

## STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE WELFARE OF OIL PALM FARMERS THROUGH THE ACCELERATION OF THE TERM OF CHANGE PROGRAM IN TANJUNG JABUNG TIMUR REGENCY

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study, namely 1). to determine the level of knowledge of oil palm farmers on the improvement program, 2). How is the willingness of oil palm farmers to participate in the Benah Term Strategy program, 3). the hope of oil palm farmers in the improvement program. This research was designed with qualitative research with a grounded theory approach. The number of informants in this study were 10 people. The technique of determining informants uses the snowball technique. The results showed that there were still many oil palm farmers who did not know about the clean-up program, but after being explained by the researchers regarding the clean-up term program, the oil palm farmers strongly agreed to participate in the clean-up activity. The results showed that there were still many oil palm farmers who did not know about the clean-up program, but after being explained by the researchers regarding the clean-up term program, the oil palm farmers strongly agreed to participate in the clean-up activity. up program. It is the hope of oil palm farmers that this clean-up program can be an additional support for the family's economy and preserve the environment.

### Keyword:

Strategy, Acceleration, Oil Palm Farmers, Fix Term

### Introduction

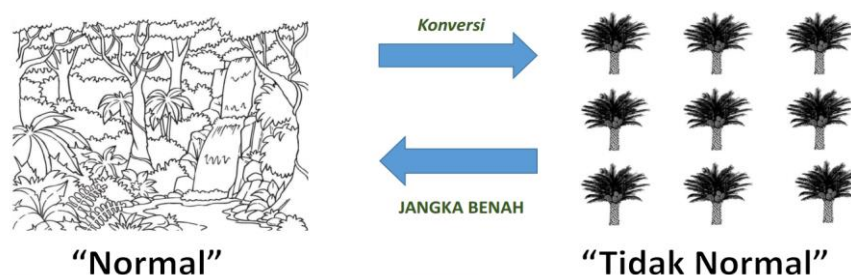
Indonesia is famous for being an agrarian country or a country with an agricultural sector. Most of the Indonesian population, especially those living in rural areas, rely on agriculture for their livelihood. This business in agriculture provides a large income for farmers in Indonesia. In general, Indonesia is known for a variety of agricultural commodities such as rice, corn, sugar cane, cassava, coconut and palm oil producers.

Oil palm itself was introduced in the 1970s and continues to grow today. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency in 2017, 40% of palm oil in Indonesia is managed by smallholders. The existence of the oil palm industry supports people's lives and helps improve community welfare. However, in the midst of its large role in the economy and improving the welfare of the Indonesian people, many challenges are faced, especially regarding environmental issues. The expansion of oil palm land ultimately converts forest areas so that various impacts will be caused, such as forest damage and land that has decreased productivity.

The forestry sector is one of the sectors most affected by the expansion of oil palm plantations. Conversion of forest land into monoculture oil palm plantations is alleged to be the cause of reduced biodiversity and decreased productivity of forests as providers of environmental services. Some tangible impacts have occurred including: 1) land that was previously overgrown with various types of trees which is currently only one species, 2) the extinction of animal species, for example: loss of animal habitat, animal and human conflicts.

The existence of monoculture oil palm plantations will not only have an ecological impact, but will also raise economic and social issues. Dependence on one type of commodity will result in vulnerability to farmers' sources of income. In addition, the condition of spacing in oil palm plantations shows abnormal conditions. This can be seen in Figure 1.1

**Figure 1.1. Plant spacing conditions are not normal and normal**  
**oil palm plantation**



Source: Marhaento, Hero, 2021

(<http://jangkabenah.org/>)

One option to deal with the problem of oil palm in the forest is to give a period to restore the monoculture oil palm ecosystem to its original forest condition. This period is known as the correct term strategy. Strategy The repair period is the period of time used to restore the monoculture oil palm agro-ecosystem in the forest area to an ecosystem that is close to its natural condition.

