

Wan Junaidi does not expect severe transboundary haze

KUCHING: Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar has allayed fears of a severe transboundary haze occurring this year.

He said Indonesia, where the haze originated from land-clearing activities, seemed to be honouring

its commitment to check the annual phenomenon.

So far, there were only a few hotspots in Sumatra and two in Kalimantan, he told reporters at his Aidilfitri open house here.

Dr Wan Junaidi said Indonesian law allowed 40% of smallholders cultivating oil palm and trees for

pulp and paper to conduct open burning on their farmlands of at least 2ha each.

However, he believes that the haze would not be so serious this year as Indonesia faced a lot of pressure from Malaysia and Singapore which suffered the most from it.

“Whatever it is, Indonesia is still going to be answerable to its neighbours based on the Asean Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution 2002,” he said.

Dr Wan Junaidi also said that global warming was making weather conditions unpredictable.

“It is common during the current

hot season, when there is rain, there are always thunderstorms with very strong winds. We are going to see a lot more of these,” he said.

He advised all local councils and state governments to take the necessary precautions for low-lying areas and ensure proper drainage to prevent flash floods. — Bernama