

Selangor govt urged to reconsider plan to develop Kuala Langat North forest reserve

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SHAH ALAM: Home to more than 2,000 Temuan Orang Asli community, the Kuala Langat North Forest Reserve is also a sanctuary for critically endangered species including the Malayan Sun Bear, Selangor Pygmy Flying Squirrel and the rare Langat Red Fighting Fish.

However, the recent proposal to degazette 930.93ha of the forest for a mixed development project is threatening the survival of the wildlife, prompting environmental groups rallying against the plan.

Global Environment Centre (GEC) has launched a petition “Help save Kuala Langat North Forest Reserve: Home of Orang Asli and Biodiversity”, which has so far garnered 10,840 signatures.

GEC Forest and Coastal programme manager Nagarajan Rengasamy said the forest also served as a water catchment area and carbon storage which reduces the impact of climate change.

He said the development would not only disrupt the ecology of the Sungai Langat and Sungai Kelang basins but also cause loss of habitat for many species which would eventually lead to the extinction of some of them.

“The degazettement of the land would also mean neglecting the rights of the Orang Asli community who have been living there for over 134 years while diminishing their need for forest produce.

“The Orang Asli community there has also put a lot of effort to protect the environment including replanting some of the trees there, but it seems that they went unappreciated,” he said when contacted today.

Meanwhile, Representatives from Otai Reformis 1998 and the Protection of the Natural Heritage of Malaysia are expected to hand a memorandum to Selangor Environment, Green Technology, Science and Consumer Affairs executive councillor Hee Loy Sian at the state government’s office tomorrow.

The Selangor Forestry Department had on Feb 5 placed a notice in major newspapers inviting stakeholders in the district to voice their objections to the proposal within 30 days.

Source: <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2020/02/566755/sgor-govt-urged-reconsider-plan-develop-kuala-langat-north-forest-reserve>