PREPARATION OF BIOCHAR AND ACTIVATED CARBON FROM COCOA POD HUSK BY USING MICROWAVE AS AMMONIUM CARRIER IN UREA-BASED FERTILIZER

Fisal Ahmad, Mohd Azmier Ahmad¹ & Nurul Amisha Abdul Mutalib.
Cocoa Innovation & Technology Centre, Malaysian Cocoa Board, Lot PT 12621, 71800 Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia
¹School of Chemical Engineering, Engineering Campus,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Seri Ampangan, 14300 Nibong Tebal, SPS, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia

ABSTRACT
Biochar (CPH_BCHAR) and activated carbon was prepared from Cocoa pod husk (CPH_AC) under microwave activation. The optimization of carbonization and activation step was performed at different microwave input power and irradiation time. Porous texture, surface and functional characteristics were analysed by N₂ adsorption, scanning electron microscopy and Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy. The adsorbents have been used to study the retention and release of NH₄⁺ from urea hydrolysis. Adsorption isotherm was fitted by Freundlich, Langmuir and Temkin isotherm models. This research shows biochar and activated carbon from CPH is a potential substrate that can be exploited to develop slow release N fertilizer with higher use efficiency and less environmental hazards.