



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Media Statement

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Conserve Forests to Resolve Water Problem Faced by Kedahans

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) urges the Kedah state government to conserve forests in the state in its efforts to resolve the water problem faced by Kedahans. Besides taking actions to stop logging and conversion of forest for plantations and large-scale agriculture projects, the Kedah state government must gazette all the forests in this state as Permanent Reserved Forest to protect them as water catchments.

Logging and forest encroachment have affected water sheds and cause serious soil erosion. In the meantime dams in the state are becoming shallower due to sedimentation and cannot hold as much water. CAP has also received many complaints that community water supply sourced from hills and streams has become polluted due to logging and sand mining activities.

At the same time, water from dams' spills over and eventually flows into the sea. This situation has triggered frequent flash floods that damage people's property and crops. CAP is disappointed that although the problem of water supply for daily needs and paddy cultivation in the state has been ongoing for more than ten years, yet until now no effective action has been taken by the relevant parties to resolve the problem.

Areas that are badly affected include Baling, Sik, Padang Terap, Pendang, Pokok Sena, Kuala Muda, Merbok, Kulim, Kubang Pasu and Lembaga Kemajuan Pertanian Muda (Muda Agriculture Development Authority - MADA) area. CAP's survey found that annually more than 100,000 water consumers in the state face difficulty due to insufficient water supply for their daily use and for paddy cultivation.

This problem has not been dealt with satisfactorily but has worsened especially during the dry season. CAP is also dismayed that many villages close to dams such as in the districts of Padang Terap, Sik and Baling do not get proper water supply.

CAP urges the government to replace or repair old water pipes and irrigation systems to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of water supply to users. Stringent legal action must be taken on all those who are responsible for causing adverse effects to water sources and water supply in this state. Weakness in enforcing relevant laws is one of the reasons why Kedah's water problem remains unsettled until now.

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