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Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation

**Features Used in Indonesian International Land Boundary
Cooperation/Agreement**

Submitted by Indonesia**

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Background

In accordance with international customary law to delimit international land boundaries amongst nations, states have been practically employed natural features, namely, “*watershed*” and “*thalweg*” to delimit international land boundary between two nations as a neighbour to each other for centuries.

As the employment of “*watershed*” and “*thalweg*” to establish limit of colonial territorial possessions, along the boundary lines and in the vicinity of border areas, in general toponymic features are similar, only a few which are not. Such similarity in referring to the same features and discrepancies in spelling and pronunciation was affected by local language, dialects and traditional culture when Geographers, Surveyors, Cartographers entitled the designated features.

During the decolonisation, Colonial rules such as the Netherland and the Great Britain had defined their sphere of influences in Borneo Island, whereas in East Timor the Netherlands and Portugal had also defined their colonies. Therefore, geographical features along the boundary lines between Indonesia and Malaysia in Borneo Island as well as between Indonesia and Timor-Leste in East Timor Island conform to refer “*watershed*” and “*thalweg*”, but diverge in spelling and pronunciation.

I. Features used in International Land Boundary between Indonesia and Malaysia

International land boundary between Indonesia and Malaysia lies along approximately 2019 km on Borneo Island, which its official name is Kalimantan Island. The boundary line itself formed by natural features, what so called by range of watersheds, consisting of mountains, hills, and ridges.

Unlike other international boundaries constituted by range of watersheds, what makes the international boundary line between these two countries “unique“, is that in some segments, a range of watershed is intersected by a river. These phenomena make the Dutch and the British surveyors experienced hardship to define where the exact watershed or range of watersheds, when conducting delimitation survey in the Borneo Island during their occupation on that island.

A. International Land Boundary Treatie/Agreements in Borneo Island

Based on the principle of “*Uti Possidetis Juris*” Indonesia inherits features used in land boundary agreement between The Netherlands and Great Britain, specifically in Kalimantan Island, where the boundary line between Indonesia and Malaysia lies on.

There are three treaties/agreements using the word “Borneo”, such as:

- Convention between Great Britain and the Netherlands defining Boundaries in Borneo, signed at London, 20 June 1891;

- Agreement between Great Britain and the Netherlands relating to the Boundary between the State of North Borneo and the Dutch Possessions in Borneo, signed at London, 28 September 1915;
- Convention respecting the further Delimitation of the Frontier between the States in Borneo under British Protection and the Netherlands Territory in that island. Signed at The Hague, 26 March 1928.

B. Type and Name of Features in International Land Boundary between Indonesia and Malaysia in Borneo Island

Indo-Malay-Dayak (Van Ophujsen spelling)	Agreement 1915 (Van Ophujsen spelling)	Indonesia (adjusted spelling)	Malaysia (adjusted spelling)	Remarks
Boekit Sikapal	Sikapal Hill	Bukit Sikapal	Bukit Sikapal	Watershed
Boekit Boemboding	Mount Boemboding	Bukit Bumboding	Bukit Bumboding	Watershed
Boekit Pematangan Bagas	Mount Pematangan Bagas	Bukit Pematungan	Bukit Pematungan	Watershed
Boekit Meliat	Mount Meliat	Bukit Meliat	Bukit Meliat	Watershed
Boekit Keblajoeng	Mount Keblajoeng	Bukit Keblajung	Bukit Keblajung	Watershed
Boekit Inoeloeh Ketek	Inoeloeh Ketek Hill	Bukit Inuluh Ketek	Bukit Inuluh Ketek	Watershed
Soengai Agisan	Agisan River	Agisan River	Agison River	River
Soengai Seboeda	Seboeda River	Sebuda River	Sebuda River	River
Boekit Sinogo	Sinogo Ridge	Bukit/Tebing Sinogo	Bukit/Tebing Sinogo	Watershed
Boekit Peloetan	Peloetan Ridge	Bukit/Tebing	Bukit/Tebing	Watershed

II. Features in International Land Boundary between Indonesia and Timor-Leste

International land boundary between Indonesia and Timor-Leste covers East Timor Island along approximately 460 km. The boundary line itself formed by mixtures of natural features between watershed or range of watersheds consisting of mountains, hills, and ridges.

