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**Press Statement**

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**Trawler Vessels and Dredgers Threaten Sungai Batu Fishermen**

The daily income of nearly 200 fishermen in Kampung Sungai Batu, Pantai Remis, Perak has been affected by the encroachment of trawler vessels into their fishing zone. The problem that has persisted for more than 10 years has not only threatened the fisheries resources and various species of marine life, but also polluted the Zone A where fishermen make a living from.

In a survey carried out by Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM), we found that fish and shrimp caught by fishermen in the area have decreased. Prior to the encroachment, the fishermen could earn more than RM100.00 per day. But now they only earn RM60.00 per day.

In addition to their dwindling daily income, some of the fishermen suffered losses due to their fishing nets being damaged by trawler vessels that have encroached into their fishing zone and hit their nets.

The trawlers encroach into the coastal fishing zone at night. The one nautical mile zone from the shore has also become their operating area. Fishermen here also claimed that each encroachment involves about 20 trawler vessels. The trawler vessel operators do not switch on their lights to avoid detection by coastal fishers and the authorities.

This problem has been reported to the Maritime Enforcement Agency of Malaysia (APMM) but no effective action has been taken so far.

SAM is disappointed that although the fishermen have been suffering long, their problems have yet to be resolved satisfactorily by the authorities. SAM believes that if left unattended, the livelihood of the fishermen will be severely affected in the future.

SAM urges the APMM to conduct frequent surveillance and strictly enforce the Fisheries Act 1985 and tackle the problems faced by the fishermen effectively.

Besides taking action on the trawler encroachments, SAM calls upon APMM and the Perak Land and Mines Office to investigate and take immediate action to stop dredging of ore in the foreshore near the Sungai Batu fishing jetty.

The fishermen in the area have raised their objections because the dredging activities pollute the sea and destroy the corals in these waters. However no stringent action has been taken against the company.

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