data-based tourism management systems by cities that use AI visitor tracking and digital eco-guides serve as practical models for urban ecotourism smart technology integration (Qingbiao et al., 2024).

6. Policy and Planning Implications

Sustainable urban development alongside ecotourism needs proper policies and governance frameworks for making UGS work effectively. The lack of comprehensive policies allows ecotourism to cause over-tourism, together with environmental harm and social marginalization (United Nations World Tourism Organization 2025). The subsection presents essential policy recommendations for urban planning operations combined with governance procedures and future research directions.

6.1 Urban Design and Infrastructure Recommendations

The development of tourism requires urban planning and strategic green infrastructure planning, which allows conservation needs to coexist with tourism development. When cities integrate green roofs with permeable pavements and urban forests along with wetlands into their urban design, they achieve significant benefits in both biodiversity and stormwater control and air quality improvement (World Health Organization, 2016). Green infrastructure serves as an effective tool for tourism management in Copenhagen and Singapore through environmental benefits (European Environment Agency, 2020).

Zoning is also instrumental in visitor impact management by establishing high- and low-impact areas within UGS. Melbourne and Amsterdam have introduced visitor flow management policies, limiting access to sensitive ecological zones while allocating areas for tourist activity, thus conserving biodiversity while promoting controlled growth of tourism (EPA, 2022).

Increasing accessibility and involving the community in UGS planning is critical to social inclusiveness. Most marginalized and low-income groups have poor access to good-quality green areas, limiting their participation in ecotourism. Urban governments must create elaborate public transport networks, pedestrian lanes, and bicycle routes to help bridge such gaps in accessibility. Barcelona and Vancouver have led in green transport networks that promote accessibility to green spaces for the general public, and this has increased the inclusivity of urban ecotourism (EEA, 2020).

Community participation is essential for ensuring the long-term viability of city green spaces. Engaging local stakeholders, conservation groups, and private enterprises in planning and managing these spaces enhances local ownership and environmental responsibility. Bogotá and Cape Town have effectively rolled out community-led conservation programs to ensure ecotourism as a collective effort while maintaining city biodiversity (RECLAIM Network Plus, 2025).

6.2 Governance and Policy Frameworks

Having strong government systems and policy frameworks is imperative to reconciling the development of tourism with environmental preservation. Multi-sectoral governance structures that bring urban planners, environment agencies, tourist boards, and local communities on board are most effective in bringing about sustainability targets. Copenhagen and Singapore have framed governance systems in which ecotourism fits into conservation priorities, and other cities can draw lessons from these (WHO, 2016).

Regulatory actions like carrying capacity analysis, visitor quotas, and resource management measures need to be used to avoid overuse and environmental deterioration. Seasonal tourist limits and permit systems have been implemented in some cities to manage urban ecotourism sustainably (UNWTO, 2025). Eco-certification programs also need to implement sustainability guidelines across tourism companies, promoting sustainable tourism practices.

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are critical in funding and sustaining UGS for ecotourism. The cities must partner with the private sector to develop sustainable funding models, such as corporate sponsorships, conservation funds, and revenue-sharing schemes. Melbourne, for instance, has used PPPs to fund urban greening measures and ecotourism establishment (EPA, 2022).

Environmental advocacy groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a crucial role in developing sustainable urban ecotourism policies. NGOs carry out research, track the impacts of tourism, and offer educational programs that encourage responsible tourism. Berlin and Stockholm have shown how government-NGO collaboration can improve visitor education and enhance conservation (National Park Service, 2023).

For the integrated urban ecotourism governance matrix framework, see Figure 2.

