

Research on the Construction of a Coastal Sports Tourism Industry Cluster in Jiangmen — A Case Study of Sea Fishing and Sailing in the Chuandao Archipelago

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Abstract

This study takes the Chuandao Archipelago as the research object and, based on policy documents and current development conditions, systematically analyzes the major issues in the development of coastal sports tourism in Jiangmen from the perspectives of resource endowment, industrial structure, infrastructure, market operation, and ecological protection. On this basis, the study proposes taking sea fishing and sailing as the core driving forces, and building a full industrial chain system integrating “experience–training–events–equipment–cultural and tourism consumption.” It further suggests improving infrastructure and public services, shaping destination brands, strengthening talent cultivation and scientific research support, and promoting ecological protection and sustainable development, so as to facilitate the transformation of Jiangmen’s coastal sports tourism toward clustering, specialization, and branding. This research provides practical references for the construction of coastal sports tourism industry clusters in coastal cities.

Keywords

Coastal sports tourism; industrial cluster; sea fishing; sailing; Jiangmen

1. Introduction

The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China underscores the importance of developing the marine economy, protecting marine ecosystems, and accelerating the construction of a maritime power. President Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized caring for, understanding, and managing the ocean, while promoting international “blue partnerships” to achieve sustainable marine development (Xinhua News Agency, 2013). As a key interface connecting the marine economy, the sports industry, and tourism consumption, marine sports play a vital role in enhancing the vitality of coastal cities. Through event-driven development and industrial integration, marine sports facilitate the formation of diversified in-

dustrial clusters and contribute to the modernization of the marine industrial system (Miao & Liu, 2023).

With the advancement of China's maritime power strategy, the implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan for Sports Development, and the deepening of the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) initiative, coastal sports tourism has emerged as an important driver of regional economic transformation and cultural–tourism integration. Jiangmen, a key node city on the western wing of the GBA, possesses approximately one-tenth of Guangdong Province's coastline. Marine areas such as the Chuandao Archipelago, Naqin Peninsula, Shangchuan Island, and Xiaochuan Island offer favorable natural conditions for developing marine sports including sea fishing and sailing. In particular, the Chuandao Archipelago, characterized by stable sea conditions and abundant fishing grounds, is widely regarded as one of the most promising marine sports destinations in western Guangdong. Nevertheless, despite its resource advantages, Jiangmen's coastal sports tourism remains weakly industrialized, with single development models, short industrial chains, and a lack of regionally influential sports tourism brands. A competitive industrial cluster capable of integrating into the broader GBA market has yet to be formed.

At the policy level, the 14th Five-Year Plan for Sports Development encourages the GBA to utilize coastline resources to develop coastal sports and leisure activities such as sailing and sea fishing, while related cultural and tourism plans emphasize the creation of coastal sports and leisure belts. Guangdong Province has further identified marine sports as a key component of marine economic development, and Jiangmen has proposed the construction of a Chuandao sea-fishing center and a GBA sailing experience destination. These policy frameworks provide clear guidance and institutional support for local development. However, existing domestic research on coastal sports tourism largely focuses on resource evaluation, event impacts, and tourism development models, with limited attention to industrial cluster formation and the integrated development of sea fishing and sailing.

Against this background, this study takes the Chuandao Archipelago as a representative case and examines the development status and constraints of coastal sports tourism in Jiangmen from the perspectives of policy orientation, resource endowment, and market demand. It further proposes practical strategies for constructing a coastal sports tourism industrial cluster, aiming to provide theoretical insights and practical references for Jiangmen's integration into the GBA's coastal development framework.

2. Current Situation and Challenges of Coastal Sports Tourism Development in Jiangmen

2.1. Outstanding Resource Endowment but Insufficient Development

Jiangmen's coastal areas are endowed with highly favorable natural conditions. The

Chuandao Archipelago possesses marine environments suitable for sea fishing and sailing, characterized by clear seawater, abundant fish stocks, and stable wind conditions, making it a natural destination for sea fishing enthusiasts and sailing participants from the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area. The Naqin Peninsula, featuring distinctive rocky coastlines and shallow-water zones, also holds significant potential for marine sports such as diving, kayaking, and stand-up paddleboarding. However, despite these advantages, the market value of these resources has yet to be fully realized. Current development remains largely oriented toward sightseeing tourism, with coastal sports tourism products being relatively homogeneous. Sea fishing is the dominant activity, but it lacks a systematic competition framework, professional operating entities, and branded events. Sailing activities remain at an early stage, with no established marinas, berths, sailing routes, or training bases to support sustained development.

