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EVALUATING TRENDS OF WATER QUALITY INDEX OF SELECTED KELANG RIVER TRIBUTARIES

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Abstract

Concerns for the river environment in Malaysia were highlighted. There had been occurrences of inadequate supply of water in certain cities and unexpected floods over the last few years. This paper discusses the results and efforts to clean the Gombak River which passes through several industrial areas and the City of Kuala Lumpur and the Penchala River which has an extra burden of passing through a highly densely populated Kuala Lumpur satellite city. Both rivers were considered polluted with the Penchala River being in a worse situation than the Gombak River. Special attention was given to the trends in the levels of Water Quality Index (WQI) over a period of nine years from 1997 to 2005. Results of efforts which included public participation, engineering and river works and strict statutory regulations by the government authorities had shown only slight success in improving the river water quality. The Gombak River started with a WQI of 64 units shows improvement of 0.07 WQI units / month while the Penchala River started with WQI of 27 units shows improvement of 0.017 units / month with BOD and Ammoniacal Nitrogen as critical factors. Further efforts from stakeholders could be harnessed and public awareness be enhanced to strive for a healthier Gombak and Penchala rivers.

Key words: Gombak River, interim water quality standard, Penchala River, river clean-up, water quality index

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