



**International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations**  
www.apimondia.org

# NEWSLETTER 15

July 2021

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## **Message from the Secretary-General**

by Riccardo Jannoni-Sebastianini

Dear Readers,

This issue of the Newsletter comes after a busy period for Apimondia.

In fact, this time you will find a detailed account of the various initiatives undertaken by Apimondia in connection with the World Bee Day 2021 event that was celebrated with a virtual meeting by FAO Headquarters in Rome (Italy) and in several other locations worldwide.

As in previous editions of this important event for the international beekeeping community, Apimondia provided a significant assistance to FAO in the organisation of the virtual event with a programme that attracted great interest worldwide and offered presentations focusing on the protection of all pollinators and how to support a good recovery of the entire sector.

Apimondia has been also active in interviewing candidates to take care of the communications and information tasks and we are now in the process of hiring a media specialist to ensure Apimondia assembles and delivers quality information on technical, scientific and practical themes to the international beekeeping community on a regular basis and with a professional cut.

In the last page of the Newsletter you will find also details and content of some other important events addressing issues like bee health, sustainable beekeeping and use of pesticides where members of the Apimondia Executive Council participated providing their expert advice.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue and we look forward to meeting you (again on-line) next September on the occasion of the free-of-charge virtual event organised by the Russian member to offer a flavour of the 47<sup>th</sup> Apimondia congress that, due to the COVID pandemic, had to be postponed to next year.

## **WORLD BEE DAY 2021**

### **Apimondia message for the World Bee Day 2021**

During the Open House meeting of the Apimondia members, in March 2021, the members were asked to give a number of key words which they would associate with the WBD. With these words we created a word cloud and we sent our message to the world for the Word Bee Day, also inviting everybody to participate in the numerous WBD events around the world.



## New Zealand

Apiculture New Zealand marked World Bee Day with a [media release](#) sent to all New Zealand media focusing on the growing interest in beekeeping throughout the country. This release was covered by several [media outlets](#) including one of the [main television networks](#). Apiculture NZ also ran several social media posts inviting bee lovers to fill their feeds with bee pics, which was viewed by more than 2,000 followers. World Bee Day was an excellent opportunity for ApiNZ to highlight the 10,340 registered beekeepers in New Zealand. Of the registered beekeepers in New Zealand, 75% are considered hobbyist beekeepers operating 10 hives or less. This group has grown significantly over the past five years, up 45%, while the number of registered beekeepers with 11 to 50 hives has increased by 50%.

Ms Kos says this growth has been driven by a variety of factors. “For many people, it comes from a desire to grow their own food and a heightened interest in health and well-being prompted by Covid-19. For others it’s about doing something good for the environment, and then many others are just fascinated by bees and want to learn more about them”. “The best thing that people can do to help bees is grow bee-friendly plants. Some of the best plants for bees are gardeners’ favourites like lavender, rosemary, basil as well as many pip fruit trees, citrus trees and natives like harakeke, rātā and rewarewa”.

## Fiji

Fiji Beekeepers’ Association celebrated World Bee Day by hosting a “bees & beekeeping” photo contest and creating a 3-page national newspaper section. The Fiji Sun Newspaper covered the “Bee Engaged: Build back better for bees” and featured articles on how to protect bees and pollinators in Fiji, the role of the queen bee in the hive and some important messages from Mr Ritesh Dass, Permanent Secretary for Agriculture. Mr Dass highlighted the opportunities for continued growth of the Fiji beekeeping sector and its untapped potential. Currently Fiji has 1,200 beekeepers and 13,000 hives producing around 250 tonnes of honey annually. Mr Dass highlighted the \$ 200,000 budget that has been set aside to help grow the sector through the Apiculture Industry Development Programme. The objectives of the programme are to: improve genetics of the bees, provide training on post-harvest handling and marketing of honey and the control of varroa. A major focus of the programme is to encourage more women into beekeeping. Currently there are 106 women who own hives in Fiji and it is fabulous to see the Government encouraging the participation of more women.

The World Bee Day photographs are showcased on the Facebook page of the Fiji Beekeepers’ Association <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FijiBeekeepers/permalink/1493097504378311/>



The winner of the Fiji Beekeepers' Association WBD 2021 photo contest: Joshua Prasad for "Man holding honey frame"

### Samoa

Our friends in Samoa made a 3-day effort to promote bee-friendly planting and reduction in use of pesticides and herbicides.

