

# SUCCESS STORIES OF SLOVENIA'S POLLINATOR DIPLOMACY

## BEES FOR PEOPLE, PLANET AND PEACE



As a universal blueprint for sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda is the only way to ensure stability and prosperity for all. The complexity and scale of current global risks call for its accelerated implementation. It requires unwavering political and financial commitment, as well as the exploration of new and innovative approaches to protect people, peace and the planet. Among these, global pollinator diplomacy is emerging as a refreshing and creative endeavour, which easily connects people across sectors and borders.

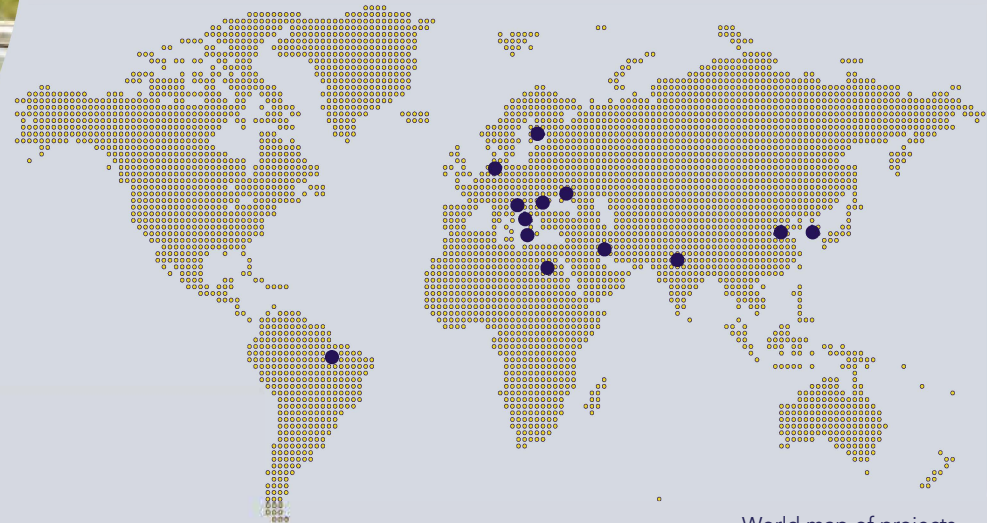


With their role in tending to approximately 80% of food crops, pollinators are essential for global food security and the health of both humans and ecosystems. Amidst the largest food and environment crisis in recent history, their importance is greater than ever. Additionally, beekeeping serves as a remarkably positive tool for protecting livelihoods and building resilience in vulnerable communities affected by climate change and conflict.

In Slovenia, bees and other pollinators have served as valuable allies in our international efforts for more than a decade. We are grateful for the strong global support for Slovenia's initiative to declare 20 May as World Bee Day. Through our diplomatic network, we have launched some 300 pollinator projects in collaboration with partners around the world, with the primary objective of restoring pollinator-friendly ecosystems and empowering vulnerable social groups. We are proud to present a selection of success stories here.

We hope that these initiatives inspire replication and expansion, and we extend an invitation to the global community to build upon the opportunities presented by international pollinator action in the years ahead.

Tanja Fajon  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs  
of the Republic of Slovenia





## BEEKEEPING AS A WAY OF EMPOWERING MINE VICTIMS

**Location:** Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, Banja Luka

**Duration:** since 2021

**Partners:** UDAS Amputee Organisation of Republic of Srpska, ITF Enhancing Human Security, Beekeeping Academy of Slovenia (KIS)



The project has empowered over 100 landmine victims from 19 cities in BiH through beekeeping – a unique means of psychosocial rehabilitation, a stable source of income and a contribution to local biodiversity. Apart from the equipment and training, a rich local support network has been established: a centre for beekeeping, a web platform, an association of beekeepers with disabilities and women, and a series of workshops with 400 participating primary schools. In parallel, the Slovenian Embassy in Sarajevo has organised diverse pollinator-related public diplomacy actions all across BiH.

