



Sahabat Alam Malaysia
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For Environmental Justice

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Press Release

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**SAM WELCOMES EFFORTS BY KEDAH STATE GOVERNMENT
TO PROTECT ULU MUDA FOREST RESERVE**

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) welcomes the efforts by the Kedah State government in seeking RM100 million in compensation from the Federal government for using the Ulu Muda Forest Reserve in Sik as water catchment forests for domestic and agricultural needs.

According to media reports, the Kedah Menteri Besar Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor had revealed in the Kedah State Assembly that the State government had negotiated with the Natural Resources Ministry to seek compensation to maintain the catchment areas.

SAM is also pleased to learn that the Kedah MB has reiterated the State government's stance of continuing the policy of maintaining the Ulu Muda Forest Reserve as water catchment forests and not allow any logging activities, for the benefit of the 4.2 million people in Kedah, Perlis and Penang for domestic, agricultural and industrial use.

We are happy to note that the MB understands the importance of preserving the environment and in protecting water resources for the present and future generations.

SAM also calls on the Federal Government, especially the Ministry of Energy and National Resources, to speed up efforts in providing the financial resources required by the Kedah State government in order for the protection of the Ulu Muda forests in perpetuity, for the public good.

As the Ministry is aware, there are international funds available for the protection of forests that can be used to help states who keep their forests intact, as these forests perform valuable ecosystem services, including in ensuring water security, regulating the climate, protect biodiversity etc.

SAM would like to underscore that the purpose of the funds to the Kedah State government must be to maintain the Ulu Muda forests and should not be used to compensate the logging companies whose concessions have been cancelled.

The funds are meant for a public purpose and should not land in the hands of logging companies.

It is time for the Federal government to show leadership in rewarding states that protect the forests for the public good, and who help implement Malaysia's international commitments under the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Meenakshi Raman
President
Sahabat Alam Malaysia