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For Environmental Justice

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Media Statement

17 May 2017

DISCLOSE SOURCE OF POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND LAKES IN PAHANG

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) urges the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to immediately disclose the findings of investigations by the Department of Environment (DOE) of Pahang on the sources of pollution of Sungai Pahang, Sungai Temerloh, Tasik Chini and Tasik Mentiga.

Disclosure regarding the sources of pollution is essential because the problem is becoming more serious and threatening water quality, fisheries and various species of plants in the said rivers and lakes.

SAM regrets that although the pollution has been a long-standing issue but so far no comprehensive report has been presented to the public on the exact cause of pollution. It is more disappointing because of lack of effective action by the authorities to overcome this problem.

The statement of the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar (*Berita Harian* report of 18 April 2017) that the pollution occurred due to the overflow of water from Sungai Pahang during the monsoon season and not as a result of logging and mining, contradicts SAM's survey findings.

The Orang Asli and Felda Chini settlers claimed that the pollution of rivers and lakes here is due to nearby logging and mining activities that has been going on for the past few years. The pollution does not only affect their livelihoods but also threatens the watersheds and water supply for their daily use, especially during the dry season.

SAM has also discovered that large quantity of natural aquatic plants in Tasik Chini and Tasik Mentiga are dead. If there is no action taken to resolve the pollution problem, SAM believes that the natural lake will undergo extreme changes due to pollution and sedimentation.

Regarding the pollution in Kuala Sungai Temerloh (*Sinar Harian* report of 8 May 2017), SAM urges Pahang DOE to conduct an investigation and take immediate action to tackle the problem. SAM believes that if the pollution is not addressed immediately, the income of local fishermen will be severely affected in the future.

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