[https://www.samoobserver.ws/category/samoa/84358?utm\\_content=buffer7688e&utm\\_medium=social](https://www.samoobserver.ws/category/samoa/84358?utm_content=buffer7688e&utm_medium=social)

### Australia

World Bee Day 2021 became a truly National celebration in Australia this year. The World Bee Day Australia website listed 49 events in total with activities taking place in all states and territories. Events ranged from fun runs, open gardens, films, honey tasting, bee club conferences and meetings and World Bee Day was celebrated across a range of Farmers' Markets around the country. It's wonderful to see this celebration being activated by the broader community with the support of beekeepers with researchers, children, schools, aged care facilities, garden clubs and government embassies and members of parliament, all taking part in World Bee Day celebrations.

A highlight of World Bee Day was the Hive Mind Exhibition held at Old Parliament House in Canberra which showcased the stories of beekeeping at both the Old and New Parliament Houses in Canberra which shared what we can learn from bees on collective decision making as a democracy. Historical objects and personal anecdotes showcase how Australia became one of the first countries in the world to allow beekeeping on its Parliament House grounds after an April Fool's joke in the 1970s.

The Australian World Bee Day website <https://www.worldbeeday.org.au/> is an excellent example of how a central website can be so effective in connecting the various events across the country and provide really useful information to help the public celebrate World Bee Day.

### **World Bee Day 2021 in the Asian Region**

by Cleofas Rodriguez Cervancia, President of the Apimondia Regional Commission for Asia

### Malaysia

The First South East Asia Meliponine Seminar was held in Malaysia on 20-21 May 2021. This event was part of the World Bee Day celebrations in the region. The theme "Stingless Bee for Global Sustainability and Harmony" is relevant in light of the initiative towards enhancement of biodiversity of pollinators and addressing the SDGs by which beekeeping plays a crucial role. The four major topics are Current Development in Meliponiculture, Innovation and Product Development, Community Engagement and knowledge Transfer and Sustainable Meliponiculture. A total of 16 papers were presented in the span of two days. The participants were from Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, India, Brazil, Australia, Taiwan and Slovenia. Apimondia was represented by Cleo Cervancia who was one of the Plenary Speakers. The seminar was organised by the University of Malaysia Terengganu and Chiang Mai University in Thailand.

### China

This year's World Bee Day celebration in China, themed "Honeybee, Big Dreams, a Programme for Rural Revitalization", was held in Zhongyi Township of Shizhu County. In recent years, China's beekeeping industry has made a lot of remarkable practices in promoting poverty alleviation and rural revitalization, and has helped many impoverished households to lift themselves out of poverty and increase their income. The current development of beekeeping industry in Shizhu County covers 179 administrative villages and 6,879 households of bee farmers. In 2020, the annual output value of beekeeping industry in Shizhu County reached 520 million yuan (about 80.7 million U.S. dollars). The industry has not only increased the income

of local people, but also attracted the return of more and more young people to join in beekeeping businesses in their hometown. (Xinhua/Liu Chan, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-05/20/c\\_139958936.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-05/20/c_139958936.htm))

## Philippines

The Philippines celebrated the World Bee Day by holding a webinar on 17-21 May 2021. The event was participated in by 956 beekeepers and scientists from Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, India and Singapore. The main topics were on Emerging Opportunities and Threats in the Beekeeping Industry, Starting and Developing a Bee Farm, Urban Beekeeping, Opportunities for Overseas Employment for Beekeepers and Stingless Bee Management. The event was sponsored by local beekeeping outfit, namely, HoNea, Larry's Honey, Sting-A-Win and 3 Miel Bee Farm. BEENET Philippines (Luzon Chapter), an Apimondia member organisation, initiated the webinar through its secretary, Prof. Analinda Manila Fajardo and President, Albee Marcia. Alex de la Cuesta, a progressive beekeeper, coordinated the event.

## **World Bee Day 2021 in South America**

by Lucas Landi

### Slovenia in Argentina

An important and unique event occurred in Argentina in relation to World Bee Day. The Slovenian people, through their representation in our country, donated a typical model apiary to the Beekeeping Department of the Faculty of Agronomy of the University of Buenos Aires. It was made by the local Slovenian carpenter Andrés Golob. The event was jointly organised by the authorities of the Faculty, the Slovenian Embassy and the Argentine Society of Beekeepers.

