The need to consider *customary ancestral adat land* in the development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure

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Customary land

- Different types of customary land
- Sabah, Sarawak
- Kelantan, Trengganu, Penang
- Melaka, Negeri Sembilan
Customary ancestral land (tanah pesaka adat)

- Unique to
  - the Malay ethnic group of Negri Sembilan, a state in Peninsula Malaysia
  - the Adat Perpatih, an unwritten custom

- Adherence: Kuala Pilah, Tampin, Rembau, Jempol, Jelebu
Adat Perpatih

- A custom originated from the Minangkabaus of Pagar Ruyong, Sumatra
- Meticulously observed to the smallest detail encompassing behaviour and ceremonies
- However, adat is not codified, but stated in the form of maxims
- Therefore needs intelligent interpretation
- The adat is transferred orally from one generation to the other
Adat Perpatih

Is symbolised by

• the *rumah gadang* or the *adat* house
  symbol of the *Adat Pepatih*

• the *tanah pesaka* or ancestral land:
  provides the communal cohesion necessary to keep the *Adat* alive

• the *Lembaga* or clan chief:
  the upholders of the *Adat*
Rumah adat
Tanah pesaka adat – ancestral adat land
Distribution of *ancestral adat land* in Negeri Sembilan (2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>district</th>
<th>hectares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kuala Pilah</td>
<td>6418.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampin</td>
<td>751.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rembau</td>
<td>5269.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jempol</td>
<td>680.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jelebu</td>
<td>157.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lembaga – clan chief

Undang
Lembaga
Buapak
clan members
Lembaga – clan chief

- **UNDANG** heads the *Lembagas*
- the *Lembaga* heads the *buapaks*
- the *Buapak* heads a family unit
- **UNDANG** in charge of the *luak* (clan district) (Sungei Ujong, Rembau, Tampin, Johol)
Customary *ancestral adat land*

- Origin: early *Minangkabau* settlers
- Land use: agriculture
- Ownership: clan, female members may own more than one plot
- Inheritance: matrilineal, female members only
- Dealings: among clan members only subject to the Lembaga’s approval
The scenario

- Limited, no new alienation since 1911
- Identified in title but not spatially on the ground
- Multiple owners
- Small uneconomical agricultural plots
- Underutilised, idle or abandoned
- Many landowners are old and poor

**Motivation:**
- *Ancestral adat land* and thus *Adat Perpatih* need to be conserved
- *Ancestral adat land* need to be revived
Why SDI?

- Access to information: create awareness or educate clan members
- Need to differentiate *tanah pesaka adat* from *harta carian* to avoid conflicts
- Need to identify the owners of *ancestral adat land*
- Information on distribution, location and use of *ancestral adat land*, idle, abandoned or otherwise
Why SDI?

• Need information to inform the Lembagas
• Need information: water resource, topografi, soil suitability, etc to develop the land
Conclusion

• Revival of the roles and responsibilities of *Lembaga, the Adat land, the Adat Perpatih*

• Improve rural economy

• Independent and self sufficient women

• Reduce or eradicate poverty

• Unambiguous inheritance

• Well informed land administrators, *Lembagas* and clan members
Terima kasih

Thank You