Comparison of different tree sap flow up-scaling procedures using Monte-Carlo simulations

Fyodor Tatarinov (1), Yakir Preisler (1,2), Shani Roahtyn (1,3), and Dan Yakir (1)
(1) Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot 76100, Israel (fedor.tatrinov@weizmann.ac.il), (2) Robert H. Smith Institute of Plant Sciences and Genetics in Agriculture, Faculty of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Quality Sciences, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Rehovot, Israel, (3) Soil and Water Department, Faculty of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Quality Sciences, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Rehovot, Israel

An important task in determining forest ecosystem water balance is the estimation of stand transpiration, allowing separating evapotranspiration into transpiration and soil evaporation. This can be based on up-scaling measurements of sap flow in representative trees (SF), which can be done by different mathematical algorithms. The aim of the present study was to evaluate the error associated with different up-scaling algorithms under different conditions. Other types of errors (such as, measurement error, within tree SF variability, choice of sample plot etc.) were not considered here.

A set of simulation experiments using Monte-Carlo technique was carried out and three up-scaling procedures were tested. (1) Multiplying mean stand sap flux density based on unit sapwood cross-section area (SFD) by total sapwood area (Klein et al, 2014); (2) deriving of linear dependence of tree sap flow on tree DBH and calculating SF\textsubscript{stand} using predicted SF by DBH classes and stand DBH distribution (Cermak et al., 2004); (3) same as method 2 but using non-linear dependency. Simulations were performed under different SFD(DBH) slope ($b_s$, positive, negative, zero); different DBH and SFD standard deviations ($\Delta_d$ and $\Delta_s$, respectively) and DBH class size. It was assumed that all trees in a unit area are measured and the total SF of all trees in the experimental plot was taken as the reference SF\textsubscript{stand} value.

Under negative $b_s$, all models tend to overestimate SF\textsubscript{stand} and the error increases exponentially with decreasing $b_s$. Under $b_s>0$ all models tend to underestimate SF\textsubscript{stand}, but the error is much smaller than for $b_s<0$ and tend to an asymptotic value. In practice, in our experimental stand in Yatir (Northern Negev, Israel) $b_s$ varied within a year from highly negative in summer to zero or slightly positive in winter. $\Delta_s$ has only a weak effect on the error. Different up-scaling models gave the best approximation in different cases: Usually for high negative $b_s$, models (3) and (1) were the best and the worst ones, whereas when $b_s$ is approaching zero from negative side, model (1) becomes the best. Under high positive $b_s$ all models give similar results. Increase of diameter variability ($\Delta_d$) dramatically decreases up-scaling precision under negative $b_s$, first of all for model (1), whereas under $b_s$ close to 0 or positive it has only a minor effect under any model. The DBH class, $d_c$, considerably affects the precision of up-scaling models (2) and (3). Lower $d_c$ under the same $\Delta_d$ leads to considerable increase of precision. When applying typical values from the Yatir forest (DBH 20±5 cm, SFD around 40 cm$^3$cm$^{-2}$day$^{-1}$, $b_s$ from -5 to 2 day$^{-1}$, $\Delta_d = 2$ cm) errors for models 1 to 3 ranged from -30 to +5%, -5 to +15%, and -10 to +25%, respectively.

The results suggest that the best up-scaling model for stand-scale sap flux estimates should be selected for given conditions based on DBH distribution parameters and $b_s$ value.

References