

## Help Kedah conserve Ulu Muda with federal funds, Tuan Ibrahim told

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PETALING JAYA: The environment and water minister should work on securing federal compensation for the conservation of Ulu Muda and Sungai Muda, said Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP).

Instead of trying to “force” Penang to pay Kedah for water from Sungai Muda, Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man should focus on getting federal compensation for Kedah, said PBAPP CEO Jaseni Maidinsa.

“It is after all, his job and responsibility,” said Jaseni in a statement today, adding that the ministry would have access to federal funding.

Last week, Tuan Ibrahim said Penang was morally obliged to pay Kedah for the water it takes from Sungai Muda.

While Penang had the right to draw water from Sungai Muda within its territory, he said, the river flowed from the Ulu Muda forest in Kedah, which had to be preserved and spared from logging, thus depriving Kedah of much-needed revenue.

Jaseni said Penang had no legal obligation to pay Kedah as the raw water is abstracted from the parts of Sungai Muda that is in Penang territory.

He also suggested that Tuan Ibrahim leverage on the fact that Ulu Muda and Sungai Muda serve the states of Kedah and Perlis as well as Penang.

He said both these areas can be considered the Northern Corridor Economic Region’s (NCER) “water assets”, adding that Tuan Ibrahim should use this to secure compensation for Kedah.

Penang taps water from the river in Kepala Batas, processes it in Butterworth, and supplies it to 80% of its 1.78 million population.

The state has refused to accede to demands to pay up after repeated demands from the Kedah menteri besar.