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DFP Diary
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Hello and welcome to the eighth edition of the CIFOR-ZM DFP Diary. This is a bi-monthly bulletin aimed at keeping you informed of what is happening in the CIFOR-ZM office and with the CIFOR Zambia Dry Forest Project (DFP). The DFP Diary will focus on exciting events (including visits to our office), and emerging research issues and results. Related beekeeping events focusing on research and information sharing may be included in future editions of this diary. Please contact Jackie Chembe on j.chembe@cgiar.org for details.

Those of you who regularly receive our DFP Diary might have been wondering why we are so quiet... No, we haven't been sleeping! In fact, we are all busy preparing the major outputs of our project, such as scientific papers, policy briefs, the beekeeping management guide etc. As a result we have not been going much into the field and we do not have exciting adventures to report on.

As you might have heard, the Dry Forest Project will end on the 31st of December this year. Before then we have a lot of outputs to finish and we will inform you of our most interesting results in the next Diary, which you can expect in early December.

Therefore, this Diary is a short one, simply to let you know that we are still around and we haven't forgotten our friends and colleagues.

Photo 1: The PAP team in Lunchu

Project Advisory Panel (PAP)

Twice a year, we invite a panel consisting of different stakeholders in the beekeeping sector, to evaluate our project and give us critical feedback. On July 24th we organised this meeting in one of the project's working areas, Mr. Nambida's apiary in Lunchu (Kapiri). The meeting was well attended, with more than 50 participants, including the Zambia Honey Council, Munati Agroforestry, SNV, Agri-Business Forum, Forestry Department (HQ, Research Division, Province and District), SAFIRE the project assistants from the three districts and many local beekeepers.

The program started with a tour of the research apiary after which the group



discussed a range of issues. Below we will highlight some of the topics discussed.

Production technologies

According to Mr. Nambida and his colleagues from Fikoko cooperative, the mud hives in his research apiary are the most preferred by bees because the microclimate is very conducive. Also in the wooden hives occupation rates have been good, but the yields were lower. Bees spend too much time controlling the temperatures inside these hives, in particular now that the trees have shed their leaves and do not provide shade.

When we started the trials we had a lot of discussions related to the standardised height above the ground at which the hives should be placed. Our friends in Salujinga (Mwinilunga) argued that hives must be hung high (>2m) to ensure bees will easily enter, whilst those in Lunchu and Chinyunyu (Chongwe) argued that the hives should be near the ground (<0.5m) to facilitate management. In the end we settled for a compromise: 1m. Little did we know that this would have an additional benefit: according to the experienced beekeepers in Kapiri, this height actually reduces the attacks by ants and termites, compared to the 0.5 meter above the ground at which they used to place their hives.

Markets

In Kapiri, the beekeepers have been blessed with the initiative of the Honey Council to build bulking centres. These have recently been opened and already they are benefiting the beekeepers. In this May/June season, the groups were able to bargain for the exceptional price of ZMK6,000/kg for comb honey. Mr. Kalimukwa was pleased to announce that he bought a new bicycle from his honey sales this season

The yields in Chinyunyu were still relatively low this year and beekeepers

sold small quantities within their communities: ZMK5000 for a 500ml jar. The lack of outside buyers is a major constraint in trying to convince more people to start keeping bees.

In Mwinilunga, the beekeepers only harvest once a year, in October/ November. Last season they were paid ZMK3,500 per kg comb honey. The main constraint for beekeepers in this area is lack of buckets and therefore lack of capacity to look for more buyers. For buyers, the main constraint is the poor infrastructure and thus high transport costs.

The representatives from the private sector, present at the meeting, indicated that the demand for honey in urban areas is huge and this suggests that more effort is needed to link producers and buyers.



Photo 2: During the project advisory panel meeting in Lunchu, beekeepers, buyers and service providers exchanged ideas about the industry

Hive trials

The hive trials have clocked their 12 months and the apiaries have been handed over to the beekeepers who managed them. We would like to thank the beekeepers for their hard work and we hope that the apiaries will continue to produce lots of honey and also

serve as demonstration apiaries for others in the community who are interested to learn about the different hives. In Lunchu (Kapiri) and Chinyunyu (Chongwe) the trialists were able to harvest honey last May/June. These yields were considerably higher than those in October/November when we had just started the trials. In particular, the beekeepers in Kapiri had very good yields due to their high occupation rates. The highest yield that we recorded in our trials was 35kg from one of Mr. Nambida's mud hives. Mr. Musonza managed to harvest honey from all his 15 hives and Mr. Ndawa had the highest total yield from his research apiary: 256kg!

In Mwinilunga, the annual migration of bees resulted in very low occupation rates in May and therefore beekeepers could not harvest this season. The good news is that the bees have started to return and the latest occupation rate figures from the apiaries are very promising.

Calendar of upcoming events and staff travels

17-20 September: Fiona will be attending the APImondia conference in France and presenting results from our research in Zambia

20-24 September: Davison will be travelling to South Africa

5-20 October: Fiona and Davison will be in Bogor at CIFOR's annual meeting

20 October: Moira Moeliono from CIFOR HQ will visit our office for a month and help with some of the project outputs

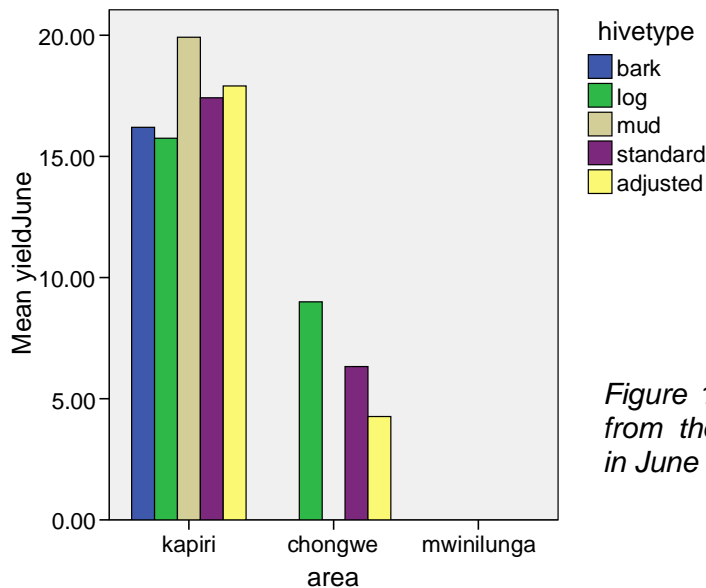


Figure 1: average yields from the different hives in June 2009 (hive trials)

DFP objectives

The overall goal of the Dry Forest Project (DFP), a research and development project funded by SIDA, is "to improve incomes of the rural poor through reinforcement of economic, institutional and policy incentives for sustainable forest management". The specific objectives are:

1. Adoption of improved forest management and marketing practices for honey and beeswax that benefit the rural poor in Zambia.
2. Enhanced collective action and benefit distribution mechanisms for forest-based activities, within local communities in Zambia that improve the livelihoods of the poor.
3. Changed perceptions and processes of policy makers, with respect to forest-based poverty alleviation, in Zambia, as well as in the broader regions.

In addition to Zambia, the project is running in Burkina Faso and Ethiopia.