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# Giant 'vacuum' cleaning up Klang River

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**SHAH ALAM:** The severely polluted Klang River is set to get a new lease of life with the help of Rotterdam-based non-profit Ocean Cleanup.

Ocean Cleanup's gigantic 'vacuum machine', the Interceptor has been docked in the Klang stretch of the river for over two months now.

It has the ability and capacity to clear up at least 100,000 kg of garbage daily from the river.

The "big cleanup" is part of the Selangor Maritime Gateway (SMG) initiative under the Menteri Besar Inc to resuscitate the state's polluted rivers, said Menteri Besar Amrudin Shari at a press conference on the sidelines of the state legislative assembly sitting yesterday.

"The clean-up exercise is provided free of charge for a year with Ocean Cleanup collaborating with state-government linked company Landasan Lunmuan Sdn Bhd (LLSB)," said Amrudin.

A special report by The Star on river pollution recently, based on data from the Department of Environment (DOE), revealed that most of the nine main rivers of Selangor are polluted.

The Interceptor, said Amrudin, has enhanced the state's efforts of clearing Klang River of garbage.

Besides Malaysia, the Interceptor has also been deployed in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Also at the press conference was the Boyan Slat, inventor of



Interceptor. He is also the Ocean Cleanup chief executive officer.

"Ocean Cleanup's main mission is to rid the oceans of plastic waste.

"To do that we have to do two things - to clean-up what was already in the ocean as well as prevent more plastic from reaching the ocean," said Slat, adding currently Ocean Cleanup's giant cleaning-up machine was deployed in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

"One per cent of rivers are responsible for 80% of the plastic going into the ocean.

"So back in 2015, we started with the river project and the result is the Interceptor," said Slat.

He added the machine on Klang River was the first full-fledged Interceptor and the one in Jakarta is a prototype.

Slat said according to Ocean Cleanup's models and measurements, the Klang River was one of the heaviest emitting rivers in terms of plastics.

Meanwhile, LLSB managing director Syaiful Azmen Nordin said the Interceptor had initially suc-

**Mega sweeper:** Dutch designed trash interceptor moored on Sungai Klang behind the Masjid Bandar Diraja Klang and (inset) Slat, the contraption inventor.

tioned in 1,200 to 1,500kg of garbage daily which has now reduced to 800 to 900kg daily.

He added the reduction in quantity indicated that the garbage in the Klang River had lessened.

A search on various newsteeds stated that 25-year-old Slat had conceptualized the Interceptor when he was still in his teens.

The Ocean Cleanup which he launched in 2013, when he was 19, has to date raised some US\$31m (RM128 m) to achieve its mission of ridding the world's oceans of plastic.