The period of improvement is carried out so that monoculture oil palm plantations can be returned to forests in a more humane and effective way. The improvement period can be carried out in two stages, namely aiming to improve the forest structure, where mixed gardens are the output target. While the second stage has a broader goal of restoring ecosystem functions with land cover resembling natural forest as the main goal. However, the improvement strategy (SJB) that has been introduced by the Faculty of Forestry UGM is still unknown to many oil palm farmers, especially small oil palm farmers in Jambi Province. One of the regencies in Jambi Province, namely Tanjung Jabung Timur, recorded the highest poverty rate with 11.39% as of March 2021 and this figure increased in the previous year period, which was 10.95% in 2020.

In Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency, the majority of the community's occupations are farmers, oil palm, coconut and areca nut plantations. The Benah Term Strategy (SJB) can be an option, a solution as an additional source of income for oil palm farmers by planting crops of high economic value. For this reason, this study formulated 3 research questions, including:

- a. What is the level of knowledge of oil palm farmers on the Term Corrective Strategy (SJB) program in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency?
- b. How are oil palm farmers willing to participate in the Term Improvement Strategy program in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency?
- c. What are the expectations of oil palm farmers in the Term Benah Strategy program?

## **Literature Review**

### **Correct Term Strategy (SJB)**

The improvement period is the period needed to achieve the desired condition of the forest structure and ecosystem function in the future. Efforts in this regard are from monoculture oil palm plantations to the structure and function of mixed forests. This mixed garden or oil palm agroforestry is considered the most rational choice with several basics, namely: 1) High opportunity for acceptance by the community (Adoptability), 2) Increasing farmer household resilience (Productivity), 3) Opportunity to legalize farmers' access rights in social forestry schemes (Legality), 4) Improvement of overall ecosystem structure and function (Sustainability): biodiversity, environmental services (water, carbon, oxygen and others).

The government's efforts to support the improvement program, namely issuing several regulations on the basis of the policy of Law No. 11 of 2020 concerning job creation, that the term improvement is part of solving the problem of "advancement" of people's gardens and "overlapping" business permits in forest areas, has been issued several Government regulations include 1) PP No. 23 of 2021 article 82 paragraph 2 "Changes in the main functions of conservation forest areas are only carried out in the event that a period of improvement is needed to optimize the functions and benefits of forest areas," 2) PP No. 23 of 2021 article 213 "Owners of community gardens located in forest areas prior to the enactment of Law 11/2020 may apply for approval of social forestry management within a certain period of time, which will then be carried out by planting trees within the framework of the improvement period" 3) PP No. 24 2021 article 27 paragraph 4 (a) "cooperation in the issuance of approvals for oil palm plantation business activities that overlap with permits in the forestry sector in production forest areas, contains an obligation for everyone to carry out long-term activities 4) PP No 24 of 2021 Article 28 paragraph 39 (a) "Approval to continue business activities which contains the obligation to apply the term of improvement and not to plant new oil palm (replanting).

The period of improvement was carried out on various forest sites damaged by various disturbances, based on the results of spatial analysis by Auriga in 2019, there were approximately 3.4 million hectares of oil palm plantations located in forest areas, of which 750 thousand hectares were managed by the people and the rest managed by the community. corporation.

## The results of the long-term program

The Correct Term Strategy Program (SJB) with the intention of changing the structure and function of the forest area which was originally "abnormal" to "Normal" through two stages of change, namely: a. Term of improvement I, monoculture area into oil palm agroforestry, b. The second term of improvement is oil palm agroforestry into mixed forest agroecosystems.

This improvement program has been implemented in 2 locations, namely in Tebo Regency, Jambi Province and in Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, as shown in map image 1.2 below:

**Figure 1.2 Map of the location of the rectification program**

**Source: Marhaento, Hero, 2021**



(<http://jangkabenah.org/>)

At the location of Kuamang Kuning Village, Pelepat Ilir District, Tebo Regency, Jambi, the Palm + Miranti scheme was planted with an area of 2 hectares in 2000 planting with a distance of 9 x 9 meters of oil palm and 3 x 3 meters of miranti trees, during those 19 years there seemed to be quite a big change. By combining miranti trees on the oil palm land, it can be seen in Figure 1.3 below that the development of oil palm plantations after



planting miranti trees, not only has an impact on forest ecology but also has an impact on economic value by using the trees to be used as boards and even for resale by farmers. This means that farmers will get additional income from these crops based on agricultural land and do not necessarily only wait for the results of the oil palm plantations owned by farmers.



