

More 'moderately' polluted rivers despite drop in high-pollution cases

PETALING JAYA: More of Malaysia's rivers are being recorded as polluted, with 49 rivers having Water Quality Index ratings of 59 and below.

Data from Department of Environment showed that although the numbers of highly polluted rivers were going down, more rivers were being found to be "moderately" polluted.

According to the department's river water quality report for February, 49 rivers were marked as "polluted" while 131 listed as "moderately polluted".

During the same month last year, 59 were listed as "polluted" and 106 moderately so.

Moderately polluted rivers have ratings of between 60 to 80.

Many of the country's worst rivers are in Johor, with Sungai Kempas recording an index reading of 21, making it the only Class V river in the country.

Last year, it marked a reading of 36.

According to national water standards, even Class IV rivers can be used, albeit only for irrigation while Class V rivers cannot be used for anything.

The WQI is an overall reading that shows how clean or dirty a river can be.

The cleanest river in the country was Sungai Ara, in Penang.

The two reports also show that there were 544 rivers recorded in the February 2015 report, compared with 382 last year.