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Friends of the Earth Malaysia
For Environmental Justice

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Media Statement

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SAM objects to the latest mining project near Tasik Chini

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) objects to the most recently approved mining project surrounding Tasik Chini. The natural ecosystem of Tasik Chini and its surrounding areas have been exploited and destroyed over the past few decades. At present, only the commitment of the Pahang State Government would be able to restore Tasik Chini to its heydays.

The exploitation and destruction of Tasik Chini began when a small weir was built on Sungai Chini in 1995. Since then, from time to time, Tasik Chini and its surrounding areas were threatened by various activities, especially logging, mining and agriculture.

The construction of the weir and the environmentally destructive activities have not only impacted the natural ecosystem and environmental quality of Tasik Chini and its surroundings but have also affected the lives and socio-economy of the people living in the vicinity of Tasik Chini especially the Orang Asli community.

The issues and problems that have arisen still persists as if there is no end.

SAM and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including the Peninsular Malaysia Orang Asli Villages Network (JKOASM) and the FELDA Chini Smallholders Network (CISNET) had submitted various complaints to the State Government and related agencies but to no avail.

In addition, over the years SAM had also taken initiatives and measures to save Tasik Chini by holding meetings with the local communities, conducting discussions with stakeholders, field surveys and holding press conferences.

We understand that in 2012, the Orang Asli community of Tasik Chini had submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister of Malaysia to stop all activities that could destroy Tasik Chini and its surrounding areas.

Now SAM is reiterating its call to the Pahang State Government for immediate action to be taken to save Tasik Chini and its surrounding areas.

Among the actions that need to be taken immediately is halt all mining activities here and the weir that has affected the natural ecosystem of Tasik Chini must be demolished.

SAM also urges the Pahang State Government to gazette the entire Tasik Chini and its surrounding areas as protected area as it an environmentally sensitive area.

In addition, the Pahang State Government must officially recognize Tasik Chini and its surrounding areas as traditional territory of the Orang Asli community here.

If the State Government still does not commit to conserve and stop all activities that can destroy the natural ecosystem of Tasik Chini and its surrounding areas, including the latest mining proposal, the declaration of Tasik Chini as a Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) may be in jeopardy.

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