Kuamang kuning village

Source: Marhaento, Hero, 2021 (<http://jangkabenah.org/>)

Not only in Kuamang Kuning Village, the Term Benah Strategy has also been practiced in Sungai Jernih Village, Muara Tapir District, Tebo Regency, Jambi Province, according to data from the Jangkabenah.org website with the number of farmers participating in the program as many as 30 farmers with the number of seeds that have been planted. 3,000 seeds and will be added about 6,000 more seeds with various types of plants including durian, agarwood, sengon and miranti trees from these SJB locations as well as in Karang Sari Central Kalimantan and Pangkit Central Kalimantan, there is quite a large enough enthusiasm of farmers, which was originally only 10 Ha in 1 year of cleaning turned out to grow up to 173 H.

## Method

### Types of research

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research, according to Bogdan and Taylor, as quoted by Lexy.J Moelong. Qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive power in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior. This study uses a grounded theory approach. The grounded theory approach according to Glasser and Strauss (1967) defines grounded theory as an inductive research method for areas that are not yet well known. Grounded Theory is a qualitative research method that uses a number of systematic procedures to develop theory from the scene.

### Determination of Informants

Informants in this study are oil palm land managers, namely oil palm farmers in East Tanjung Jabung Regency, totaling 10 people with the criteria of having oil palm plantations in East Tanjung Jabung Regency. In this study, using the Snowball technique is a method to identify, select and take samples in a continuous network or chain of relationships, this technique is based on the analogy of a small snowball which then enlarges gradually. It starts with a few people or cases, then expands based on the relationship to the respondent.

**Table 1. Informant Data**

No	Name	Age	Address	Work
1	Sugianto	35	SK 3 Kiri Sido Mukti, Dendang District	Oil Palm Farmers
2	Yati	50	SK 5 Kanan Rantau Indah, Dendang District	Oil Palm Farmers
3	Ariadi Pangestu	21	RT 03 Kiri Pandan Sejahtera Village, Geragai District	Oil Palm Farmers



4	Bohir	52	Tri Mulya Village, Rantau Rasau District	Oil Palm Farmers
5	Erlina Ika Aprianti	23	Tri Mulya Village, Rantau Rasau District	Oil palm farmers
6	Ika Sholehah	28	Tri Mulya Village, Rantau Rasau District	Oil Palm Farmers
7	letter	42	Tri Mulya Village, Rantau Rasau District	Oil Palm Farmers
8	Suroto	45	Tri Mulya Village, Rantau Rasau District	Oil Palm Farmers
9	Bambang Handayani	43	Tri Mulya Village, Rantau Rasau District	Village Head/Oil Farmer
10	Sutiman	63	Tri Mulya Village, Rantau Rasau District	Oil Palm Farmers

### Research Time and Location

This research was carried out from July 20 to August 30, 2022, which is located in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency, Jambi Province.

### Results and Discussion

#### Knowledge Level of Oil Palm Farmers in the Term Strategy Program

From the results of interviews with oil palm farmers in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency as many as 10 people about knowledge related to the improvement program can be seen in table 1 below.

**Table 1. Knowledge of Oil Palm Farmers About the Term Strategy Program**

No	Name	Knowledge Level About SJB
1	Sugiati	Don't know
2	Yati	Don't know
3	Ariadi the stud	Knowing
4	Bohir	Don't know
5	Erlina Ika Afrianti	Don't know

6	Ika Sholihah	Don't know
7	Surti	Don't know
8	Surato	Don't know
9	Bambang Handayani	Knowing
10	Sutiman	Knowing

Source: Analysis results, 2022

From table 1 above, it can be seen that the knowledge of oil palm farmers in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency about the Repair Term Strategy Program most dominates is that they do not know about the Benah Term program, namely (70%) or as many as 7 people and who know about the repair term program (30%). ) or as many as 3 people. This shows that there needs to be more socialization from various parties, especially the government so that this program can be further known by the community, especially for oil palm farmers.