2.2. Short Industrial Chain and Weak Foundation for Cluster Development

From the perspective of industrial structure, coastal sports tourism in Jiangmen remains at a preliminary stage of development. Sea fishing activities mainly rely on traditional fishing vessels and informal clubs, with a notable absence of professional operators. Supporting industries for sailing—such as equipment leasing, training institutions, maintenance services, and event operations—are largely underdeveloped or nonexistent, making it difficult to form a scalable industrial chain. The lack of leading enterprises and flagship projects has resulted in a fragmented and weak industrial landscape characterized by small scale and low competitiveness. Moreover, the development model for sea fishing remains simplistic, largely confined to a basic “sea fishing + sightseeing” combination. High value-added and synergistic formats—such as “marine sports + homestay economy,” “marine sports + leisure fisheries,” and integrated fishery–tourism development—have not yet been effectively explored.

2.3. Inadequate Infrastructure and Limited Capacity for Hosting Professional Events

At present, sports infrastructure in the Chuandao Islands and surrounding coastal areas is relatively underdeveloped. Facilities such as professional sea fishing competition bases, dedicated mooring infrastructure for sports vessels, marked sailing routes, and comprehensive logistical support systems are largely absent. Most existing facilities have been constructed according to conventional tourism standards and are insufficient for hosting medium- to large-scale professional or international sporting events. Despite possessing favorable natural conditions, the lack of competition venues, operational 保障 systems, and safety supervision mechanisms significantly constrains Jiangmen’s ability to attract high-level marine sports events from

the Greater Bay Area and beyond. The situation is particularly pronounced in sailing development, as Jiangmen currently lacks mature sailing ports and specialized training bases, which hinders both participation growth and commercial operation.

2.4. Insufficient Policy Implementation and Weak Interdepartmental Coordination

Although Jiangmen has introduced multiple policies supporting coastal tourism and marine sports development, implementation remains uneven and coordination mechanisms insufficient, limiting overall policy effectiveness. At present, sea fishing and sailing projects continue to operate under traditional fisheries vessel management systems, with a lack of specialized certification and operational standards for sports vessels. Enterprises often face complex procedures and unclear criteria in registration, approval, and inspection processes. Furthermore, governance involves multiple departments—including marine affairs, culture and tourism, sports, natural resources, and transportation—yet responsibilities and authority boundaries remain unclear. This has resulted in repeated reviews and coordination difficulties in areas such as sea area usage approval, event applications, and vessel docking management. Many policies remain at a declarative level, lacking concrete implementation guidelines, such as detailed rules for event subsidies, marine safety management, and visitor capacity control. Inadequate information sharing among departments further reduces efficiency in project implementation, industrial chain expansion, and market promotion. Overall, the institutional framework for coastal sports tourism development in Jiangmen remains incomplete, necessitating stronger policy integration, clearer operational standards, and enhanced cross-departmental collaboration.

2.5. Weak Market-Oriented Operations and Limited Brand Influence

Jiangmen currently lacks professional cultural tourism groups or sports industry companies dedicated to marine sports operations. Existing enterprises are generally small in scale, weak in branding capacity, and limited in their ability to access high-end sports tourism markets in the Greater Bay Area. The absence of nationally influential marine sports events—such as international sea fishing tournaments or youth sailing leagues—has resulted in Jiangmen’s relatively low visibility within the regional marine sports landscape, especially compared with cities such as Shenzhen and Zhuhai. Furthermore, Jiangmen has yet to establish an integrated market-oriented promotion system that links city branding, event branding, and destination branding. As a result, brand recognition remains weak, market appeal is limited, and the city has not fully capitalized on its potential to attract Greater Bay Area tourists and sports consumers.

2.6. Tensions Between Marine Ecological Protection and Development

The Chuandao Archipelago and the Naqin Peninsula host important ecological resources, including mangrove forests, coral reefs, and intertidal ecosystems. However, due to the lack of standardized management of sea fishing activities, certain marine areas face ecological risks such as overfishing and marine debris accumulation. Scientific assessments of ecological carrying capacity are currently insufficient, and mechanisms linking “blue carbon” initiatives with marine sports development remain underdeveloped. As a result, potential conflicts persist between resource development and ecological protection, highlighting the need for more sustainable and environmentally responsible development models.

3. Pathways for Building a Coastal Sports Tourism Industrial Cluster in Jiangmen

Although Jiangmen’s coastal sports tourism development benefits from notable resource endowments and favorable policy opportunities, significant shortcomings remain in terms of industrial chain completeness, infrastructure provision, operational capacity, and ecological governance. These constraints necessitate the construction of a systematic and integrated industrial cluster to unlock the sector’s development potential.

