

Building Capacity of Farmers on Honey Production

Vietnamese farmers embrace honey production as an alternative livelihood in Nam Dinh province.

Background

Rural Vietnamese are mostly subsistence farmers who rely on good agricultural harvests for their survival. In situations where harvest is low, farmers had to find alternative livelihood to support their household. More often, they go and exploit resources around Xuan Thuy National Park (XTNP). If uncontrolled, these resources would decline and could affect the overall ecosystem of the wetland area.

Officials of Xuan Thuy National Park, with the support from the Wetlands Alliance through CORIN-Asia, have introduced honey production as an alternative livelihood in several communes of Nam Dinh, Vietnam. Honey production has provided promising results in strengthening management of community resources around Xuan Thuy National Park and at the same time generate income and livelihood opportunities to several local farmers.

Technical Capacity Building for Honey Group Members

In the first six months of 2008, the Commune People's Committee has undertaken several activities such as conducting a study tour to Cat Ba Nature Reserve to learn techniques on honey bee keeping, organizing the farmers into a group and obtaining institutional support from



A National Bee Company staff demonstrates the propagation of queen bee to farmers.

XTNP officials and other local agencies. These initiatives have led to significant results not only in terms of production but also strengthened participation of the community in managing their environment.

In the second half of 2008, local partners of Nam Dinh have successfully organized a hands-on training on producing queen bees through the technical support of the National Bee Company in Ha Noi. The training has not only built capacity among farmers on production but also generated further information on bee life and common methods to prevent and treat bee diseases.

Results

The honey bee group demonstrated their knowledge and was able to

produce more than 17 queen bees and some of these were distributed among other members. Being able to produce healthier queen bees will enable the farmers to replace poor ones. This implies an increased number of bee cages, improved quality of bees, and thus, producing more honey, and higher income for the honey group members.



A farmer demonstrates how to develop queen bees for the propagation of bee hives.