

Malaysia ranks 69 out of 70 in US green index
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Malaysia has been ranked as the second worst environmental democracy among 70 countries studied in the latest index published by US-based World Resources Institute's Environmental Democracy Index.

Malaysia ranked 69th out of 70 nations that were measured in the index, with a score of 0.58. It was ranked above Haiti, and below Sri Lanka, Congo and Namibia.

The country also ranked way below the global average score of 1.42.

Indonesia was ranked 17th with a score of 1.80, the highest among Malaysia's neighbours.

Three European countries – Lithuania, Latvia and Russia ranked as the top three countries –with Lithuania notching up a score of 2.42.

In the three assessment categories, Malaysia scored lowest in terms of public participation, which was merely at 0.25, access to information (0.71) and access to justice (0.77).

One of the main reasons cited for the low scores was that the government was not obligated to make environmental and public health information available to the public.

"State agencies are not required to account for public comments in environmental decision-making," it said.

The public were also not given a "broad standing to make environmental claims in court".

It cited, as an example, that the drinking water quality in Kuala Lumpur was not made publicly available.

Malaysia has faced several major protests over projects that have sparked public health and environmental fears in the past.

These included the government's plan to build a new incinerator in Kepong, the Lynas rare-earth processing plant in Gebeng, Pahang, in which thousands protested against over radioactive fears, and also a gold mine in Raub purportedly using cyanide for its operations. – May 21, 2015.

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