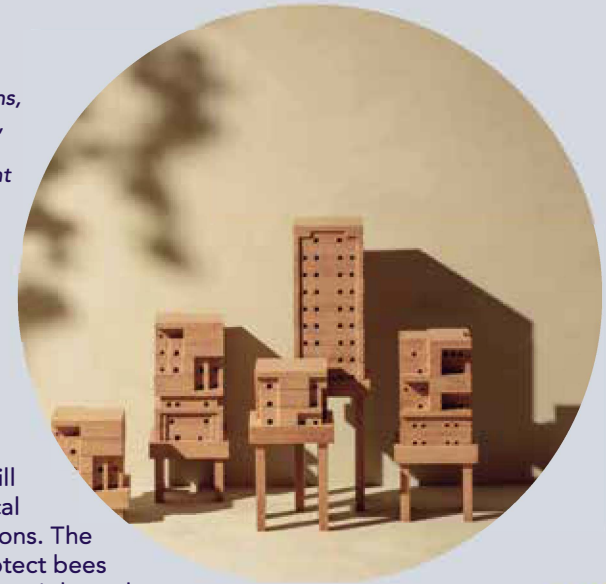
## BEE RESILIENT – POLLINATORS IN CHANGING ENVIRONMENT (Future-Fit Scenarios)

**Location:** Denmark and Finland

**Duration:** May 2023 – May 2024

**Partners:** national beekeeping associations, national foresight capability organisations, WFP Nordic Office, the Nordic Genetic Resource Center, ministries of environment and agriculture

Through a participatory approach, the project aims to create scenarios about the future role of bees and other pollinators in severe weather environments. It analyses the impact of climate change, social processes and security trends on their ability to ensure safe food supply and environmental balance. The results will also be relevant for other geographical areas facing extreme weather conditions. The goal is to strengthen measures to protect bees and other pollinators, both in their own right and as part of the global food security efforts.



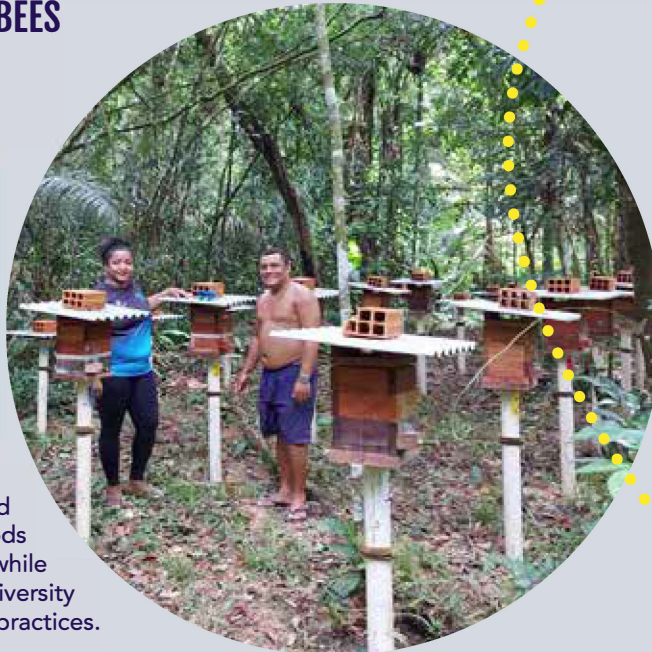
## FRIENDS OF THE AMAZON BEES

**Location:** Brazil – Quilombo Africa, Abaetetuba, Pará

**Duration:** since 2023

**Partners:** NGO Instituto Peabiru

With support of the Slovenian Embassy in Brasilia, the NGO Peabiru empowers a vulnerable Quilombola community in the heart of the Amazon to take care of the endangered native stingless bee. The project provides beehives and training on sustainable honey production to the local population, targeting primarily young adults and women. It protects their livelihoods and strengthens their resilience, while strengthening the local biodiversity through sustainable beekeeping practices.



## BEE AWARE – ENCOURAGING CHILDREN AND YOUTH TOWARDS POLLINATOR ACTION

**Location:** Egypt – Cairo

**Duration:** since 2023

**Partners:** Arab Beekeepers Union, Beekeeping Academy of Slovenia, Agricultural Research Centre - Ministry of Agriculture Egypt

After having planted more than 100 honey plants in 2023, the project now focuses on awareness-raising activities targeting children and young people. In 2024, preschool and primary school children from disadvantaged areas will paint local apiaries with Slovenian and Egyptian motifs. In addition, the Beekeeping Academy of Slovenia will present Slovenian experience to the Egyptian Arab Beekeeping Association and Agricultural Research Centre – both in beekeeping and in awareness-raising projects and campaigns.





