



PRESS STATEMENT

**YB DATUK SERI DR. HAJI WAN JUNAIDI BIN TUANKU JAAFAR
MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT**

“PENANG UNDERSEA TUNNEL PROJECT”

30 JANUARY 2018

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) wishes to categorically state that it has no official knowledge of the proposed Penang Undersea Tunnel Project. Whatever information NRE has gathered thus far has been through the news outlets.

From what the Ministry knows, the Penang Undersea Tunnel Project will comprise 7.2km of an undersea tunnel connecting Persiaran Gurney from Penang Island to Bagan Ajam in Seberang Prai on the mainland.

To date, the Ministry via its approving authority which is the Department of Environment (DOE), has not been officially informed by the project proponents of the Penang Undersea Tunnel Project. From reports in the mass media, the Ministry found out that the project is now undergoing feasibility studies. This is **NOT** an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study.

Under normal circumstances, an EIA is only carried out once the feasibility studies have been completed and the project has been found to be feasible. Then, the approximate details of the project could be presented to the DOE for EIA evaluation, amendment and approval. It is premature to comment upon the impact and/or mitigation measures that might have to be taken. **It is therefore not correct to say that the Ministry has not approved the EIA as the Ministry has no official knowledge of this project.**

This megaproject will definitely be subject to the terms and conditions of the EIA Order 2015. This **requires** the submission and approval of an EIA Report to the Director General of Environmental Quality as stipulated under Section 34A of the Environmental Quality Act 1974 **prior** to the implementation of the project. The Project would also require approvals from other agencies under the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment as well as the National Physical Plan Council (NPPC).

The Ministry strongly urges the Penang State Government to comply with all stipulated regulations for the commissioning of such a mega project which will foreseeably have great impact on the surface and subsea environments.

Thank you.