The event began with speeches by the Dean of the Faculty Agr. Eng. Marcela Edith Gally, the professor of the Beekeeping Department Dr. Alicia Mabel Basilio and the Ambassador Alain Brian Bergant. The event, which was held in compliance with current health protocols, was also attended by Agr. Eng. Gerardo Ourracariet (Secretary of Habitat, Infrastructure and Environment of FAUBA), Mrs. Emiliana Racigh Lazo (pro-secretary of the Argentine Society of Beekeepers), Mr. Claudio Giacomino, Deputy Director of the European Community (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship), Mrs. Duška Paravić (Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia), Agr. Eng. Jorge Komar (President of Slovenia) and Mr. Tomas Kastelic, Head of Economic and Consular Affairs of the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia.

<https://www.facebook.com/embajadaesloveniaba/>

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<https://www.agro.uba.ar/noticias/actualidad-news/un-colmenar-esloveno-en-la-fauba>

[@FAUBA\\_oficial](https://www.facebook.com/FAUBA_oficial)

### Argentine Congress of Beekeeping 2021

The main beekeeping event in Argentina is coming soon, from 5 to 8 July 2021. The Argentine Congress of Beekeeping has as its main objective to create an area of exchange of knowledge and opinions among beekeepers, technicians, researchers, scientists, input producers and apicultural marketers so that the beekeeping sector remains informed and has the ability to debate its problems to build its future together. The event will take place 100% online. Registrations are still open.

<https://congresosada.com/>

## Chile

The Annual Congress of the National Beekeeping Network-Chile is coming soon, from 25 to 28 August 2021. The topics of debate will be: pollination, reproduction, sanitary management and product differentiation. More information will be available soon on <http://www.redapicolachile.cl/apicola/>

## **World Bee Day 2021 in Africa**

by David Mukomana, President of the Apimondia Regional Commission for Africa

Apimondia hosted members and stakeholders on the virtual meeting “Apimondia Open House Meeting” held on 27 March 2021 where the Apimondia President, Vice-President, Secretary-General and the Regional Commission for Oceania President made presentations on the World Bee Day Event and preparations that were happening at FAO HQ. Part of the stakeholders who attended the virtual meeting included Sr Julia Masina Mafike from Lesotho who was encouraged by the messages and decided it was an important event Lesotho should host in order to create awareness of the importance of bees.

After internal consultations, Sr Julia formally communicated with the Regional Commission about the desire to host World Bee Day celebrations in Mafeteng and needed guidance on the hosting requirements. The Regional Commission President provided guidance including the need to engage government and other key stakeholders as well as informing Apimondia Executive Management of the request. Apimondia gave the greenlight and the preparations went in full swing with both the District Local Offices and Ministry of Forestry Range and Soil Conservation working round the clock to see the event hosted successfully.

### World Bee Day Event - 20 May

The Inaugural World Bee Day Celebrations for Lesotho were held in Mafeteng District at the JMM Beekeeping Farm situated in the Catholic Training Centre. The event was well publicised through the media channels as well as social media platforms. The attendance was beyond the expected given the issues to do with Covid-19 challenges that saw many people with limited resources to travel and attend the event. Around 500 attended the celebrations and were asked to strictly follow Covid-19 protocols including sanitising and wearing of masks all the time. More than 200 masks were donated by Metropolitan Life and some by Standard Bank Lesotho that were distributed to those who did not have proper masks to ensure the risk of possible infections were eliminated.

The programme was designed in such a way that stakeholders were taken through the efforts the government has been making in supporting the beekeeping sector in Lesotho in order to help fight unemployment and conserving the environment. Speakers were drawn from the government, the National University of Lesotho, Traditional Leaders, Catholic Church and the Regional Commission President.

Part of the programme was a brief visit to the garden where hives were mounted with different plants and flowers providing forage for bees as well as the various stands that were mounted for exhibition of honey and other hive products by a number of communal beekeepers. The quality of the honey and value-added products was very high providing a strong case that these products can compete very well at a global level if exhibited at events such as Apimondia congress. Thus, in the Regional Commission President’s address, he recommended the following:

- Lesotho be formally represented at the forthcoming 47<sup>th</sup> Apimondia Congress in August 2022 being hosted in Ufa, Russia;
- Lesotho honey and hive products be part of the exhibition during the congress and future congresses at the One Africa Pavilion and Basotho honey should be available at the African Honey Bar for people to taste as part of the exhibition during the Congress;
- Basotho beekeeping stakeholders come together and form a National Association that can be part of the Apimondia family as full member; and
- establishment of a Model Beekeeping Project at the Royal Farm in order to encourage Traditional Leaders to support beekeeping as an important sector that can be replicated in other countries as many people respect traditional leadership, hence playing a leading role in preserving the environment and alleviating poverty within the communities.