3.1. Establishing a Complete Coastal Sports Tourism Industrial Chain

The core of building a coastal sports tourism industrial cluster in Jiangmen lies in transforming development from isolated experiential activities into a comprehensive industrial system encompassing “experience–training–events–equipment–culture and tourism–consumption,” thereby achieving sustainable growth and value upgrading. At the entry level of the industrial chain, sea fishing and sailing should serve as the two primary pillars, supported by diversified, low-threshold recreational products such as family-oriented sea fishing, nearshore sailing experiences, night fishing, parent–child paddleboarding, and coastal hiking. These offerings can lower participation barriers, enhance public engagement, and cultivate initial consumer interest.

Building upon experiential participation, structured training pathways—such as youth sailing training centers, advanced sea fishing skills courses, and graded certification systems—should be developed to guide experiential consumers toward goal-oriented and repeat consumption. This transition will help form stable demand for training services and establish long-term consumption chains. At the mid- and high-end segments of the industrial chain, priority should be given to developing a comprehensive event system. Signature events such as the “Chuandao International Sea Fishing Challenge,” the “Chuandao Cup Sailing Open,” and the “Greater Bay Area Marine Sports Carnival” can form a branded event matrix with international visibility and regional appeal. These events not only generate extensive media exposure but also stimulate consumption in accommodation, transportation, equipment rent-

al, aerial photography, catering, and related sectors, transforming marine sports from niche leisure activities into destination-defining IP assets.

Furthermore, extending the industrial chain through the introduction of boat manufacturing, equipment sales, maintenance services, and industrial exhibitions can significantly enhance downstream value creation. This dual-driven model of “sports experience + equipment economy” will support Jiangmen’s development as an important hub for marine sports equipment within the Greater Bay Area.

3.2. Improving Marine Sports Infrastructure and Public Service Systems

The successful implementation of an industrial cluster requires high-quality infrastructure and public service systems as foundational support. At present, infrastructure in the Chuandao Archipelago and the Guanghai Bay area remains inadequate, necessitating increased investment in ports, marinas, transportation links, and shoreline facilities. Priority should be given to the construction of specialized sea fishing piers, sailing marinas, event command centers, and marine rescue stations, enabling these areas to host national-level competitions and high-end training programs.

For sailing development, essential facilities include berth zones, boat storage and maintenance areas, wind field monitoring systems, navigational safety markers, and standardized sailing routes. Sea fishing infrastructure should incorporate designated fishing zones, vessel docking areas, safety barriers, night-fishing lighting systems, and catch exhibition centers to enhance professionalism and safety. In terms of public services, an integrated system covering “visitor services–emergency response–smart management–safety supervision” should be established. This includes developing a smart marine sports platform offering real-time marine condition monitoring, navigation warnings, fishing spot reservations, event registration, traffic coordination, and insurance services.

Emergency response systems should integrate the capacities of maritime police, border defense, cultural tourism, and sports departments, establishing coordinated rescue mechanisms supported by standardized rescue vessels, drone patrol systems, and emergency communication networks. Improved infrastructure and public services will significantly enhance visitor safety and overall experience, thereby providing a solid foundation for industrial cluster development.

3.3. Building an Internationally Influential Destination Brand System

Branding constitutes the core competitive advantage of coastal sports tourism. Jiangmen should leverage sea fishing and sailing as its defining resources to establish a clear destination brand positioning through a dual-IP strategy: “Capital of Sea Fishing in the Greater Bay Area” and “Youth Sailing Training Island.” A unified visual identity system should be developed, clarifying brand symbols, slogans, and core

narratives to ensure strong recognition across the Greater Bay Area and nationwide. Sporting events should function as the primary mechanism for brand dissemination, with high-profile competitions generating media exposure and enhancing destination visibility. Digital marketing represents the most effective pathway for brand communication. Jiangmen should construct a multi-platform content ecosystem centered on short-video platforms such as Douyin, Xiaohongshu, and WeChat Channels, producing high-frequency content including sea fishing vlogs, sailing aerial footage, and island lifestyle features.

Influencer collaboration programs should be implemented through partnerships with outdoor KOLs, professional anglers, and sailing bloggers to enhance content credibility and appeal to younger demographics. By integrating digital promotion with booking, experience delivery, and repeat consumption through an industrial digital platform, Jiangmen can achieve a closed-loop operation from brand exposure to commercial conversion.

