



'Stingless beekeeping in nature'

A project to support the development of community activities aiming to stingless bees farming and environmental regeneration.

Context and challenges

The idea to implement stingless beekeeping, activity that involves the farming of stingless bees, in the Campo de Perizes community was elaborated with the goal to strengthen the local biodiversity and the creation of new sources of profit in the region. In spite of being in an area where it is traditional to trade products harvested from bees, the community lacks the means and training to implement the practice. Stingless beekeeping, therefore, emerges as a sustainable alternative activity to be done inside the community.

Native bees are fundamental for pollination and for biodiversity preservation. Since they are adapted to the local conditions, species of stingless bees are very efficient pollinators of native plants, guaranteeing the reproduction and diversity of plant species. In this context, the conservation of these bees is directly related to wild flora and fauna preservation, guaranteeing the continuity of the ecosystem.

The ecosystem services provided by stingless beekeeping are important not only to maintain the environment, but also to strengthen other sources of income to the community. The production of honey and other stingless bees products consolidates small producers and is intrinsically connected to sustainability and environmental conservation. Brazil presents a great diversity of stingless bees species and is considered a world reference in the handling of these insects. In addition to supplying unique products for commercialization, meliponiculture improves the productivity and quality of crops, favouring food safety and contributing to sustainable agriculture.

In the Campo de Perizes community, the installation of stingless bees colonies is a response to challenges faced due to honey exploration from outsiders, without any benefit to the community. This frequent practice makes it essential the creation of local hives, aiming to guarantee that the resources from bees are enjoyed by the community. By establishing meliponiculture as a local activity, the residents of Campo de Perizes have the opportunity to control and enjoy products from native bees. Additionally, honey harvesting without the proper maintenance of colonies is a harmful practice for bees in general, that could lead to the death of the colony. In this way, there is a great community interest in the theoretical-practice training through training for knowledge transfer about the extraction of stingless bees resources as a source of income.

The project aims to provide the valuing of native bees biodiversity in the area and the implementation of a consistent and diversified source of income to the families. The community values activities that can contribute to eradicate poverty and misery, promoting food safety, the development of sustainable practices and new abilities inside the group. Therefore, doing this project of bee hives installation in the community has the potential of benefiting these people and the environment in many different levels, and with long term impact.

Locality of the project

The project is located in the Campo de Perizes region, in Bacabeira in Maranhão, in the following geographic coordinates: -3.1037242529363365, -44.26599089653305. The association identified as 'Associação de moradores do povoado Campo de Perizes – AMOCAMPE' is registered in the following CNPJ: 17.556.802/0001-85.

Beneficiaries

In total, 29 people will directly benefit with the development of the project, being 20 adults (11 women and 9 men), 5 young people, and 4 children.

Planned activities

So the project ‘Stingless beekeeping in nature’ can be accomplished, the extractivist community planners highlight the following activities:

- Meeting with the benefited families for idea alignment
- Verification of the area for the beehives
- Cleaning of the area and construction of structures
- Formalization of the partnerships and trainings
- Equipment acquisition
- Alignment meetings
- Beginning of production
- Seedlings planting
- Accompanying meeting and evaluation

Period of activities

Weekly tasks	Month 1: Campo de Perizes / 2023			
Activities	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week
Initial meeting: general definition	x			
Verification of the area for the hives		x		
Joint effort: preparing of space			x	
Organization of trainings				x

Weekly tasks	Month 2: Campo de Perizes / 2023				
Activities	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week
Equipment acquisition	x				
Alignment meetings		x			
Beginning of production			x		
Seedlings planting				x	
Accompanying meetings					x

General budget

	Description	Value
1	Total cost of project	2.380,00 €
2	Support from Meli	2.000,00 €
3	Counterpart from the residents' association	380,00 €

Team and partnerships

Associação de moradores do povoado Campo de Perizes, Meli Bees Network gUG and the State University of Maranhão (UEMA).

Specific and general impacts of the project ‘Stingless beekeeping in nature’:

Specific goals

- Implementation of stingless beekeeping in the community;
- Promoting a new source of income for the residents of the community;
- Organizing and planning trainings in meliponiculture and regenerative agriculture in the community;

Organizing meetings to discuss and share ideas with the community and residents of the region, strengthening bonds and sharing environmental information.

General goals

Learn about ecosystem services made by native bees and regenerative practices;

Preserve traditional practices in the farming of native bees and the extractive way of life;

Create and strengthen partnerships between communities and residents from the region;

Enjoy the ecosystem services performed by the native bees in crops production and environmental regeneration.