A. International Land Boundary Treaties/Agreements in East Timor Island

There are three treaties establishing frontier between Netherlands and Portugal in East Timor Island during decolonisation, using features of “*thalweg*” (median line of a river) and “*watershed*” as features used in delimitation, such as:

- Treaty of Demarcation and Exchange of some Portuguese and Dutch Dominions on the Solor and Timor Archipelago, between Portugal and the Netherlands, signed in Lisbon, 20 April 1859;
- Convention for the Demarcation of Portuguese and Dutch Dominions on the Island of Timor, signed at London , signed in the Hague, 1 October 1904;
- Permanent Court of Arbitration, Arbitral Award Rendered in Execution of the Compromise Signed at the Hague, 3 April 1913, between the Netherlands and Portugal concerning the subject of the Boundary of a part of their Possessions in the Island of Timor, signed in Paris, 25 June 1914.

B. Type and Name of Features in International Land Boundary between Indonesia and Timor-Leste in East Timor Island

Local Language	Boundary Convention 1904	Indonesia	Timor-Leste	Remarks
Mota Biku	Mota Biku	Mota Biku	Mota Biku	River
Mota Assudat	Mota Assudat	Mota Assudat	Mota Assudat	River
Mota Talau	Mota Talau	Mota Talau	Mota Talau	River
Mota Mallibaca	Mota Mallibaca	Mota Mallibaca	Mota Mallibaca	River
Mota Mautilu	Mota Mautilu	Mota Mautilu	Mota Mautilu	River
Mota Pepies	Mota Pepies	Mota Pepies	Mota Pepies	River
Bulu-Bulu	Bulu-Bulu	Bulu-Bulu	Bulu-Bulu	Watershed
Karawa Kotun	Karawa Kotun	Karawa Kotun	Karawa Kotun	Watershed
Mota Marees	Mota Marees	Mota Marees	Mota Marees	River
Mota Tafara	Mota Tafara	Mota Tafara	Mota Tafara	River
Mota Tiborok	Mota Tiborok	Mota Tiborok	Mota Tiborok	River
Dato Miet	Dato Miet	Dato Miet	Dato Miet	Watershed
Mota Alun	Mota Alun	Mota Alun	Mota Alun	River
Mota Sukaer	Mota Sukaer	Mota Sukaer	Mota Sukaer	River

Local Language	Boundary Convention 1904	Indonesia	Timor-Leste	Remarks
Mota Baukama	Mota Baukama	Mota Baukama	Mota Baukama	River
Tahi Fehu	Tahi Fehu	Tahi Fehu	Tahi Fehu	Watershed
Fatu Suta	Fatu Suta	Fatu Suta	Fatu Suta	Watershed
Fatu Rusa	Fatu Rusa	Fatu Rusa	Fatu Rusa	Watershed
Uas Lulik	Uas Lulik	Uas Lulik	Uas Lulik	Watershed
We Merak	We Merak	We Merak	We Merak	River
Fatu Rokon	Fatu Rokon	Fatu Rokon	Fatu Rokon	Watershed
Fitun Monu	Fitun Monu	Fitun Monu	Fitun Monu	Watershed
Debu Kasabauk	Debu Kasabauk	Debu Kasabauk	Debu Kasabauk	Watershed
Ainin Matan	Ainin Matan	Ainin Matan	Ainin Matan	Watershed
Lak Fuin	Lak Fuin	Lak Fuin	Lak Fuin	Watershed
Hali Sobuk	Hali Sobuk	Hali Sobuk	Hali Sobuk	Watershed
Mota Haliboli	Mota Haliboli	Mota Haliboli	Mota Haliboli	River
Mota Bebulu	Mota Bebulu	Mota Bebulu	Mota Bebulu	River
Ai Kakar	Ai Kakar	Ai Kakar	Ai Kakar	Watershed
Takis Mountain	Takis Mountain	Takis Mountain	Takis Mountain	Watershed
Mota Masin	Mota Masin	Mota Masin	Mota Masin	River

III. International Land Boundary between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea

In the delimitation process of International land boundary between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Indonesia intensively involved concluding agreement to define International land boundary between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Agreement between Indonesia and Australia concerning Certain Boundaries between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea was signed in Jakarta, on 12 February 1973. At that time, Legal Status of Papua New Guinea territories were partly controlled and protected by the Government of Australia.

Unlike defining International Land boundary in Borneo and East Timor Islands which constituted boundary line on natural feature basis, by using “*watershed*” and “*thalweg*”, international land boundary in Papua Island was drawn artificially by astronomic-meridian-line from the North that begins at 1410 00’00’ E to South that ends at 1410 01’10’ with the distance of approximately 816 km.

The only distinctive geographical feature in the vicinity of border area between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea is the River Fly (or *Sungai Fly*), which curvedly debouches crossing the international land boundary between two countries.