



KEMENTERIAN TENAGA DAN SUMBER ASLI

# KERATAN SURAT KHABAR

SURAT KHABAR	:	NST			
TARIKH	:	25/8/2021 (RABU)	MUKA SURAT	:	12
JABATAN	:	Jabatan Hutan Sarawak			

INDISCRIMINATE ACTIVITIES

NST, 25 Ogos  
2021\_12

## Sarawak Forestry Dept investigating logjam in Batang Baleh



Deputy Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri James Jemut Masing says the logjam in Batang Baleh is caused by logging near the river's headwaters. PIC BY ERIKA GEORGE

**KUCHING:** The state Forestry Department is investigating the logjam in the upper reaches of Batang Baleh.

Its director, Datu Hamden Mohammad, said a team was on the ground to collect information on the river.

"We will decide on the next course of action based on our findings," he said.

WWF-Malaysia on Monday urged Sarawak to investigate destruction to the environment in Upper Baleh, which was an important water catchment for Kapit, Sibul, Sarikei and Mukah.

WWF-Malaysia Sarawak conservation programme head Dr Jason Hon said the cost of the clean-up should be borne by

companies responsible for the logjam, which affected the environment and people's livelihoods in rural and urban areas.

He said forestry authorities could identify the culprits through its intelligence unit and remote monitoring system.

On Sunday, Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri James Jemut Masing said the logjam was caused by timber concessionaires operating near the headwaters of Batang Baleh.

He said the state government should not renew timber licences for the upper reaches of Batang Baleh to prevent such incidents.

Masing said the previous logjam in the headwaters of Batang Baleh in 2010 stretched from Kapit to Sibul.

He said dead fish and wildlife, including carcasses of crocodiles, were floating in the river.

Hon said indiscriminate activities in the interior and upstream could aggregate and impact those living downstream as well.

A study by WWF-Malaysia in 2018 showed that ecosystem services in the Baleh watershed were worth US\$93.72 million per year, not including carbon sequestration. Sediment and flood regulation were among the ecosystem services with the highest value.

The Upper Baleh is part of WWF's Heart of Borneo effort, which promotes sustainable use and management of natural resources on land and rivers for different stakeholders.

