

17th January 2020

**YAB DATUK SERI PANGLIMA HAJI MOHD SHAFIE BIN HAJI APDAL**

Ketua Menteri Sabah  
Pejabat Ketua Menteri Sabah  
Pusat Pentadbiran Negeri Sabah (PPNS)  
Aras 31 dan 32, Blok A, Jalan Sulaman,  
Teluk Likas, 88400 Kota Kinabalu  
Sabah

**Report on Inclusive Dialogue between Stakeholders on Infrastructure Development in Sabah for the 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan held on 22 October 2019 at IDS Hall, Wisma Sedia, Kota Kinabalu co-organised by Coalition 3H and Institute for Development Studies Sabah**

We are a coalition of nine organizations, namely the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre, Borneo Futures, Danau Girang Field Centre, Forever Sabah, Jaringan Orang Asal Se-Malaysia (JOAS), Land Empowerment Animals People (LEAP), PACOS Trust, Seratu Aatai, and WWF Malaysia. We have gathered primarily to share our collective resources and bodies of work, and engage more coherently, effectively and usefully in infrastructure planning and development processes in Sabah and Malaysia. Our goal is to be at the table in the planning and decision-making processes, bringing and offering our best available collective data and expertise with transparency and goodwill. We aim to shift the dynamic of engagement between civil society and government from reactive to proactive.

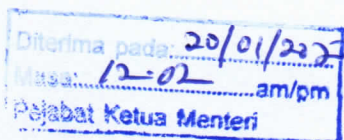
We have followed with interest the State and Federal governments' process with regards to governance, management and implementation of the Pan Borneo Highway (PBH) development. We have also engaged to our best of our ability with the respective State agencies and the former Project Delivery Partner, sharing our collective data and expertise particularly with regards to important wildlife habitats, forests and ecologically sensitive regions. We have found the agencies responsive and willing to engage, and we also see that they have capacity and resource constraints; our intention is to offer support in specific scientific, legal and practical areas.

On 22 October 2019, the Institute for Development Studies (Sabah) and Coalition Humans Habitats Highways (3H) organised the Inclusive Dialogue between Stakeholders on Infrastructure Development in Sabah for the 12th Malaysia Plan, bringing together participants from both the state public sector and civil society (including experts and academics). It was graced by guest of honour, YB Assaffal @ Samsul Kamal P. Alian (Assistant Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment, who is also the State Assemblyman for N. 49 Tungku).

The purpose was to open a space for dialogue, sharing information, discussing planning and approval processes, airing mutual concerns and challenges, building understanding and exploring possible solutions.

Through the dialogue, civil society participants were able to share with government agencies data and information regarding potential damaging impacts of proposed projects, as well as to propose alternative solutions.

Participants came to the conclusion that there are weaknesses in the current infrastructure project approval process (especially the severely limited utility of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process), and there is a need for wider engagement of civil society (who might have data and knowledge not available to the government agencies) at a much earlier stage (planning, not just during approval / implementation), and that the planning agencies (especially the State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN) could benefit from more open engagement with civil society.



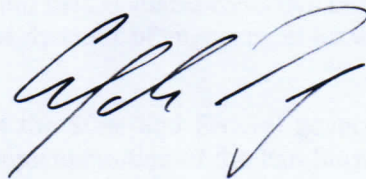
Above all, it was clear that in the "New Malaysia" and "New Sabah", there is a clamour for greater transparency by the government and engagement with the public. The participants are hopeful that this will usher in a new era of openness, democratic engagement and knowledge-based policy making.

Appended with this letter is the summary report on the inclusive dialogue and a compilation of all the presentations summarizing our key concerns with the Pan Borneo Highway.

We would like to propose the establishment of a multi-stakeholder committee for PBH with relevant government agencies, civil society and private sector actors; we would be pleased to do our part in organizing the civil society component of such a committee to ensure our best and most cohesive representation at the table. This committee could be chaired directly under the auspices of the appropriate State and Federal ministries/agencies.

We stand ready and willing to serve the sustainable development of our state and country, and would be grateful to be able to meet with you in person to discuss this further at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



**CYNTHIA ONG**

**On behalf of Coalition 3H**

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