



Sahabat Alam Malaysia
Friends of the Earth Malaysia
For Environmental Justice

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Press Statement

4 February 2022

SAM strongly objects the proposed logging and tin mining project within Hutan Simpan Kenderong in sub district of Kerunai, Hulu Perak

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) is irked that pristine natural forests that provide important ecological services continue to be subjected to mining projects that are extremely destructive in nature. A local mining company, EMBI Mining Sdn Bhd, has proposed to carry out logging and tin mining activities in a forested area in the sub district of Kerunai, Hulu Perak, where 245 hectares (605 acres) of forest has been excised out of Hutan Simpan Kenderong for the logging and mining operations. As stated on the cover page of the EIA report, the mining lease holder is Menteri Besar Incorporated (MB Inc. Perak).

Clear cutting, supposedly discreet clear felling as mentioned in the EIA, 605 acres of forested land would be disastrous. Coupled with mining operations that will result in contamination of water resources, it would be catastrophic. Moreover, the proposed site is an Environmentally Sensitive Area Rank 1 whereby no development, agriculture or logging should be permitted except for low impact nature tourism activities and for research and education purposes.

In addition to this, the proposed site is located within the primary linkage-8 of the Central Forest Spine (CFS) region where it is reported that the area houses endangered and nearly extinct species of wildlife like elephants, tigers, tapirs, and sun bears.

The primary linkage of CFS is an important natural corridor which allows large mammals to travel from one primary forest to another to find food and shelter. Proposing mining projects at such naturally pristine locations will further exacerbate the already worsened human wildlife conflict situation in Malaysia.

According to the EIA, the proposed site is a hilly terrain that has an elevation of 320 to 450 meters. Moreover, the proposed site is also a water catchment area, whereby the EIA report clearly states that there are tributary rivers which runs in close proximity of the project side that flows into Sungai Perak.

Sungai Perak is an important water source which provides 45% of potable water for the state of Perak. Jeopardizing the water source of the local community for mere fiscal benefits is irresponsible and shouldn't be allowed to happen.

A calamitous precedent has already been set in 2019 which proves that conducting mining in environmentally sensitive areas spells disaster. There are several water intake points (WIP) along Sungai Perak and among those water intake points, Air Ganda WIP is the closest one to the proposed project site which was forced to shut down in 2019 after local residents predominantly indigenous people suffered from bad skin disease. Upon investigation, authorities found traces of arsenic in the water mainly caused by a licensed mining company that conducted mining activity at the same location which EMBI Mining Sdn Bhd has proposed their project now.

No matter what type of mitigation and reparation plans the project proponent might have recommended, carrying out environmentally disastrous projects will degrade the local environment to the extent where no mitigation nor reparation plan will work.

SAM strongly objects to the proposed logging and tin mining operations in HS Kenderong and would like to reiterate our firm stand against any kind of environmentally unsound project proposals that imperils the environment, jeopardizes water sources and threatens the lives and livelihood of communities.

We therefore urge the Department of Environment (DOE) to reject the EIA report and the State government of Perak to take immediate measures to revoke the degazettement of the HS Kenderong, and gazette the forest as a water catchment forest.

Meenakshi Raman
President
Sahabat Alam Malaysia

Note to Editor:

The EIA of the proposed project can be accessed at <https://www.doe.gov.my/portalv1/en/info-hebahan/pengumuman-teks/laporan-penilaian-kesan-kepada-alam-sekeliling-eia-bagi-proposed-project-of-logging-and-tin-mining-operations-compartments-24-and-31-within-hutan-simpan-kenderong-measuring-245-hectares-s/330850>

The deadline for submission of comments on the EIA is 25 February 2022