

### DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF LINERBOARD MADE FROM SODA-ANTHRAQUINONE TREATED COCONUT COIR FIBER FOR PROTECTIVE PACKAGING

By

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Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirement of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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# DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF LINERBOARD MADE FROM SODA-ANTHRAQUINONE TREATED COCONUT COIR FIBER FOR PROTECTIVE PACKAGING

By

#### NOR MAZLANA BINTI MAIN

#### February 2018

Chair: Assoc. Prof. Rosnita binti A. Talib, PhD

**Faculty: Engineering** 

This research aimed to develop a linerboard made from coconut coir fiber (acts as a reinforcing fiber) blended with old corrugated container (OCC)/ dry strength agent (DSA) with high burst and ring crush strength properties. This newly developed linerboard would be an alternative source of commercial Malaysian packaging material containing DSA, OCC and industrial long fiber (ILF). Fiber characterization, soda-AQ pulping optimization, mechanical treatment (beating) and blending process of the coir fiber were investigated to optimize the characteristics of this linerboard.

The coir fibers were characterized using chemical and morphological analyses, to assess the fiber's potential for the production of pulp and paper. Chemical analysis was performed according to Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry (TAPPI) Standards, while the morphological properties were measured using a Quantimeter image analyzer. From the fiber characterization, it was found that; the chemical composition of fiber was suitable for a pulping process; the fiber was short fiber with an average length of  $0.84 \pm 0.17$  mm; and the fiber had a thin wall dimension, offering better fiber bonding during the papermaking process.

Soda-AQ pulping was optimized from nine (9) runs of the experiment. The condition of 18% active alkali (AA) and 1.5 hrs cooking time was chosen for mechanical treatment (beating). This condition had provided the highest screened yield (48.99%), a low reject yield (0.27%), high viscosity (11.73 cP), and the preferred Kappa number (41), which were acceptable for unbleached linerboard production. Since beating treatment could strengthen the coir pulp, evaluation at various revolutions (1000, 2000, 4000 and 8000) was carried out. The optimum beating revolution was obtained from the intersection between freeness and burst index; which was at 2000 revolutions. By using this revolution, the burst index of 4.57 kPa.m²/g and ring crush index of 1.76 Nm²/g was obtained.

The optimum beating revolution was further used in the blending process. Before linerboard production, the preferred DSA was determined, which was amphoteric polyacrylamide (aPAM) with 1.5% dosage. Series of blends containing coir, aPAM, ILF and OCC were formulated. It was observed that the blending ratio of 10/90/1.5 (coir/OCC/aPAM) was the ideal ratio and chosen as selected formulation. This selection was made based on the values of burst index (3.37 kPa.m²/g) and ring crush index (1.90 Nm²/g), which fulfilled the minimum requirement by the Malaysian industrial linerboard.

After the fabrication of the corrugated board using 10/90/1.5 (coir/OCC/aPAM) linerboard and commercial flute, the cushioning performance was assessed using a stress-energy method. The effectiveness of this new corrugated board was attained from the minimum G values (fragility product) and dynamic cushion curves. The results showed that this new corrugated board was comparable with the commercial corrugated board.

As for the conclusion, with the fiber characterization, soda-AQ pulping and mechanical treatment (beating) optimization, with the consideration of the blending process effects, it was recommended that the used of 10/90/1.5 (Coir/OCC/DSA) linerboard be suitable for the additional component of corrugated board. This alternative linerboard has high potential to be used in container production for protective packaging application. In addition, the used of coir fiber as short fiber in the blending process may replace the using of imported long fiber as commonly used in Malaysian industrial linerboard.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

# PEMBANGUNAN DAN PENILAIAN BODPELAPIK YANG DIPERBUAT DARIPADA GENTIAN SABUT KELAPA TERAWAT OLEH SODA-ANTHRAQUINONE BAGI PELINDUNG PEMBUNGKUSAN

#### Oleh

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#### Februari 2018

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Matlamat kajian ini adalah untuk membangunkan bodpelapik diperbuat dari gentian sabut kelapa (bertindak sebagai pengukuhan gentian) yang dicampur dengan bekas beralun lama (OCC)/ agen penguat kering (DSA) serta mempunyai sifat kekuatan pecah dan gelang musnah yang tinggi. Bodpelapik yang baru dibangunkan ini merupakan sumber alternatif kepada bahan pembungkusan komersial Malaysia yang mengandungi DSA, OCC dan gentian panjang industri (ILF). Pencirian gentian, pengoptimuman pemulpaan soda-AQ, rawatan mekanikal (pemukulan) dan proses pencampuran ke atas gentian sabut kelapa telah diselidik untuk mengoptimumkan ciriciri bodpelapik ini.

