

APIMONDIA International Symposium

November 30 to December 02, 2018

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Introduction

Apimondia

Apimondia is International Federation of Beekeepers Associations established in 1890. The EAB is the only member of this age old global organization from Ethiopia. It is working for the development of the beekeeping sector in the world through organizing symposia and congresses biennially in different parts of the world where the actors come together to listen to, discuss with and learn from each other.

Apimondia Symposium

The African continent had only got one chance in the past to organize such an Apimondia event in the over 120 years'since the establishment of of Apimondia. The EAB, as part of its development efforts in the country, wanted to organize this important event for the second time in the continent and forwarded its intention to the Apimondia Secretariat. The EAB has been advised to start with an Apimondia Symposium so that the EAB submitted a proposal to the secretariat which accepted the idea. The EAB successfully defended its proposal at Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2017, and started preparation for the successful organization of the event - for the first time in Ethiopia.

General Objectives of the Apimondia Symposium 2018

The symposium had the following major objectives,

- Clarify the development role of bees for the actors to be able to work towards exploitation of the potential of bees for our development efforts, and for the protection of bees and other pollinators;
- Create a platform where actors can learn -from scientific papers, discussions and shared experiences -how bees can serve as an input to improve food production and food security and enhance vegetation coverage (greening) to combat climate change impacts;
- Showcase the huge apicultural potential of the country to the global beekeeping community to attract their attention for possible investment and markets;
- Show Ethiopia's capacity to host the up-coming Apimondia Congress 2023 and other huge global events to enhance decision on the next bidding process;
- Contribute to the image building efforts and tourism industry development and initiate api-tourism as a new industry in the country.

Title and Topics of the Apimondia Symposium

The apiculture (beekeeping) sector is one of the neglected sectors in Africa in general and in Ethiopia in particular. This is because the crucial role of bees is not understood and level of productivity and diversification of hive products is very poor. This, for a long time, led to poor judgment and consideration of the beekeeping sector as a side activity for small household incomes only.

Taking this important point into account, the title of the symposium was decided to be 'The Role of Bees in Food Production'. This is managed to advertise the pollination role of bees in food production, conservation and afforestation programmes. The subtopics selected for parallel sessions were

- ✓ Pollination and food production
- ✓ Threats for the pollinators (bee health)
- ✓ Environmental services and climate change
- ✓ Commercialization and transformation of beekeeping

Apimondia Symposium 2018 Organization Management

The symposium organization process was designed thoughtfully to ensure intended benefits of the International Apimondia Symposium and convince the beekeeping community of the world of the huge apiculture potential of the country and, at the same time, of the event managing capacity of the actors in the country. Accordingly, three tier committees were organized, coordinated and their capacity and experience utilized for the successful organization of our symposium. These were:

➤ **Apimondia Symposium 2018 in Ethiopia Organizing International Committee**

Led by the President of Apimondia, it was mainly responsible for guiding the Scientific Committee and the National Organizing Committee and working for international level support and communications

➤ **The Role of Bees in Food Production Symposium 2018 Scientific Committee**

This was led by the Commissioner for Apimondia Scientific Commission for pollination and bee flora, and was responsible for scientific papers to be presented on the symposium conference.

➤ **The Role of Bees in Food Production Symposium 2018 National Organizing Committee (NASOC)**

It was led by the President of the EAB and responsible for the effective and successful organization of the Apimondia Symposium 2018 in Ethiopia.

Moreover, a professional congress organizer (PCO) was recruited and assigned to guide and handle required activities for the effective international symposium organization.

Components of the Apimondia Symposium

The Apimondia Symposium in Ethiopia was designed to have four components. These were:

- Conference
- Api-expo
- Business to Business discussions and awards
- Technical tour

All these have been fairly managed towards the success of the event.

The Apimondia Symposium 2018 Organization Process in Ethiopia

The Apimondia Symposium organization process in Ethiopia was coordinated and overseen by the EAB and the MoA (and the then MoLFR), and the overall organization process was led by the NASOC while day to day activities has been carried out by EAB secretariat and the professional congress organizer (PCO) assigned by the EAB through announced bid. Furthermore, five subcommittees have been organized to operate various tasks under the guidance of the NASOC and the secretariat.

The organized subcommittees which heavily contributed to the successful organization of the symposium were

1. Event promotion
2. Fund raising
3. Participants mobilization
4. Logistics
5. Finance

Furthermore, the PCO has helped a lot and meaningfully in identifying important activities, handling them, and in management of the whole organization process.

