

MAUNAKEA:

THE SITE OF CONTROVERSY
BETWEEN CULTURE AND
SCIENCE

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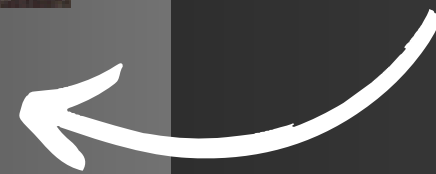
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ABSTRACT

Mauna Kea, a sacred site in Hawaii, has become the focal point of a longstanding controversy between cultural reverence and scientific advancement, particularly in the realm of astronomical research. This paper explores how sustainable mountain development can be approached in a way that respects the cultural and religious significance of Mauna Kea while also advancing the field of astronomy. By advocating for compromise between stakeholders, this research suggests the decommissioning of outdated telescopes, prioritizing environmental conservation, and ensuring that the development of new infrastructure aligns with both ecological sustainability and cultural values. The paper examines the implications of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11.4, which emphasizes the protection of cultural and natural heritage, and discusses how this target can guide the resolution of the Mauna Kea controversy. Ultimately, this research emphasizes the importance of balancing scientific progress with respect for indigenous traditions, promoting a holistic approach to sustainable development.



MAUNA KEA INTRODUCTION

The summit of Mauna Kea, one of the highest peaks in the United States, rises in the north-central region of Hawai'i Island. Known as "White Mountain" in Hawaiian, this dormant shield volcano—the youngest in Hawaii—stands at approximately 4,205 meters above sea level and is frequently blanketed in snow. Its pristine and awe-inspiring location has garnered global interest. Mauna Kea holds profound spiritual significance for Native Hawaiians as a Kapu (sacred) site, while simultaneously serving as an ideal location for astronomical research. The ongoing controversy surrounding Mauna Kea exemplifies a complex and contentious intersection between scientific progress and indigenous rights. It highlights the pressing need for sustainable development models on Hawai'i Island that strike a balance between the preservation of cultural heritage, environmental stewardship, and scientific advancement.



METHODOLOGY

This research paper adopted a qualitative approach, collecting a variety of primary and secondary sources to analyze the construction of the Thirty-Meter-Telescope (TMT) on Mauna Kea. The primary sources include official statements from stakeholders, government documents and legislative texts. Secondary sources include scholarly literature, interviews, and analyses from experts. This paper utilizes an analysis framework to identify key progressions, challenges, and implications of Sustainable Mountain Development in regards to the divide of culture and science.





CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the pursuit of sustainable development requires a collaborative approach that integrates indigenous knowledge to navigate the complexities of achieving long-term sustainability. The proposed Thirty-Meter Telescope project, in its sustainable development, should prioritize sourcing materials that meet stringent environmental criteria, while also ensuring the preservation of the surrounding ecosystem. Economically, it is essential to assess the viability of expanding existing telescope infrastructure to meet the evolving needs of the astronomical community, minimizing disruption to the landscape. Ultimately, a balanced compromise that respects both cultural heritage and scientific progress is necessary to achieve a harmonious coexistence of tradition and innovation.





THANK YOU!

PLS DON'T ASK ME QUESTIONS 😊