A number of discussions were triggered during the interactive sessions where some leaders were keen to know how the young people can benefit from beekeeping as a source of employment as well as consideration by church institutions to utilise farms they own to do beekeeping in order to support charity work that is currently dependent on donations. These charities include orphanages, Old People’s Homes as well as feeding the homeless and vulnerable members of the communities.

In acknowledgement of the support, the following institutions played a significant part in the successful hosting of the World Bee Day in Mafeteng, Lesotho: Thaba Bosou Risk Solutions, Maseru Toyota, Maboloka Spring Waters, Metropolitan Life Lesotho, LENAFU, Standard Bank Lesotho, Rev. Bishop John Joale Thomola – S.C.P. Bishop of Diocese of Mohare’s Hoek, Mrs & Mr Repheane, Forestry - Thaba Tseka, Sentebale Funeral Group and other individuals.



Interested participants at the celebration of the WBD in Lesotho

#### Permanent Secretary (PS) - Ministry of Forestry Range & Soil Conservation meeting - 21 May

A meeting was organised on 21 May 2021 for the Regional Commission President to meet the Permanent Secretary - Ministry of Forestry Range and Soil Conservation, Mr Lefu Manyokole where the PS provided the general background on the efforts the government is making in conserving the environment as well as supporting the beekeepers in Lesotho in conjunction with Ministry of Agriculture.

The PS was briefed on Apimondia and the role it plays in promoting beekeeping and other related sectors. The President also expressed gratitude to the government of Lesotho for sending a delegation to attend the 46<sup>th</sup> Apimondia Congress in Montreal, Canada in September 2019 and suggested that Lesotho to be represented in the forthcoming congresses in order to learn from other countries on how to improve on policy framework that will support beekeeping and protect the bees in line with global trends. The Regional Commission President also reiterated the need for the government to encourage local retailers to buy local honey as a way of creating a local market for the beekeepers given the high quality of honey available. This will go a long way in boosting local honey production and thus create employment opportunities especially for many youths.

#### Technologies for Economic Development (TED) meeting - 21 May

The Regional Commission President was taken to TED, a local Development Partner that supports nature-based enterprises with beekeeping as one of the economic empowerment initiatives for the communities. Their main focus is empowering the beekeepers as well as ensuring the barriers to their development are identified and addressed including access to markets. The 3 major areas of consideration are:

- conservation and protection of the honey bee colonies;
- increased production;
- increased effectiveness of investment in sustainable value chain.

The Regional Commission President was advised on the major challenges faced by the sector in Lesotho that include access to funding by the communal beekeepers, quality and affordable equipment as well as access to markets.

The development partner was encouraged to consider investing in affordable equipment especially the local hives such as the Top Bar hives in order to increase the number of beneficiaries and hives their initiative can cater for with the same budget. Further, it was alluded that the development partner should consider helping the Basotho beekeepers to exhibit their honey at regional and international forums such as the Apimondia Congress by sponsoring a booth where Lesotho honey and hive products can be exhibited in order to access global markets from where they can fetch better prices and a huge market.

The team also visited the hives on site with some hives colonised. However, the set-up indicates a need for training on apiary management in order to ensure the beekeeping initiative is well supported. For instance, the hives were painted black using oil and the hives were seating on used tyres with some hives with snails and webs.

### Honey Processing Centre - 21 May

Mr Mahalefele took the Commission President to the processing centre being established at the Ministry of Agriculture. The centre is still under construction but shows a clear vision of the nature of work and scale of the centre is intended to be. The equipment that was procured in preparation for the honey processing activity was impressive. And the newly refurbished training arena that can accommodate up to 30 participants can provide very good facilities for beekeeping training. This development can help create a strong beekeeping sector in Lesotho.

There are a few observations that need consideration in order for the facility to provide maximum benefits to the sector and the economy.

The model for the processing facility still needs to be clearly defined and who will be involved in the day-to-day running of the processing centre. Adequate consultations need to be done in order to ensure the processing facility will not be a white elephant due to under-utilisation.

Secondly, the model of procuring honey from the communal beekeepers needs to be well defined so that the beekeepers will not feel or perceive they are being short-changed especially those bringing few supers given that the machine is a 60 - frame extractor thus requiring at least 6 supers per run, a situation that may see more than one beekeeper having to process their honey in a single run.

