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## Degazetting forest reserve unwise move

I AM saddened by the wanton "rape" of the last natural habitat of the "keruing paya" or *Dipterocarpus coriaceus* at the Bikam forest reserve in Perak.

The forest reserve is the last bastion of the tree and it has been degazetted to make way for oil palm cultivation.

*Dipterocarpus coriaceus* is a species of tree in the family *Dipterocarpaceae*, which is endemic to Kalimantan, Sumatra and Penin-

sular Malaysia. The large tree grows in mixed dipterocarp forests on hillsides and undulating land.

It is in the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species.

Surely, the authorities know the existence of this valuable natural asset? The species should be allowed to grow freely.

The authorities should allocate a suitable area to replant this valuable wood species before it goes

extinct. Of course, it is good to do things in the name of progress, but it does not mean that natural resources, which are on the verge of extinction, are sacrificed.

Have a heart. I am all for progress, but with limits.

The Forest Research Institute of Malaysia and Malaysia Nature Society must work to ensure such degazetting of land does not happen again.

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*The Bikam forest reserve is the last bastion of the threatened 'Dipterocarpus coriaceus'.*