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KERATAN AKHBAR

Exco member: Luas to prosecute those contaminating water resources



Hee: Polluters can be fined between RM200,000 and RM1mil and jailed three years.

Polluters found discharging effluent into river basins will be made accountable for their actions, says Selangor tourism, environment, green technology and Orang Asli affairs committee chairman Hee Loy Sian.

In a statement over contamination concerns at Sungai Selangor and Sungai Langat, Hee warned that polluters could be booked under the amended Resource Alteration Activity (Selangor) 2013 and Emission or Discharge of Pollutants (Selangor) 2012 regulations by the Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas).

He said any activity related to water resources that must comply with conditions stipulated in written permissions or licences issued by Luas, such as the release of pollutants from scheduled activities like dredging and sand washing, would be regulated under the two amended regulations.

This included wastewater management, including grey water from commercial areas and local government activities.

LEMBAGA URUS AIR SELANGOR
(UNIT KORPORAT)

“The Selangor government will not compromise with any party found guilty of polluting the state’s water resources.

“Stern action will be taken against them.

“We are empowered to do so by the Luas (Amendment) Enactment 2020, which gives focus to Prohibition of Pollution of a Water Source under Section 79 (4).

“Those convicted can be fined a minimum of RM200,000 and a maximum of RM1mil, and jailed not exceeding three years,” he said.

In the long term, this is aimed at improving the quality of river water and its surrounding ecosystem by minimising effluent discharge or pollution load quantities and promoting best management practices through the use of green technology such as recycling of effluent discharges by the economic sector.

Hee also advised the public to report to Luas should they see any activity that could potentially contribute to the pollution of the state’s water resources.

On local media reports about the two rivers being at risk of contamination, he said while the water quality index (WQI) by the Department of Environment (DOE) as of March 1 showed moderate contamination with readings of between 62 and 78 for some river basins in the state, readings at Sungai Selangor and Sungai Langat basins indicated the water was clean.

“Sungai Selangor and Sungai Langat account for more than 90% of the water supply to the people of Klang Valley and Putrajaya.

“As of March 1, WQI showed values of Sungai Selangor at 86, Sungai Langat at 91, Sungai Tengi at 87 and Sungai Bernam at 93,” said Hee.

WQI values range between 0, which represents the worst, and 100, the best.

Hee assured that the above water conditions could be treated by all 34 water treatment plants within the state according to the National Drinking Water Quality Standards as prescribed by the Health Ministry before distribution.

To curb the pollution of water resources, he said the Luas Pantas Squad, formed in December 2020, managed to curb the increase of several unexpected river pollution issues.

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“Based on records for 2021, only two cases of shutdowns for water treatment plants in Sungai Semenyih were recorded.

“This is an improvement from 2020 where 11 incidents because of odour pollution in raw water resulted in water supply disruption to users,” said Hee.

He revealed that through monitoring, sampling and immediate action, 22 potential shutdowns of water treatment plants have been prevented with the help of the authorities.

“The state government through its Raw Water Guarantee Scheme is implementing a water quality conservation project in Sungai Gong using the bioremediation method.

“This process uses microbial or plant enzymes to detoxify contaminants in the soil and other environments.

“It will be replicated in other rivers of the state for the purpose of improving river water quality.

“Luas will also increase the number of water quality telemetry monitoring stations in at-risk areas as early warning systems to detect contamination so that immediate control action can be taken on site, avoiding disruptions to water treatment plant operations,” he added.