



**Sahabat Alam Malaysia**  
**Friends of the Earth Malaysia**  
For Environmental Justice

1, Jalan Joki, 11400 Penang, Malaysia  
Tel No: +604 827 6930  
Fax No: +604 827 6932  
Email: foemalaysia@gmail.com  
<https://www.foe-malaysia.org>

Press Release

17 April 2024

**Penang State Government Should Not Proceed with Penang Hill Cable Car Project  
until Full Public Consultation and Feedback is Sought**

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) reiterates its call to the Penang State authorities, the Department of Environment and the Majlis Bandaraya Pulau Pinang (MBPP) not to allow the Penang Hill cable-car project to proceed until there has been a full public consultation and feedback on the project, especially from those who will be affected by the project.

SAM has been receiving complaints from various quarters, about the lack of consultation over the project.

Thus far, the Penang State Government (PSG) has been saying that all the approvals have been obtained in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the project as well as planning permission from the local authority to commence the works in June this year. The PSG claims that all laws have been followed.

However, SAM regrets that none of these approvals have been made through a public consultation and feedback process.

1. The EIA for the project was approved without a detailed EIA done, and which was not displayed publicly and no feedback was sought prior to its approval by the Director General of Environment. This despite the fact that the DG of Environment had a discretion to seek public feedback. This was not done at all, depriving the public a very important mechanism for public participation and feedback.
2. No local plan has been drawn up for the areas and residents who will be affected by the ancillary works related to the cable car project, especially at the bottom station in the Botanical Gardens, and along Jalan Kebun Bunga. The residents living nearby are not in the know about how they will be affected by the works related to the cable car project.

The lack of a local plan for the island for decades now is a major violation of the Town and Country Planning Act 1976. If a local plan has been drawn up, the public, especially those who would be impacted by the project would have been able to give their feedback.

3. The Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) and the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the project are all required prior to the grant of planning permission. None of this has been publicly displayed for public comments and feedback.

Clearly, the public has been kept in the dark as to the environmental and social impacts of the project prior to any approvals given.

To approve the cable car project without such public participation and public disclosure is not good governance.

This is especially so in the case of a project which is taking place in an environmentally sensitive area, such as Penang Hill and the Penang Botanic Gardens.

Transporting 1,000 people per hour via the cable car to the Hill is no small matter. Questions abound about the spill over effects and the carrying capacity of this environmentally sensitive ecosystem.

The PSG representatives are quick to point out that SAM was invited to a focus group discussion during preparation of the SIA but did not attend it. We had informed the authorities that we could not attend the consultations at the appointed date but this does not absolve the authorities from making the EIA public to seek prior feedback before any approvals are given.

SAM calls on the Penang State authorities, the MBPP and the relevant State agencies to publicly display the EIA, TIA and SIA for the project and seek public feedback.

A local plan also should be produced for public feedback, without which, the cable car project should not proceed.

SAM is baffled by the non-transparency and lack of opportunity for public consultation and feedback in this regard.

**For the sake of good governance and transparency, the cable car project must not proceed until the public has had an opportunity to view the details of the project and all the above measures are taken.**

**Meenakshi Raman  
President  
Sahabat Alam Malaysia**