

# Penang urged to review reclamation

**'GREAT CONCERN':**  
Don't compromise the environment, says minister

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coastal reclamation may not be immediately noticeable, he said such activities could have a huge impact on humans and the ecosystem in the long run.

"I view with great concern the coastal reclamation issue highlighted in the *New Straits Times*.

"The Penang government must ensure that the environmental component is not compromised in efforts to develop the state's economy, besides assuring that the people's wellbeing is taken care of.

"As such, I strongly urge the Penang government to review all coastal reclamation in the state," he told NST in an interview yesterday.

In its exclusive report, NST quoted Universiti Sains Malaysia marine biologist Dr Zulfigar Yasin as saying Penang was sitting on a ticking time bomb.

He warned that coastal reclamation would worsen the island state's seascape and that the state's environment was heading towards uncharted waters.

Any coastal reclamation involving less than three nautical miles is under the purview of the state government.

If it involves more than 40.5ha and 10,000 people, it must be brought to the National Physical Planning Council.

Wan Junaidi said initial checks by the Department of Environment (DoE) found that critical issues stemming from coastal reclamation

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**Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar**  
Natural resources and environment minister

involved hydraulics, ecology, erosion and sediment control, socio-economy and economic valuation of the environmental impact.

Checks showed that forest reserves, fishing villages, and seaweed, seagrass, aquaculture and turtle-landing areas were sensitive to coastal reclamation.

Wan Junaidi said DoE, as the department responsible for preserving the environment, received the terms of reference for coastal reclamation projects, and that any action was under its purview.

"In this aspect, DoE ensures that all coastal reclamation projects fully abide by the Environmental Quality

Act 1974, including the preparation of the necessary environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports by developers, as all development components come under activities stipulated in the Environmental Quality (Activities Set) (Environmental Impact Assessment Round) Regulations 2015.

"The Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) receives the hydraulic modelling report for coastal reclamation.

"In the event of non-compliance with the conditions of the EIA and hydraulic modelling reports, DoE and DID will not hesitate to take action."

