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Strengthening beekeeping through B-THENET qualification and certification of advisors in beekeeping

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In an era of growing challenges for beekeeping, reliable qualifications for beekeepers and advisors are essential to maintain high quality standards, sustainability, and consumer trust. As global markets demand greater transparency in honey production, a structured qualification system ensures best practices in bee colony management, disease control, and ethical beekeeping.

This research, part of the Horizon Europe-funded B-THENET project, examines two qualification levels: micro-credentials for national advisors through B-THENET Center trainings and a B-THENET certification for highly trained advisors on international level.

Micro-credentials provide targeted, modular learning in bee colony management, disease prevention, sustainability, and honey quality assurance. They promote continuous learning, allowing advisors and beekeepers to stay up to date on scientific advancements. A standardized B-THENET micro-credential certification strengthens the credibility of advisors in beekeeping. This will in a long-term perspective strengthen the beekeepers' credibility on local and global markets, increasing the consumer confidence, improving honey quality, and creating better economic opportunities.

At a higher level, the international B-THENET certification equips advisors with science-based expertise to enhance bee colony resilience against climate change, pathogens, and habitat loss. This certification includes training in communication, group dynamics, behavioral change, advisory tools, process management, and coaching in beekeeping. With up-to-date knowledge, B-THENET-certified advisors improve communication strategies, strengthen disease management, and drive sustainability in the sector.

Additionally, credentialed advisors play a key role in bridging the gap between research and practice, ensuring that beekeepers adopt the latest innovations and best practices. By fostering a network of highly trained professionals, the B-THENET framework contributes to a more adaptive and future-proof beekeeping sector.

This presentation offers key recommendations for policymakers, educators, and industry stakeholders to establish globally recognized B-THENET micro-credentials and certification frameworks. B-THENET explores if these systems could be the way forward to create a resilient, professional, and sustainable beekeeping sector, ensuring beekeepers and advisors as essential stewards of sustainable landscapes for pollinators and food security.