3.4. Developing a Multi-Stakeholder Talent Cultivation and Recruitment System

Human capital is the key driving force behind industrial cluster development. At present, Jiangmen faces shortages in marine sports professionals, with limited specialization and insufficient professional depth. A comprehensive talent system should therefore be constructed through local training, external recruitment, and international cooperation.

Locally, partnerships with institutions such as Jiangmen Polytechnic and Guangdong Ocean University can support the establishment of curricula in marine sports navigation, sea fishing instruction, maritime rescue, event operations, and sports equipment technology. Joint training bases should be developed through school–government cooperation to ensure stable talent output. Externally, a “Greater Bay Area Marine Sports Talent Attraction Program” can be introduced to recruit coaches, captains, event managers, and rescue specialists from cities such as Shenzhen, Zhuhai, and Xiamen, supported by incentives including talent subsidies, housing support, and event allowances.

Internationally, cooperation with institutions such as sailing schools in Japan’s Shonan region, Australia’s surf lifesaving associations, and marine sports training systems in Hawaii can facilitate the introduction of advanced training curricula, safety standards, and certification systems. A structured career development pathway should be established through graded coach certification, professional advancement systems, and enterprise-based training incentives, ensuring talent retention, effective utilization, and long-term development.

3.5. Establishing Scientific Research, Monitoring, and Standardization Systems

To ensure long-term, standardized, and sustainable development, Jiangmen must establish a governance framework supported by scientific research and industry standardization. A “Jiangmen Coastal Sports Tourism Research Center” should be created in collaboration with universities and research institutions to conduct long-term studies on marine carrying capacity, tidal and wind field dynamics, ecological changes, sea fishing resource assessments, and sports risk management. These research outputs can provide scientific support for planning, event organization, and marine area development.

By deploying marine monitoring stations, sea fishing resource survey points, and real-time wind and wave monitoring systems, a comprehensive digital monitoring network can be established, enabling a shift from experience-based to data-driven management. Concurrently, an industry standard system should be developed, covering sports vessel modification standards, sailing operation protocols, event safety guidelines, visitor service specifications, and coach training standards. Alignment with insurance providers, equipment manufacturers, and event operators will further enhance the effectiveness of these standards, positioning Jiangmen as a regional benchmark for marine sports governance.

3.6. Building an Ecological Protection and Sustainable Development Framework

Marine ecology represents Jiangmen’s most valuable asset in coastal sports tourism, making sustainability a fundamental prerequisite for development. Marine zoning management should be implemented to clearly delineate recreational zones, training areas, fishing restrictions, and ecological protection zones, ensuring that sports activities occur within environmentally safe limits. “Green event” and “leave-no-trace sea fishing” mechanisms should be promoted through low-carbon event operations, marine waste collection programs, fishing gear recycling systems, and eco-friendly vessel retrofitting.

Community participation is essential for sustainable development. Through integrated “fishery–tourism” models, local fishermen can transition into roles such as sea fishing guides, captains, and experience facilitators, increasing income while aligning livelihoods with conservation goals. Finally, an integrated system encompassing ecological monitoring, restoration initiatives, and resource compensation mechanisms should be established to ensure the synchronized advancement of development and conservation, thereby securing the long-term sustainability of Jiangmen’s coastal sports tourism industry.

4. Conclusion

Jiangmen’s coastal sports tourism industry is currently at a critical stage of transformation, shifting from a resource-driven model to an industry-oriented one, and from extensive development toward intensive and high-quality growth. By using sea

fishing and sailing as core driving forces and advancing coordinated efforts in policy guidance, spatial planning, industrial chain construction, digital governance, and talent system development, Jiangmen possesses strong potential to build a coastal sports tourism industrial cluster on the western wing of the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area. High-quality marine resources such as the Chuandao Archipelago and the Naqin Peninsula constitute Jiangmen’s most significant comparative advantages, while the upgrading of marine sports consumption and the growing demand for high-end coastal tourism in the Greater Bay Area provide unprecedented development opportunities.

The construction of a coastal sports tourism industrial cluster in Jiangmen aims to foster an integrated development pattern encompassing “resources, industry, branding, ecology, and talent,” enabling coastal sports tourism to become a new engine driving the coordinated growth of cultural tourism, fishery–tourism integration, homestay economy, and marine equipment manufacturing. Looking ahead, with continued policy support and the gradual improvement of the industrial chain, Jiangmen is expected to evolve into one of the most distinctive and promising marine sports demonstration cities in the Greater Bay Area, offering replicable experiences and practical models for the high-quality development of Guangdong’s marine economy.

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