

## Preliminary Observations on Indigenous Knowledge and the Uses of Natural Resources in Banting and Padawan

*(Pemerhatian Awal Tentang Kearifan Tempatan dan Kegunaan Sumber Asli di Banting dan Padawan)*

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper discusses preliminary findings of the study on indigenous knowledge of various cultural, religious, medicinal and culinary uses of the natural resources found in two different indigenous communities in Sarawak, namely the Iban of Banting and the Bidayuh of Padawan. Structured interviews were carried out with each household head in the selected villages to determine indigenous knowledge of these communities on the usage of and reliance on natural resources. Through focus group discussions, indigenous knowledge on the various uses of identified natural resources is still available in these two communities. Their dependence on natural resources as building materials, food and, in the economic aspects still exist. However, their dependence on natural resource is diminishing. The indigenous knowledge gap between the old and younger generation of both Iban dan Bidayuh areas has also been identified. Most of the young people are no longer practicing traditional way of life because they are more comfortable with the modern way of life today. In addition, most Iban people in Banting, and the Bidayuh in Padawan have embraced Christianity and practiced modern way of life.*

*Keywords: Indigenous knowledge; natural resources; modernisation; Iban; Bidayuh*

### ABSTRAK

*Berdasarkan penemuan awal kajian, maka makalah ini bertujuan membincangkan kegunaan sumber asli dalam kehidupan etnik Iban di Banting, Sri Aman, dan etnik Bidayuh di Padawan, Kuching, Sarawak, berdasarkan pengetahuan peribumi. Seterusnya, cabaran amalan pengetahuan peribumi juga dibincangkan. Temu bual berstruktur telah dikendalikan bersama setiap ketua isi rumah di kampung-kampung terpilih untuk mengetahui kearifan tempatan bagi masyarakat tersebut berkaitan dengan penggunaan dan kebergantungan terhadap sumber asli. Melalui perbincangan dalam kumpulan, kearifan tempatan mengenai pelbagai kegunaan sumber asli yang dikenalpasti adalah masih terdapat dalam kedua-dua komuniti ini. Kebergantungan kepada sumber asli sebagai bahan binaan, makanan dan dalam aspek ekonomi adalah masih wujud. Walau bagaimanapun, kebergantungan mereka terhadap sumber asli adalah semakin berkurangan. Kelompongan kearifan tempatan di antara generasi tua dan muda juga telah dikenalpasti di kedua-dua kawasan Iban dan Bidayuh tersebut. Kebanyakan generasi muda tidak lagi mengamalkan cara hidup tradisional kerana mereka lebih selesa dengan cara hidup moden masa kini. Selain itu, kebanyakan orang Iban di Banting dan Bidayuh di Padawan telah memeluk agama Kristian dan mengamalkan cara hidup moden.*

*Kata kunci: kearifan tempatan; sumber asli; modenisasi; Iban; Bidayuh*