Gentian sabut kelapa telah dicirikan menggunakan analisis kimia dan morfologi, untuk menilai potensi gentian untuk pengeluaran pulpa dan kertas. Analisis kimia telah dilakukan mengikut Piawaian Persatuan Teknikal Industri Pulpa dan Kertas (TAPPI), manakala sifat morfologi telah diukur dengan menggunakan satu penganalisis imej Quantimeter. Daripada pencirian gentian, didapati bahawa; komposisi kimia gentian sesuai untuk proses pemulpaan; gentian adalah gentian pendek dengan panjang purata  $0.84 \pm 0.17$  mm; dan gentian mempunyai dimensi dinding nipis, yang menawarkan ikatan gentian yang lebih baik semasa proses pembuatan kertas.

Pempulpaan soda-AQ telah dioptimumkan daripada sembilan (9) eksperimen yang telah dijalankan. Keadaan pada 18% alkali aktif (AA) dan 1.5 jam masa memasak telah dipilih untuk rawatan mekanikal (pemukulan). Keadaan ini telah memberikan hasil pengskrinan tertinggi (48.99%), hasil sisa yang rendah (0.27%), kelikatan tinggi (11.73 cP), dan nombor Kappa yang diingini (41), yang mana boleh diterima untuk pengeluaran bodpelapik yang tak diluntur. Oleh kerana rawatan pemukulan boleh menguatkan pulpa sabut kelapa, penilaian kepada pelbagai revolusi (1000, 2000, 4000 dan 8000) telah dilaksanakan. Revolusi pemukulan yang optimum telah diperolehi daripada persilangan di antara indeks kebebasan dan pecah; iaitu pada 2000 revolusi.

Dengan menggunakan revolusi ini, indeks pecah sebanyak 4.57 kPa.m²/g dan indeks gelang musnah sebanyak 1.76 Nm²/g telah diperolehi.

Revolusi pemukulan yang optimum seterusnya telah digunakan dalam proses pencampuran. Sebelum penghasilan bodpelapik, DSA yang boleh diterima telah ditentukan, iaitu amphoteric polyacrylamide (aPAM) dengan dos 1.5%. Siri campuran yang mengandungi sabut kelapa, aPAM, ILF dan OCC telah diformulasikan. Telah diperhatikan bahawa nisbah pencampuran 10/90/1.5 (coir/OCC/aPAM) adalah nisbah yang ideal dan telah dipilih sebagai formulasi terpilih. Pemilihan ini dibuat berdasarkan nilai indeks pecah (3.37 kPa.m<sup>2</sup>/g) dan indeks gelang musnah (1.90 Nm<sup>2</sup>/g), yang memenuhi keperluan minimum oleh perindustrian bodpelapik Malaysia. pembuatan bod beralun menggunakan bodpelapik (coir/OCC/aPAM) dan flute komersial, prestasi kusyen dinilai menggunakan satu kaedah tekanan-tenaga. Keberkesanan bagi bod beralun yang baru ini telah diperolehi daripada nilai minimum G (kerapuhan produk) dan lengkung kusyen dinamik. Keputusan telah menunjukkan bahawa bod beralun yang baru ini adalah setanding dengan bod beralun komersial.

Sebagai kesimpulan, dengan pencirian gentian, pengoptimuman soda-AQ dan rawatan mekanikal (pemukulan), dengan pertimbangan kesan proses pencampuran, telah disyorkan bahawa penggunaan bodpelapik 10/90/1.5 (Coir/OCC/DSA) adalah sesuai sebagai komponen tambahan bagi bod beralun. Bodpelapik alternatif ini mempunyai potensi yang tinggi untuk digunakan dalam pengeluaran bekas bagi aplikasi pelindung pembungkusan. Di samping itu, penggunaan gentian sabut kelapa sebagai serat pendek dalam proses pencampuran boleh menggantikan penggunaan serat panjang yang diimport seperti yang biasa digunakan dalam perindustrian bodpelapik di Malaysia.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First and foremost, all praise is for Allah SWT, the most gracious and merciful, Who has given me the patience, strength, determination and capability to complete what I have started.

I would like to express heartiest gratitude, appreciation and deep thanks to my supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rosnita A. Talib and my co-supervisors, Prof. Dr. Russly Abd. Rahman, Dr. Rushdan Ibrahim and Dr. Ainun Zuriyati Mohamed for their guidance, helpful advise, generous encouragement, never-ending patience, critical comments, kind attention and willingness to assist me throughout this research. Without their valuable advice and support, it would not be possible for me to complete this research.

I am most thankful to the staffs of the Pulp and Paper Program of Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM), Institute of Tropical Forestry and Forest Products (INTROP, UPM), and the Mineral Research Centre, Minerals and Geoscience Department of Malaysia (JMG) for their assistance, service, and experience shared during my research work at the laboratories and workplaces. My special thanks are due to Dr. Rohaya and Dr Sharmiza for their excellent technical assistance and performing several analyses included in this thesis. My sincere appreciation also goes to my fellow friends for their support, inspirations, advices and ideas during the implementation of this work.

My special appreciation is dedicated to the Ministry of Education of Malaysia, and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) for providing the scholarship under the SLAB financial scheme. I am also grateful to GS Paper and Packaging Sdn. Bhd., and Malayan Adhesive Chemical (MAC) Sdn. Bhd. for supplying me the raw materials in this research.

