



Media Release

For Immediate Release

Response to Article Titled “Timber Giant Samling Enters Forest Earmarked For Conservation, Satellite Images Show” Published by BMF

20 July 2022, Miri Sarawak - We refer to the article mentioned above dated 13 July 2022 which was published on the Bruno Manser Fonds website and which was used as the basis of a joint press statement by Keruan, BMF and The Borneo Project titled “Timber Giant Samling Enters Forest Earmarked for Conservation, Satellite Images Show” (“**Article**”).

Samling would like to categorically deny that it has encroached into any area recognised as Native Customary Rights or NCR land by the Sarawak state government. We also categorically deny that we have encroached into any forest earmarked for conservation by the Sarawak authorities.

The so-called Upper Baram Forest Area mentioned in the statement is a concept that has not been ratified by the state authorities, and one that has not been discussed with Samling even though we are the concessionaire holders for most of the areas covered under the concept.

We reiterate that the issue of encroachment does not arise because Samling is in possession of all necessary licences and permits to carry out timber harvesting in the area. This area does not encroach into the areas inhabited by the Penan communities of Long Ajeng, Long Lamam and Long Murung.

The rightful community living and moving in the area is the Long Selaan community, from whom Samling has obtained prior consent to begin timber harvesting operations within the ambit of its license.

Therefore, the said Article has left us confused and perplexed because it appears that the authors of the Article themselves are confused whether Samling is guilty of encroachment into protected areas marked for conservation or guilty of carrying out activities without the consent of the local communities. The Article is also replete with accusations of encroachment interchanged with allegations of entering without the approval of local Penan communities.

The said Article also states that Samling “encroached even further into the area of the Bateu Siman mountain in May and June.”

This is absolutely untrue as Samling has not carried out any timber harvesting activities at the Bateu Siman mountain.

The Article and the ensuing accusations have been repeated ad nauseam without any regard to the state government’s processes for the timber industry which Samling has always adhered to. It is no surprise that the state authorities have found no issue with Samling’s activities in the area, although this has not deterred some NGOs from their continued attempts to distort the facts and disparage Samling as flouting the law indiscriminately.



We at Samling realise that no matter how many times we deny these accusations; no matter how many times we show proof of community consent for Samling to operate in the area; no matter how many times we iterate that we have adhered to all state laws in operating in the area; that these accusations will continue.

We repeat – the Article is published without evidence, without basis, without proof – solely with a view of disparaging Samling.