### National University of Lesotho - 21 May

The Regional Commission President was taken to the National University of Lesotho to appreciate the work being done at the institution in support of the honey sector.

The university established an Innovation Hub where a number of projects are being prototyped with the hope of having them transferred to the business park once the projects are successful. Part of the projects at the Innovation Hub include honey and hive products value-added products in conjunction with JMM Beekeeping Farm. What was clear is the appetite to further develop the products to international standards in order to ensure these value-added products compete on international markets.

The Commission President had the last meeting with the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture where the President provided an overview of the Apimondia Scientific Commissions whose technical and science-based mandate is and should be supported by institutions of higher learning which Africa and particularly Southern Africa is lacking. The Dean was also briefed on the 6 Regional Working Groups that have the responsibility to provide technical input to the Regional Commission so that the African continent is also engaged in science-based discussions at a global level.

The Dean was grateful for the visit and advised that his department is fully ready to work on apiculture-related research in partnership with sister faculties such as Health and Nutrition.

The meeting ended with a plan to have follow-up communications to converge on areas that can be collaborated on between the university and the Commission.

*Re a leboha!*

## Other Apimondia activities

**31 March 2021:** [Bee Health and Sustainable Beekeeping](#), a webinar organised by Italian beekeepers in collaboration with DG-AGRI European Commission took place on 31 March 2021. Among other speakers, the President of the Apimondia Scientific Commission on Beekeeping Technology and Quality, Mr. Etienne Bruneau, talked about “Platform of information at EU level” and Dr. Fani Hatjina, President of the Scientific Commission on Bee Health, talked about “[Disease control and emergency situations](#)”, both summarising some of the results of the EIP-AGRI Focus Group on Bee Health and Sustainable Beekeeping.

The image shows a screenshot of a webinar presentation. On the left, a slide titled "BASE IDEAS" features a circular diagram with six segments labeled 01 to 06, each with a corresponding idea description. On the right, a slide titled "Emergency situations" includes the heading "The honey bees are in need!" and a list of four steps for handling emergencies. The webinar interface includes a video feed of Etienne Bruneau and a small video feed of Fani Hatjina.

**BASE IDEAS**

- IDEA 01: Facilitate the structuring and standardisation of the information received (definition of a common approach on the content and format of the information to be collected)
- IDEA 02: The information who should take into account existing tools would be consolidated by the European platform and made accessible to all cells and/or directly to beekeepers.
- IDEA 03: The information sent to the platform would be accompanied by scientific monitoring on subjects of direct interest to beekeepers in the field.
- IDEA 04: Research results (popularized articles and scientific publications to beekeeping) in a database directly accessible by beekeepers in different languages with an indicator of interest for beekeepers, the number of views, downloads...
- IDEA 05: Production of documents, synthesis reports, articles and other information & education material on current topics responding to the priority needs defined by the beekeeping sector in EU.
- IDEA 06: Redistribute the info to the regional centers who could translate the information into their own language and adapt it to local production conditions.

**Emergency situations**

◆ **The honey bees are in need!**

A honey bee health emergency occurs when a beekeeper is confronted with direct events related to the health of their bees that need urgent intervention, otherwise risking massive losses of their colonies and/or endangering neighbouring ones. In such a situation the beekeeper needs urgent advice from bee health experts. Coping with an emergency should follow the following steps:

1. The beekeeper makes a correct, comprehensive and relevant description of the situation and relays it to the expert;
2. The expert attempts to understand the emergency and advises the beekeeper;
3. The beekeeper acts according to the advice of the expert;
4. The expert monitors the situation after the action of the beekeeper and, if needed, advises him on further action.

**From February till June 2021:** On the “protection of bees” front, Apimondia participated in several joint efforts with other European organisations to strengthen our voice against the use of toxic pesticides:

- February 2021: the Apimondia Scientific Commission on Bee Health participated in a common letter to Agriculture Ministers in different countries asking for the ban of three toxic substances: sulfoxaflo, cypermethrin and benfluralin;
- February 2021: Apimondia jointly with BeeLife, Pollinis and Pesticide Action Network sent a letter to EU Commissioner Kyriakides and Vice-President Timmermans in respect of the EFSA's approach and methodology during the process of defining the Specific Protection Goals for bees; and
- June 2021: Apimondia co-signed an open letter concerning the ongoing discussions to establish the Specific Protection Goals (SPGs) in relation to risk assessment of pesticides on bees.

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