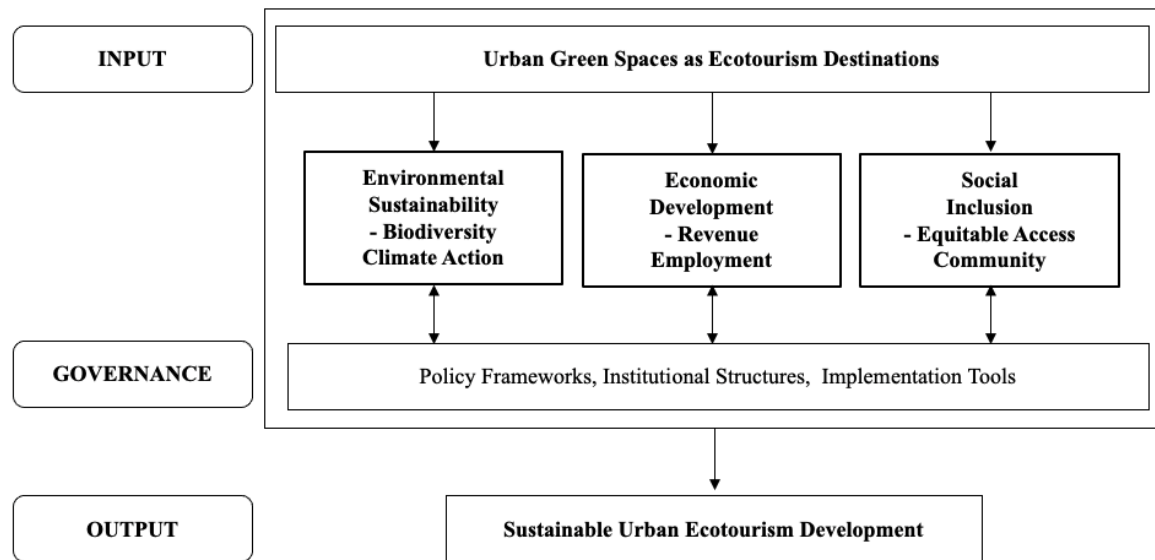


Figure 2. Integrated Urban Ecotourism Governance Matrix Framework

6.3 Future Directions for Research and Practice

Future studies will need to look beyond the general geographical contexts previously studied and aim at diverse South American, African, and South Asian settings with underdeveloped urban ecotourism scenes. It would be informative for global policymaking to learn from how cities across these continents fold ecotourism into municipal planning (EEA, 2020).

Another vital sector to investigate is the function of digital technologies within sustainable urban ecotourism. Upcoming innovations like AI-managed tourist management, eco-guides provided through digital formats, and conservation financing with blockchains could remake urban tourism development (RECLAIM Network Plus, 2025). Research studies in the future should analyze data-driven solutions as a tool in tracking tourist dynamics and environmental responses.

Comparative studies on global best practices can yield rich policy blueprints for urban ecotourism management. Cross-city comparisons of sustainable urban tourism models in Singapore, Melbourne, and Berlin can enable the identification of scalable and transferable governance strategies (WHO, 2016).

To ensure optimal returns from UGS as sites for ecotourism, the cities have to invest maximum in green infrastructure, implement sustainable governance systems, and ensure active people's participation. The subsequent studies should revolve around identifying the best worldwide practices, developments in technology, and people-friendly interventions to guarantee that urban ecotourism continues to remain economically sustainable, ecologically supportive, and social-inclusive in nature (NPS, 2023).

7. Conclusion

Urban green spaces (UGS) are critical in supporting sustainable ecotourism, providing environmental, economic, and social advantages that enhance urban sustainability. With the continued growth of cities, incorporating ecotourism into urban planning creates a chance for the promotion of biodiversity conservation, economic development, and community well-being. Nonetheless, in the absence of strategic policies and sustainable management, urban ecotourism has the potential to cause environmental degradation, over-tourism, and social disparity.

The research points out that UGS are ecological buffers that reduce climate change and air pollution and promote biodiversity. Increased tourism poses a threat to these advantages if not properly managed. Best practices in cities like Singapore, Copenhagen, and Amsterdam prove that zoning controls, tourist caps, and sustainable infrastructure are important in striking a balance between tourism development and conservation.

Economically, ecotourism in urban areas has the potential to stimulate local employment, tourism income, and business growth, but it should be commercialized cautiously to avoid overuse and green gentrification. Maintaining that tourist income finances conservation and local businesses can provide an autonomous economic

plan for urban green spaces.

Social inclusion is still a key to sustainable urban ecotourism. Community participation, participatory planning, and enhanced accessibility can guarantee that everyone in the city benefits from ecotourism activities. Policies should mitigate the risk of gentrification to avoid displacement and ensure affordable access to green areas.

In the future, multi-stakeholder governance, public-private partnerships, and smart city technology will be imperative to improve the sustainability of urban ecotourism. Subsequent research is necessary to advance digital innovations, global policy benchmarks, and localized strategies to better solidify urban ecotourism frameworks.

Through embracing data-informed, participatory, and conservation-oriented strategies, cities can fully realize the potential of UGS as ecotourism destinations, making them resilient, economically viable, and socially inclusive amidst fast-paced urbanization and climate change.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are derived from publicly available sources, including published journal articles, policy documents, and institutional reports cited in the reference list. Additional information is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Disclosure of AI Use: The authors used OpenAI's ChatGPT (version May 2026) to improve the Introduction section's clarity and grammar. All scientific interpretation, data analysis, and conclusions were independently developed and verified by the authors.

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