

COURSE REPORT

BEEKEEPING OF STINGLESS BEES TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY LIVELIHOODS AROUND HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE AREAS OF PALM OIL PLANTATIONS IN CENTRAL KALIMANTAN, INDONESIA

November 5-7, 2019

Danau Sembuluh, Seruyan Regency, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

A field training organized by:

Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative (ELTI)

Research & Development Institute for Natural Resource Conservation Technology (BALITEK-KSDA)

Tropenbos Indonesia Program (TBI)

Goodhope Asia Holding, Ltd.

Swaraowa



Participants and organizers.

Background: The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) requires that member companies protect, manage, and restore High Conservation Value (HCV) areas within their plantations. These areas include, but are not limited to, areas with “concentrations of biological diversity including endemic species, and rare, threatened or endangered species, that are significant at global, regional or national levels.” Because these

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Participants and resource person discussing honey bees in the field.

areas can not be converted for plantation establishment, companies are forced to look for other ways to benefit from these areas themselves or in unison with local communities.

One possible new livelihood alternative for communities living around these HCV areas is the keeping of stingless bees (i.e., meliponiculture) for honey, bee pollen, and propolis. There are approximately 500 species of stingless bees, many of which have been successfully domesticated. Meliponiculture is particularly pertinent in Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), as it has been identified as having amongst the highest level of stingless bees in the Indo-Malayan region. This training aimed to provide plantation conservation managers and community members with the knowledge and skills needed to work together to promote stingless beekeeping, both for the benefit of biodiversity and livelihoods.

Objectives:

1. Introduce the opportunity for meliponiculture to the communities around HCV areas of oil palm plantations.
2. Promote sustainable beekeeping to combat poverty and build resilient livelihoods.
3. Conserve and maintain the environment (HCV Areas) for people and bees.
4. Promote the restoration of degraded HCV areas.



Mr. Sidik Harjanto presenting about honey bees in Indonesia.



Honey bee box made by participants.

Program

Day 1

The training started with Mr. Ramlan (Assistant Manager Conservation, PT Agro Harapan Lestari) providing information on the background and objectives of the training. Mr. Ganapathy Karpan (General Manager, PT. Agro Indomas) also welcomed the participants and provided opening remarks about PT. Goodhope's commitment to implement sustainability practice in its operations, including to conserve, protect, and enhance the HCV area with support from the local communities. Mr. Sidik Harjanto (Swarawa) then presented introductory information about stingless bees including their taxonomy, physiology, ecology, and potential economic value. Afterwards, Mr. Mei Ardhy Mujiyanto (Swarawa) presented information about meliponiculture. After lunch, all participants practiced moving honeycomb bee colonies from nature to an artificial hive box and conducting an environmental assessment of the flowering schedule needed for meliponiculture.

Day 2

Participants divided into two groups, each group practiced making honey bee boxes, preparing media for beekeeping, moving bee colonies, propagating new colonies, managing pest and diseases, recognizing honey bee nest construction, and harvesting honey. Mr. Mujiyanto then presented information about marketing and branding honey products. After lunch, Mr. Harjanto discussed the attributes of different honey bee species and installation of honey bee traps using plastic bottles. In the afternoon, all participants went to the field for a tree planting activity in the riparian zone of Sembuluh Lake.



Participants practicing removal of a bee colony from a box.



Participants receiving seeds for planting.

Day 3

Mr. Harjanto reviewed all the practicum techniques from the previous day and presented additional information about how to move a honey bee colony into a box. Each group of participants presented what they had learned during the previous two days and received additional input from the resource people. Afterwards, Mr. Mujianto presented a follow-up plan for moving forward after the training. Dr. Arbainsyah (ELTI) introduced the ELTI Leadership Program, to which course alumni could apply for additional training, professional development, and project support. The training then ended with a course evaluation and closing remarks by Mr. Henry Putranto (Training Centre Manager of PT. Goodhope Academy of Management Excellence).

Participants:

The training was attended by a total of 37 participants representing five oil palm companies (PT. Agro Bukit, PT. Agro Indomas, PT. Rim Capital, PT. Agro Wana Lestari and PT. Karya Makmur Sejahtera) and 12 villages (Desa Lanpasa, Desa Terawan, Desa Selunuk, Desa Paren, Desa Banua Usang, Desa Pasir Putih, Dusun Rongkang, Desa Penyang, Desa Tumbang Keminting, Desa Tumbang Penyahuan, Desa Teweihara, and Desa Tanah Haluan), all of which are located close to the Goodhope plantation where the training was held.



Tree planting by participants.

Follow-up:

All of the participants were very active throughout the training. A WhatsApp group was established and participants have been actively communicating with each other as well as the organizers to show their activities in their respective locations. One of the training participants has also requested assistance from ELTI's Leadership Program to conduct a similar training for other participants at the plantation where he works.

This event was possible thanks to Arcadia, whose Environmental Conservation grants support programmes that protect and enhance biodiversity, and provide field training and academic research.