### **Willingness of Oil Palm Farmers to Participate in the Correct Term Strategy Program (SJB)**

The Repair Term Strategy Program (SJB) is considered capable of being a solution or one of the schemes for the completion and arrangement of oil palm plantations in the forest area of Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency. Based on interview data conducted by researchers, there are 8 out of 10 informants who strongly agree to participate in the Term Benefit Strategy Program. Moreover, if the government provides seeds to oil palm farmers, such as areca nut, coconut, jengkol and others. As stated by the following informants:

*"If SJB can really be applied in our plantations, of course we really hope for maximum results, so that we can increase our income. In essence, as long as this*

*program benefits and prospers the community, of course I will participate in making it a success (Bohir, 2022)"*

*"Through SJB, hopefully it can really increase people's income and can take advantage of vacant land in the crevices of palm trees (Erlina, 2022)".*

Suroto and Sutiman, stated that they agreed to participate in the Benah Term Strategy Program if the government provided more education to oil palm farmers regarding how to improve the term strategy, such as the size of the distance between oil palm trees and mixed crops, as well as more efforts from the government to provide socialization to farmers so that they can take advantage of land well and improve the economy.

*"I totally agree, if this program really produces and prospers the community, of course I fully support this program. However, related to planting seeds, of course it cannot be arbitrary, it must be adjusted to the conditions of the land and the type of soil. (Suroto)"*

Suroto and Sutiman thought that plants that were used as mixed crops could not be arbitrary, they had to adapt to the conditions and types of soil. If oil palm plants are juxtaposed with areca nut, coconut or acacia, it is still guaranteed that both will grow well. However, if oil palm plantations are juxtaposed with rubber, jengkol or meranti, then the possibility of oil palm plantations will lose and the fruit will decrease. Therefore, there is a need for in-depth socialization regarding the long-term strategy of improving in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency, so that oil palm farmers can utilize the land well and maximally.

### **Palm Oil Farmers' Expectations on the Term Strategy Program**

The long-term strategy of fixing becomes a solution to unite economic and ecological interests. The existence of oil palm plantations,

which is supported by a long-term strategy program, is expected to support the community's economy in order to maintain forest sustainability.

Bambang Handayani, head of Tri Mulya Village, Rantau Rasau Sub-district, said that as a link to the community, of course he fully supports this program so that it can be developed properly and can support the community's economy. Bambang also hopes that this program can be implemented in East Tanjung Jabung Regency, especially in Trimulya Village, Rantau Rasau District. From the results of several interviews, the informant hopes:

1. The government provides massive socialization and provides assistance to oil palm farmers
2. Providing quality seed assistance in accordance with the potential of the region
3. Provide support by making regulations that support the long-term improvement program

## Conclusion

Strategy The repair period is the period of time used to restore the monoculture oil palm agro-ecosystem in the forest area to an ecosystem that is close to its natural condition.

Tanjung Jabung Timur district is the district with the highest poverty rate in Jambi province, therefore the long-term strategy program is expected to be implemented in the district. The majority of the people of Tanjung Jabung Timur work as oil palm, areca and coconut farmers, so the long-term strategy is very suitable to be introduced and realized to oil palm farmers in the related area.

Based on the level of knowledge and support to participate in the program, oil palm farmers in East Tanjung Jabung Regency need to be

introduced to more about the long-term strategy program. This needs to be done so that oil palm farmers can participate in implementing a long-term strategy program, in order to be able to maintain the ecosystem and also support the community's economy.

Oil palm farmers in East Tanjung Jabung Regency are very enthusiastic to participate in implementing a long-term strategy program in their oil palm plantations, especially if the government facilitates seeds for mixed crops in their oil palm plantations. Oil palm farmers in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency hope that through this program they can reduce poverty levels and be able to improve the economy for the better.

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