Last but not least, I would like to express my gratefulness and indebtedness to my beloved family members for their support and understanding throughout the journey. To my beloved husband and kids, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for your amazing endless love and support. Their patience and sacrifice throughout this entire process may never be completely appreciated.

Thanks again to all of you. I could not have completed this thesis without each of you.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 5 February 2018 to conduct the final examination of Nor Mazlana Main on her thesis entitled "Development and evaluation of linerboard made from Soda-Anthraquinone Treated Coconut Coir Fiber for Protective Packaging" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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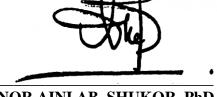
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#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

a.d. Air-dried (weight)

AA Active alkali

AHQ Anthrahydroquinone
ANOVA Analysis of variations

aPAM Amphoteric polyacrylamide

AQ Anthraquinone

ASTM American Society for Testing and Materials

BfR German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment

CEPI Confederation of European Paper Industries

CFR Code of Federal Regulation

CMC Carboxymethyl cellulose

cP Centipoise

CP Chemical pulping

cPAM Cationic polyacrylamide

CSF Canadian standard freeness

DA-SP Data acquistion and signal processing

DE Dynamic energy

DLVO Derjaguin, Landau, Verwey and Overbeek

DP Degree of polymerization

DSA Dry strength agent

DS-DE Dynamic stress and dynamic energy

ECF Elementary chlorine free

EFSA European Food Safety Authority

EPS Expanded polystyrene

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization

FDA Food and Drug Administration

FESEM Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscope

FRIM Forest Research Institute Malaysia

G Acceleration

G's Dynamic stress

gsm Grammage, g/m2

hrs Hour

IEP Isoelectric point

ILF Industrial long fiber

INTROP Institute of Tropical Forestry and Forest Products

ISO International Organization for Standardization

kPa Kilo Pascal

MFC Microfibrillated cellulose

min Minute
mL Milliliter

MP Mechanical pulping

mPa Mega Pascal

N Newton

nm Nanometer

NTP National Toxicology Program

o.d. Oven-dried (weight)

°C Degree Celcius

OCC Old corrugated containers

OPMFS Palm oil male flower spikes

PAM Polyacrylamide

psi Pounds per square inch (pressure)

RCT Ring crush test

RH Relative humidity, %

sec Second

TAPPI Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry

TEA Tensile energy absorption

TGRT Tukey's Group Range Test

#### **CHAPTER 1**

#### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Research Background

In recent days, environmental and sustainability issues awareness has been increasing around the world. One of the issues is deforesting for pulp and paper production, especially in Asia-Pacific region and European countries. Therefore, new alternative raw materials, such as non-wood and residues from agricultural and forest industries are being studied and applied to replace wood-base pulp and paper (Ferrer *et al.*, 2015; Wutisatwongkul *et al.*, 2016).

The world paper industry can be broadly classified into packaging, printing and writing, newsprint and tissue paper production. Out of those, packaging paper has been the largest category worldwide, which accounted for 51.7% of the paper industry in 2009. Meanwhile, printing and writing paper were the second largest with 27.8%, followed by newsprint and tissue paper at 11.2% and 7.5%, respectively (Jukka, 2011). Malaysia's paper industry follows this pattern, with packaging paper contributes almost 50% of the total paper production. It should be noted that Malaysia is a net importer of pulp (Singh et al., 2012), particularly virgin long-fiber pulp. In general, Malaysian paper and paperboard industries have been mixing the imported virgin longfiber pulp with secondary fibers, such as the old corrugated container (OCC) and waste papers. This is to produce papers that meet the packaging specifications. Nevertheless, the imported virgin pulp is expensive, hence imposing additional cost in papermaking industry. Therefore, the Malaysian government has been encouraging the utilization of non-wood sources gathered from annual crops and agricultural residues, as an alternative source (FRIM, 2009). This reduces the dependence on imported pulp, paper, and paperboard.

There are a wide variety of non-wood fibers that can be used for papermaking purposes in Malaysia. For example, coconut coir, bamboo, bagasse, kenaf, rice straw and oil palm empty fruit bunches (EFB). Among those fibers, coir fibers from coconut fruit is an important raw material, since only 15% of the fibers are currently recovered for use, while others are left abandoned (Karthikeyan & Balamurugan, 2012; Verma *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, Malaysia the Top 10 of world's coconut producer ranking, with total coconut production of 653 million seeds in 2015 (Ismail & Abdul Shukur, 2016). Remarkable advantages gained by using non-wood raw materials in producing pulp, such as the production of pulp with excellent quality that can be used to make specialty grades of paper (Kaur *et al.* 2010). This study aims to assess the suitability of coir fibers in making linerboard for packaging application, using chemical pulping process.

Among all known chemical based pulping processes, soda-anthraquinone (AQ) pulping used in this study is an environmentally friendly process based on the fact that it is sulfur-free, essentially requires only a modest amount of raw material (Jimenez *et al.*, 2009). Also, an addition of AQ in soda pulping process generally increases delignification rates, selectivity, and velocity. This practice also reduces alkali charges

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