The Event (Apimondia Symposium 2018) – 30 Nov – 04 Dec 2018

The Apimondia event organized by the Ethiopian Apiculture Board in collaboration with Apimondia, Ministry of Agriculture and other apiculture stakeholders in Ethiopia has been carried out in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 30 November to 4 December of 2018. As stated in the introduction, this was the

second time that an Apimondia symposium was held on the continent of Africa and the first of its kind in Ethiopia.

The conference part of the symposium has been managed at UNECA (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa) conference center (Thanks to ATA) where professionally managed conference facilities are available which helped enormously in offering a quality and standard conference. As the tightly secured UNECA facilities and limited space were unsuitable to hold the exhibition, which was supposed to attract the “broad masses”, it was held at Green Park of Ghion Hotel, which allowed to manage as many as exhibitors under the park awhile helping people to admire attractive environment to which our bees are contributing significantly

The Apimondia Symposium conference attracted 991 (103 females) players from 25 countries. Of these, 263 of the players were guests invited for opening ceremony and 106 of them were non-paying interested participants from the key sector areas, EAB staff, committee members, other invited guests and exhibitors. From the conference participants 51 were international participants who came from 24 countries of all continents.

The conference has been carried out in four parallel sessions based on the different topics of the symposium and at plenary where the situations demanded. Accordingly,

- ✓ 36 technical papers
- ✓ 3 key note speeches
- ✓ 1 panel discussion
- ✓ 6 experience sharing papers from national actors, and
- ✓ 4 introductory messages during the opening session

a total of 50 papers have been presented to the audience for learning and sharing purposes.

Furthermore, the Api-expo at Ghion Green Park has attracted 168 exhibitors from 5 countries displaying their products such as hive products, beekeeping inputs and services including research outcomes. These players, mainly from different regions of Ethiopia and some from abroad, presented their products for showcasing, experience sharing, market linkages and sales in 68 booths.

The event was officially opened by the guest of honor, HE Ato Oumar Hussein, Federal Minister of Agriculture, in the presence of many representatives of key sectors including top management of Apimondia and renowned scientists around the selected topics of the conference part of the Symposium.

The commencement of this unique and important event was accompanied by a Marsh Band (police orchestra) to draw attention of the public and help changing attitudes towards the sector. Best DJ service was arranged for the exhibition site at Ghion Green Park which helped a lot to keep the exhibitors and visitors motivated.

The event has been promoted in various ways with considerable investment for achieving the desired purpose. Especially the exhibition part of the symposium has been promoted focusing on the general

public to encourage the public to visit the expo for the better understanding of the sector, tasting genuine bee products and carrying home some for own consumptions.

In order to encourage female beekeepers and to win attention of the regions to invest in the bee sector, selection criteria were prepared and shared beforehand to be used by the judge team for giving awards to these two categories. Accordingly, selected female beekeepers and best performing region were awarded at the closing session of the event through special support of Oxfam Ethiopia.

Furthermore, sites for the technical tour were identified, informed and helped to get prepared to ensure the maximum learning and appropriate image building of the visitors. Interested technical tour participants registered in two groups, as per their interest, and traveled to Holeta Bee Research Center on the one hand and Addis Ababa City on the other. Within the city of Addis Ababa, apicultural activities (from production to processing and export marketing) were demonstrated.

Convened with the title – “*The Role of Bees in Food Production*”, the symposium has accentuated its deliberation on the ‘*significance of bees’ pollination for improved production*’, stressing the poorly understood and underexploited role of bees in crop pollination in Africa at large, and the urgent need to change this.

The role of bees to sustainable land management, forest conservation, biodiversity, food security and poverty alleviation has long been a neglected agenda in Africa and beyond as well. The apiculture sector and the secret services of bees have neither been well understood nor sufficiently been exploited in Africa despite its major contributions to the global economy and huge potential to combating the growing concern of climate change at the global scale.

It is believed that the Apimondia symposium has helped the participants to open eyes to understand the huge secret service of bees and enlightened them for future better planning, to make use of the untouched potential of bees in Africa, for diversified hive products and using the pollination role of bees for improved food production and conservation interventions.

The symposium had a great significance in promoting the nexus of bees’ pollination to crop productivity, biodiversity, and food security among smallholder farmers in Africa.

