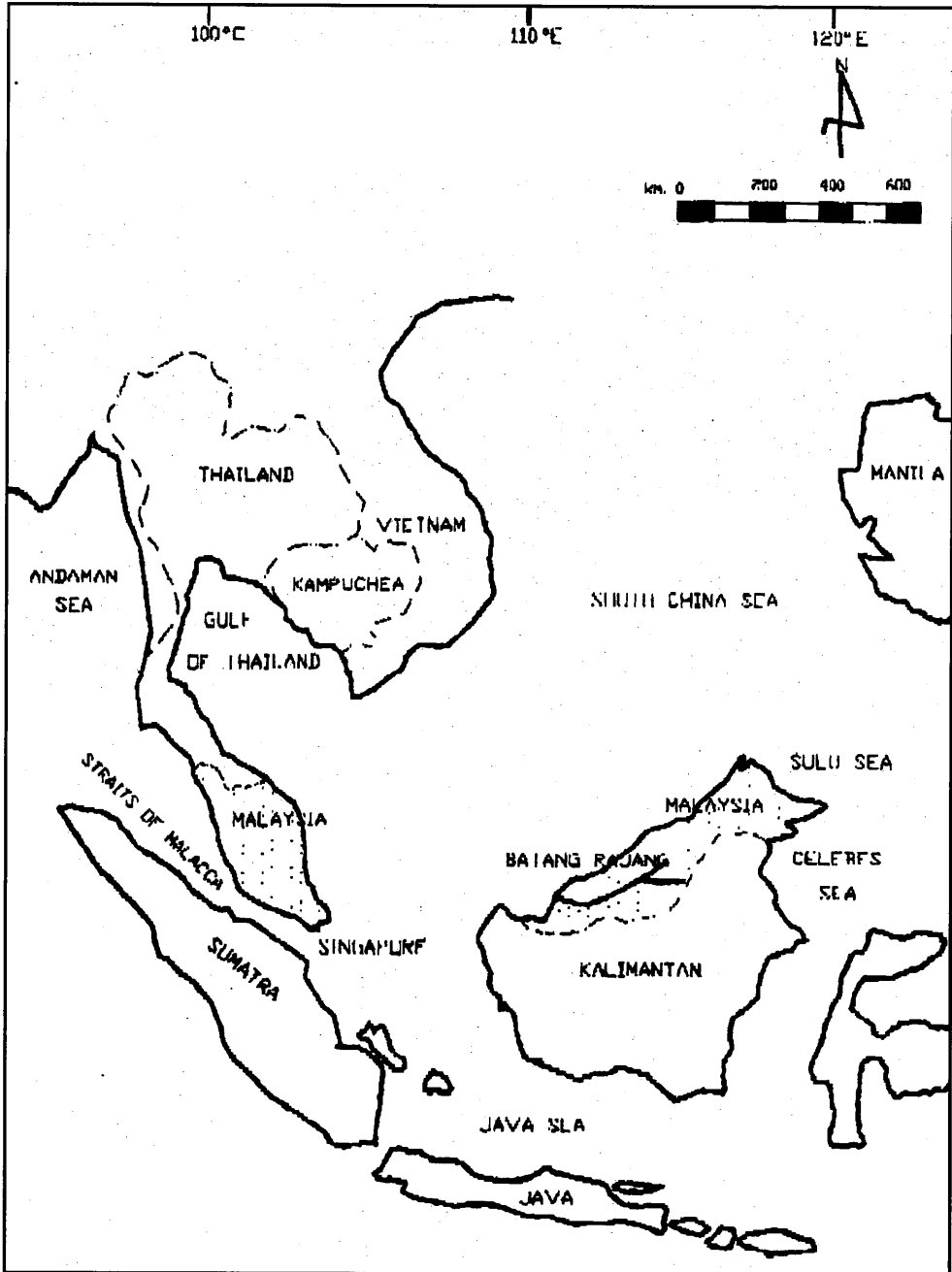


Malaysia

Malaysia-1: Batang Rajang



Introduction

Malaysia is situated in the heart of Southeast Asia, just north of the equator. It has a total land area of 330 434 km² and is divided into two distinct regions i.e. Peninsular Malaysia, (which extends from the Thai border down to the island nation of Singapore and across the South China Sea) and the two states of Sabah and Sarawak (on the northern coast of Borneo, which are bordered by Indonesia to the south and the Philippines to the east).

Being in the tropical region, the climate is hot and humid throughout the year. The mean annual rainfall is 2 500 mm and the temperatures range from 21°C to 32°C. Out of a total population of slightly over 19.4 million (mid. 1994), approximately 16.4 million live in Peninsular Malaysia whilst 3 million live in Sabah and Sarawak. A variety of racial backgrounds are available. The majority of Malays, Chinese and Indians are in Peninsular Malaysia whereas Iban, Kadazan and Bidayuh are the main indigenous ethnic groups in Sabah and Sarawak.

The river catalogued in this volume is the Rajang River, Sarawak. Being the longest river in Sarawak (432 km), it flows through the central part of Sarawak and drains an area of 50 707 km². It originates from Mt. Makati (1 360 m) and flows out into the South China Sea. This area is in the tropical rain forest and has a mean annual rainfall of 3 820 mm. The mean annual discharge at Kapit (34 053 km²) has been 2 510 m³/s (1983 - 1990).

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