



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

檳城消費人協會 பினாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

Websites:
www.consumer.org.my

10 Jalan Masjid Negeri, 11600 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia
Tel: 604-8299511 Fax: 604-8298109
email: consumerofpenang@gmail.com

Media Statement

10 July 2019

FOUM Offers to Assist the Kedah State Government Protect Ulu Muda

10 July 2019: FOUM or Friends of Ulu Muda, a coalition of NGOs, social enterprises and private companies working together to protect the Greater Ulu Muda Forest, would like to applaud the Kedah Menteri Besar, YAB Dato' Seri Hj. Mukhriz Tun Mahathir and the Kedah State Government for taking the bold move to protect the Ulu Muda forest.

Despite the numerous challenges faced in generating revenue, the Kedah State Government has taken it upon themselves to protect this important area for the greater benefit of the northern region and the nation.

The Greater Ulu Muda Forest is an important conservation area for various reasons. It is a water catchment forest for three dams, namely Muda, Pedu and Ahning. These three dams regulate the supply of drinking water to over 4 million people plus the numerous industries and services in the three northern states of Penang, Kedah and Perlis.

Water originating from the Greater Ulu Muda Forest is also used to irrigate the vast paddy fields of Kedah and Perlis allowing for two crops a year. The area's paddy fields provide nearly 50% of the nation's rice production thus is of utmost importance to Malaysia's food security.

The Greater Ulu Muda Forest is rich in biodiversity harbouring threatened large mammals such as the Asian elephant, Malayan sun bear, Malayan tapir and the sambar deer, as well as over 320 species of birds. It is only one of two sites in Malaysia harboring all 10 species of Malaysian hornbills.

The Greater Ulu Muda Forest is an area of about 163,000ha. With its protection, a larger transboundary protected area of 184,100ha would be created with the contiguous 24,100ha San Kara Khiri NP in Thailand.

In view of the Kedah State Government's decision to protect this area for the benefit of the nation, we strongly feel that is only appropriate that the Federal Government and other parties contribute financially to the Kedah State Government's efforts. In addition to Federal grants (such as the RM60 million budget allocation to the State governments to protect and expand natural reserves) the main downstream users of water originating from the Greater Ulu Muda Forest can also contribute to a PES (Payment for Ecosystem Services) scheme. A PES scheme would allow users of the water to contribute funds to the protection and management of the Greater Ulu Muda Forest.

FOUM realises that the recent announcement is merely the start of a long process to gazette the Greater Ulu Muda Forest as a protected area and to establish a suitable management system for the area. In this

spirit, FOUM would like to offer technical assistance to the Kedah State Government drawing upon the wide range of expertise available through its members in conservation and the management of protected areas and nature tourism.

FOUM look forward to contributing positively to the establishment and management of a fully-realised protected area in the Greater Ulu Muda Forest.

Friends of Ulu Muda is a coalition of non-governmental organisations.

Consumers Association of Penang
Earth Lodge
Water Watch Penang
Malaysian Cave & Karst Conservancy
Sahabat Alam Malaysia
GreenSmiths
The Habitat Foundation
Ecotourism & Conservation Society Malaysia
Pertubuhan Pelindung Khazanah Alam (PEKA)
Malaysian Primatological Society
Management & Ecology of Malaysian Elephants

Find us on Facebook: Friends of Ulu Muda

For more information please contact:

Mageswari Sangaralingam, Consumers Association of Penang - 0128782706 OR
Kang Yue Shern, GreenSmiths – 0164910486