The event has been officially closed at the end of third day, before the technical tours, by the vice president of Apimondia, Dr. Peter Kozmus, after valuable remarks made by the Mr David...Mukomana, Commissioner for African Commission at Apimondia and Mr Harun Baiya, president of Apitrade Africa. Words of thanks for the participants and some points on way forward expectations have been forwarded by Mr Negash Bekena, coordinator of Apimondia symposium organization secretariat.

In order to complete the required documentation, to prepare the proceedings and its printing and to produce a documentary video film preparations are underway with the support of ATA (Agricultural Transformation Agency) through different contracted firms..

Finance

To carry out all required and planned activities, the NASOC mobilized **ETB 6,602,216.4** of which **6,068,461.40** is expended to handle various activities of the symposium organization.

But the amount that came to our account for direct management was 4,043,396 of which ETB 3,509,641 was spent through direct management of the NASOC coordination office) to make the symposium organization plan a success. Some more indicatives are below.

Source Item	Amount	Remark
Sponsorship	2,071,462	Refers to amount that came to our account only
Registration	969,291	
Booth Rent	937,184	
Technical tour	64,009	
Others	1,450	
Total	4,043,396	

Expenses

Sn	Description	Cost amount	Remark
	Promotional/Advertizing Costs	601,408	290,415.73
	Venue Rent	00	1,260,000 directly covered by ATA
	Publication Costs	131,224	
	Event organizer/PCO	1,168,122	
	Women beekeepers Award	38,880	
	Organizing Committee Expense	585,479	
	Airfare, accommodation, per diem	753,485	Including guests hospitality
	Accounting & audit fees	135,720	Includes bank charges
	Apimondia share (5%)	95,324	As per the LOA/agreement

	Documentation	00	482,100 directly covered by the ATA/Norwegian Embassy
	Food/reception	00	816,720.40 directly covered by MoA/FAO/UNDP
	Grand Total	3,509,642	Refers to the managed cash by the coordination office directly

The event has some excess income over the expenditure though it is not as expected to be. The left over, ETB **533,755** will be used to keep the institutional strength of the EAB as the EAB is running for bid to host Apimondia Congress 2023 in collaboration with MoA and other key sector actors in the country.

Also it should be noted that the Apimondia Symposium organization in Ethiopia consumed another **2,558,820.40** Birr which was directly paid by our sponsors – ATA and MoA – to the clients. And, they deserve great thanks.

Achievements

Though the event organization process and the event have not yet been formally evaluated, from the reflections received we conclude that the event has well achieved its intended objectives. The secretariat was strong enough, through special support of SNV Ethiopia and GIZ, to coordinate and manage required activities of the symposium. Accordingly

- ✓ Well acknowledged quality papers were selected and presented to the conference participants
- ✓ Required lessons were drawn from the research findings around the globe, discussions were carried out and communications made with the participants
- ✓ Feedback of satisfaction was received from almost all participants from Ethiopia and abroad
- ✓ Good and additional experience on international event organization was gained
- ✓ The sector potential of the country was showcased
- ✓ The human capacity of the sector in event management, research activities and policy development was well presented
- ✓ Female food heroes and female model beekeepers have been encouraged to show even more engagement and dedication
- ✓ The best performing region on the event participation recognized and awarded to encourage future dedication and performance of the regions in the sector development activities.
- ✓ Green light was obtained from the Apimondia officials on bid for host Apimondia Congress 2023 in Ethiopia
- ✓ A major contribution was made towards the image building of the country

Problems and Challenges

- Limited finance mobilization and collection problems
- Entrance problem on the first day of the conference at the conference hall
- Absence of some paper presenters who have submitted their abstracts
- Less number of exhibitors than planned (both domestic and abroad)

Way Forward

- Lessons drawn from the conference and exhibition participants have to be organized, shared and followed up at different levels
- Ways should be designed to encourage using bees as an agricultural input to improve food production and for better conservation and afforestation works

Preparation to bid for hosting Apimondia Congress 2023 has to be started timely and in a well coordinated manner

Words of Thanks

The Ethiopian Apiculture Board, the Ministry of Agriculture and Apimondia are grateful for support and contributions made to ensure the successful organization of this great event in Ethiopia. The organizers are also grateful for the quality papers presented to the conference participants and for providing opportunities to our participants to learn from this unique and important event both as an exhibitor and delegate on the symposium.

The actors who provided considerable support to make the plan a success deserve great thanks.

Thanks you very much indeed.