Oil palm plantation at PTPN VI- Batang Hari Unit

Short description by Ana Meijide

Site

PTPN VI - Batang Hari Unit is the plantation where the climate tower (A03 subproject of the CRC 990) was installed. It is located in the Harapan Landscape, at approximately 15 km from UNJA in direction to Muara Bulian (it takes about 45min to get there from UNJA). The plantation has an area of 2025 ha. Most of the oil palms were planted in 1999 and 2002, except for 2 small groups in 2004 (see attached map). The tower is located on sub-plot 23 (S 01°41'35.0'', E 103°23'29.0''), which is one of the flattest in the area. A power line was built from the housing area in sub-plot 17 to the tower (approximately 1km). Therefore, at the moment there is power supply at the tower, and a small hut for instruments was built there.

Oil palms in the area planted in 2002 are on average around 11m high. The topography of the area shows small hills. Soils around the tower, and generally in the upper part of hills are mineral, but they become more organic in the lower parts of the landscape, in the areas closer to the rivers and water streams.

Logistics

One of the main advantages of the site is its proximity to Jambi (45 min to UNJA), which reduces traveling time and facilitates the access to services. PTPN has a central office in Jambi city, and another one from Batang Hari Unit located in the plantation. The personnel working in both offices, but specially in the central one, has so far been cooperative whenever we have requested to install any additional instrumentation or plan new experiments (dig soil peats, install sap flow sensors in oil palms, soil chambers, etc.) after an explanation on what we wanted to do as long as it we do not damage any oil palms.



Image 1: Location of PTPN VI Batang Hari Unit in Google Earth



Image 2. Oil palms and mineral soils in the upper parts of the hills (left)

Image 3. Stream in sub-plot 23, in the lower part of the hill, where organic soils can be found (right)



Image 4. View from the tower above the plantation

