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## Media Statement

**26 November 2018**

### **SAM Questions Selangor's Commitment to Protect Permanent Reserved Forests**

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) objects to the proposal by the Selangor State Authority to excise two more Permanent Reserved Forests (PRF) in the state of Selangor.

The PRFs proposed to be excised are part of Sungai Buloh Forest Reserve (HS Sungai Buloh) in Petaling District covering 1.2418 hectares and part of Bukit Lagong Forest Reserve (HS Bukit Lagong) in Gombak District covering 28.3 hectares.

HS Sungai Buloh is significant because it is the oldest Permanent Reserved Forest in Malaysia. Since its establishment on 14 January 1898, from time to time, a large portion of the Sungai Buloh Forest Reserve (original area covered 6,590ha) had been excised and sacrificed for development.

At present HS Sungai Buloh has been reduced to a mere 25ha only. Hence it is desirable for the area covering HS Sungai Buloh is maintained as a natural heritage protection area.

Maintaining the existing hectarage of HS Sungai Buloh and HS Bukit Lagong and all other PRF in the Klang Valley is of paramount importance because the forests here play a role in balancing the physical development with natural surroundings.

Because physical development mainly change in land use for urbanization is very rapid in the Klang Valley whilst green lungs and zones are shrinking fast, the green house gas emissions are gradually increasing, causing impacts to quality of life of people here.

Several road accidents in the past and wildlife-human conflicts in this areas indicate that the PRF in Klang Valley especially outside the Titiwangsa Range "Central Forest Spine" forest complex which has become "forest island" is still a habitat especially for totally protected wildlife.

The proposal to excise part of HS Sungai Buloh and part of HS Bukit Lagong contravenes and not in congruence with one of the main strategies of the Selangor Forestry Department to maintain existing PRF and increase its area.

The proposal to excise part of HS Sungai Buloh and part of HS Bukit Lagong also contravenes the goals and targets of the Peninsular Malaysia Forestry Department to achieve 5 million hectares of PRF cover in Peninsular Malaysia.

In addition the proposed excision of part of HS Sungai Buloh and part of HS Bukit Lagong is not in line with the Federal Government's recommendation during the 2019 budget presentation for all State governments to

take up efforts to conserve existing natural protected areas and to increase new protected areas.

In fact the State Government was very avid and committed in ensuring its natural heritage and green legacy is always preserved when former Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Azmin Ali stated that Selangor should not feel comfortable with the current hectarage of PRF despite more than 30% of the land area of the State is under forest cover and that it needs to be expanded.

Thus SAM hopes that the Selangor State Authority reconsiders its proposal to excise part of the said forest reserves or any other forest reserves in the Klang Valley.

**S. M. MOHAMED IDRIS**

**President**

**Sahabat Alam Malaysia**