



KEMENTERIAN TENAGA DAN SUMBER ASLI

KERATAN SURAT KHABAR

SURAT KHABAR	:	SUNDAY STAR			
TARIKH	:	27/6/2021	MUKA SURAT	:	10
JABATAN	:	KeTSA			

New roads could lead to more roadkill

KOTA KINABALU: Sabah's wildlife population could dwindle if new roads are built across key habitat areas without proper research, a study by the University College Sabah Foundation showed.

It found that existing roads were already causing significant numbers of roadkill of endangered and protected species.

Among others, elephants, pangolins, clouded leopards, proboscis monkeys, slow loris and banteng had been sighted along the roads that were surveyed.

Not only were these endangered species at risk but human lives could also be at stake if large animals such as elephants and banteng are involved in any collision especially in Kinabatangan and Kalabakan areas.

"If more roads are constructed in or around forested areas without careful consideration for wildlife ecology, the problem could be aggravated," the UCSF research study suggested.

The UCSF study was carried out at five key new road stretches under the Pan Borneo Highway to understand its possible effects on wildlife in the areas.

The traffic corridors examined were Sindumin-Papar-Tuaran, Kota Belud-Kota Marudu-Kudat, Tamparuli-Telupid-Sandakan, Kinabatangan-Lahad Datu-Tawau and Tawau-Kalabakan-Keningau-

Kimanis under the current Pan Borneo Highway project plans.

Some of the largest natural habitats that came under the Pan Borneo Highway were in Kinabatangan and Kalabakan which are integral to the Heart of Borneo.

The study, which was the first state-wide roadkill study in Sabah, recorded a total of 21 mammals, 10 birds and five reptile species as victims or potential victims of roadkill incidents.

The study also calls for the possibility of having overpasses, underpasses and canopy bridges to minimise the risk of death.

In Sungai Yu, Pahang, and Aring in Terengganu, wildlife crossings have been built similar to those constructed in other countries.

To conclusively determine which type of crossings are suitable for wildlife in Sabah, more study is needed, the researchers noted.

According to UCSF researcher Regina Justinus, they found nocturnal animals are likely killed at night and suggested that appropriate wildlife warning signs and speed bumps be installed.

"Educational signage should be installed to warn drivers and passengers not to discard food waste along the roads," she added.

Project supervisor Lawrence Alan Bansa said good roads are urgently needed to drive socio-economic growth in Sabah.