

PP-476 [Beekeeping Economy]

World Bee Day: Promoting Bee Conservation and Awareness

Peter Kozmus

Slovenian Beekeepers` Association

In 2017, following an initiative by the Republic of Slovenia, the United Nations declared May 20th as World Bee Day (WBD) to raise awareness about the vital role of bees and other pollinators in food security and biodiversity. Since then, WBD has been observed annually, not just as a celebration but as a global call to action.

Each year, WBD serves as a platform to educate the public and policymakers about the challenges bees face, such as habitat loss, climate change, and pesticide use. Encouragingly, more organizations dedicated to bee conservation, environmental sustainability, and planetary health actively participate in WBD initiatives. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in collaboration with Apimondia, continues to play a key role in these efforts, underscoring the urgency of protecting pollinators.

While the annual WBD theme evolves, its three core objectives remain constant:

- (A) Raising awareness of the crucial role of bees and pollinators,
- (B) Informing decision-makers about the threats bees face, and
- (C) Encouraging collective action to safeguard bee populations for future generations.

The specific challenges affecting bees vary across regions, making it essential to identify local threats and implement targeted solutions. Without concrete action, awareness alone is insufficient. In Slovenia, for example, recognizing the need for better summer forage for bees led to a national initiative to plant over two million honey plants. Another key initiative is the Golden Bee Award, presented annually by the President of Slovenia, honoring individuals and organizations worldwide for their contributions to pollinator conservation.

World Bee Day is a crucial opportunity to take meaningful steps toward protecting bees and their habitats. By improving conditions for pollinators, we not only support biodiversity but also contribute to a healthier planet for future generations. Let's use this day as a catalyst for lasting environmental change.