

Apis Agribusiness



The Situation

Ethiopia is a country of geographical contrasts and ecological riches. Reliance on natural resources is high: 85% of all jobs are in agriculture. However, deforestation and ecological degradation has accelerated in the last five decades challenging the country's economic development. At the beginning of the 20th century, forests still covered 40% of the country – by the year 2000, this had been reduced to just 2.3%. Without healthy forests, rain is less likely to soak into the soil and replenish ground water – posing a big challenge for the rainfall-dependent Ethiopian agriculture and further exacerbating the problems caused by droughts. Population growth resulting in widespread unemployment and lack of participation of communities in forest protection are among the main drivers of deforestation in Ethiopia. Faced with the hardships related to agriculture, a shortage of available land and a lack of off-farm jobs, more and more rural youth decide to migrate to cities in search of better livelihoods.

The Solution

“No bees, no trees – no honey, no money” – This is the slogan with which Apis Agribusiness set out to fight the interlinked challenges of deforestation, youth unemployment and migration. By training unemployed and landless rural youth in wild honey production, Apis Agribusiness not only creates income opportunities linked to the growing market in sustainable honey, the initiative also sets strong incentives for protecting the forests where wild bees live. Beekeeping does not require fertile land, a large area or big initial capital. This makes the sector one of the few that has the potential to achieve transformation and growth across all categories of rural households. However, despite its great potential, the honey sector still faces a range of problems, such as a lack of beekeeping skills, outdated technologies and limited access to markets.

To remove these barriers, Apis Agribusiness supports rural youth in identifying apiary sites close to forests, establishing learning and collection centers within villages and developing a coaching and organic production system. The village collection centers provide seasonal information and help the youth to ship their products without additional transportation costs. The youth are also able to get premium prices by selling organic honey. To sustain the bees' habitat, the young beekeepers plant trees and commit to conserving the remaining natural forest.

Ecosystem: Forest

Area Impacted: 2,500 ha

Production Quantity: 300 tons

People Employed: 25 directly, 500 rural youth indirectly

Population Impacted: 500 unemployed youth and 2,500 smallholder farmers



Ethiopia



Farming for Biodiversity

Unsustainable agricultural practices remain one of the greatest threats to ecosystems and biodiversity. As the world population is expected to reach nine billion by 2050 and climate change further threatens livelihoods, we have to find ways of agricultural production that support farmers and the environment we all rely on.

The good news is these solutions already exist: From modern beekeepers who work on reviving ancient local wisdom to phone apps connecting rural farmers with urban consumers.

With Farming for Biodiversity, we are on a global mission to surface these local solutions, celebrate them and bring them to scale.

Our vision is to make these community-led initiatives shine and reach:

- Over 200 million globally through media impressions and publications
- Over 100,000 active website participants and readers of online publications
- 200 selected agriculture & biodiversity pioneers through eight technical and campaign trainings, hosted across the globe
- 800,000 farmers, conservationists and other land users at the community-level



Through our crowd-sourcing contest Solution Search, we have identified over 300 innovative and replicable ideas that connect agriculture, livelihood and the environment. These selections were assessed by our renowned panel of expert judges from leading organizations around the world.

Based on the solutions surfaced, we will host eight in-country workshops to introduce the most promising approaches to local influencers. Trainings will equip participants with the skills to implement locally driven solutions in their own communities. Longer term grants will provide an additional incentive to continue their work. These efforts will expand these approaches globally, reaching 800,000 people!

Throughout the project, we will gather, analyze and publish lessons learned. An online peer-to-peer network will connect all solution providers and facilitate interactive exchange across countries and themes. We will actively engage in global environment and agriculture policy processes – such as the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) meetings, drawing attention to community leaders and local champions.