



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, 28 March 2007

UNDP and SRB launch new study for sustainable use of rivers in Sarawak

Lemanak River, Sri Aman, 28 March 2007 - YB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Alfred Jabu ak. Numpang, Deputy Chief Minister, Minister of Infrastructure Development & Communications and Minister of Rural Development today launched the "Sarawak Inland Waterway Transport (SIWT) System Study", a joint project by the Sarawak Rivers Board (SRB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Historically, rivers have been the lifeblood of Sarawak and its communities, providing the communities with sustenance, a means of transport and livelihood.

The aim of the project is to develop a Masterplan that will enhance the development of Sarawak's waterways as a viable and sustainable infrastructure network, increasing mobility and access to the rural areas, enhancing opportunities for tourism and providing for profitable, long-term economic activities.

The Master Plan will cover the period to 2020 and will also incorporate a five-year Action Plan that will be implemented by the SRB.

Some of the key strategies of the masterplan include:

- **Community water transport** to improve mobility and access to economic and social services, particularly in rural areas;
- **Sustaining inland waterways** as the main mode of transport by developing integrated water transport services designed to create an effective inter-modal transport network;
- **Development of sustainable riverine tourism** that will involve the rural communities and ensure equity for all stakeholders.
- **Enhancement of safety, security and environmental protection;**
- **Strengthening the institutional framework** and, in particular, SRB's capacity to implement the Master Plan.

The Master Plan will be developed through participation which will increase the likelihood that the improvements to facilities and services to be provided will reflect the needs of local people and ensure that development benefits are equitably shared.

NOTE TO EDITOR

SRB - The Sarawak State Government established the Sarawak Rivers Board (SRB) in October 1993 under the Sarawak Rivers Ordinance 1993. The functions of the SRB stipulated in the Ordinance include multi-purpose river basin planning, control and regulation of river traffic, provision and improvement of ports and navigation facilities, protection and restoration of river banks, implementation of safety measures and river environment management.

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners. Its current priority is to help all countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

To read more about the work of UNDP does in Malaysia, please visit our website at www.undp.org.my

For further information, please contact:
Dayang Amelia, Assistant Controller (Legal)
Sarawak Rivers Board
1st floor, Electra House
Power Street, 93000
Kuching, Sarawak
Tel No. 6082 207103 Fax : +6082 234096