## POLLINATOR ECOSYSTEM PRESERVATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

**Location:** Greece – Patras

**Duration:** since 2023

**Partners:** University of Patras, Agri-Food Partnership of the Region of Western Greece

The Slovenian Embassy in Athens and the University of Patras teamed up to plant a Bee Garden in the University's botanical gardens. Young volunteers prepared an ecosystem restoration plan, planted around 200 honey plants and nurtured them. They were supported by the Beekeeping Academy of Slovenia (KIS), whose expert instructed them in pollinator ecosystem preservation and pollinator nutrition, particularly in view of natural disasters that regularly affect both Greece and Slovenia. The project is set to continue and grow, involving the broader local community.



## BEEKEEPING AS A WAY OF EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN REFUGEES AND ORPHANS

**Location:** Iran – Karaj

**Duration:** 2019–2022

**Partners:** Iranian Beekeepers' Association, University of Tehran, Afghan Refugee School Karaj



The Slovenian Embassy in Teheran offered six urban beehives and capacity building to the school for Afghan girls, children of refugees in Karaj. The purpose of the project was to familiarise the most vulnerable parts of Iranian society, especially street children and children of Afghan refugees, with the opportunities offered by beekeeping and the production of honey and honey-based products. The project's focus was on independent work with bees, the production of honey and honey-based products, and the basics of marketing.

## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH BEEKEEPING

**Location:** India – Mohand, Uttarakhand

**Duration:** since 2023

**Partners:** NGO AHEAD, Indian government institutions

The programme empowers women in one of India's most vulnerable and closed communities, the van Gujjar's at Mohand. Equipped with beekeeping kits and skills, access to the Indian honey market and a beekeeping certification, these women gained in economic and social independence.

Beekeeping offered them an activity which was close to their living space and life vision yet presented a great innovation in their everyday life. The programme had a positive impact on the quality of life of their families and the local community. After the successful start in 2023, the programme continues and is growing.



## FEMALE BEEKEEPERS AS AGENTS OF POSITIVE CHANGE

**Location:** North Macedonia – North East and the Vardar region

**Duration:** 2023–2025

**Partners:** ADRA Slovenia, ADRA North Macedonia, several education & business partners from Slovenia

The project provides climate-resistant beehives to 50 families and trains them – in particular women and young people – in organic beekeeping and bee product entrepreneurship. In parallel, a media campaign and a pilot honeybee park serve as an educational tool to promote bee conservation, biodiversity and the importance of honey plants among decision-makers and other 60,000+ citizens. The project paves the way for rural development, localisation of food production and women's empowerment, while preventing rural migration by creating new employment opportunities for women and young people.





## BEE AND TEA FAMILY DAY

**Location:** China – Beijing

**Duration:** since 2023

**Partners:** Apicultural Science Association of China (ASAC), China National Botanical Garden, Museum of Beekeeping Beijing, architects from the University of Ljubljana and Tsinghua University, Medex



To raise awareness of the importance of bees in urban environments and the protection of nature in cities such as Beijing, the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Beijing initiated a project facilitating knowledge exchange between Slovenian and Chinese students in the design and construction of urban apiaries. The awareness-raising event Bee and Tea Family Day in the China National Botanical Garden presented a Slovenian design of an urban apiary, Medul, by the Slovenian architect Prof. Vlatka Ljubanović and Ms Iva Sodnik, a result of collaborative efforts of architecture students with Slovenian beekeepers.

## BEE-FOREST PROJECT

**Location:** South Korea – Province Gangwon, Hyeon-nam Reservoir

**Duration:** since 2023

**Partners:** Korean Rural Community Corporation, Hanns Seidel Foundation Seoul, local beekeeping associations

South Korea has long been struggling with honeybee disappearance. The Slovenian Embassy in Seoul partners with local stakeholders to bring them back to the "silent forests" bordering North Korea, where wildfires have driven away local fauna and devastated biodiversity. The project's partners planted "Bee Bee Trees" in 2023 to boost pollinators and prevent forest fires. In a follow-up, they will be organising pollinator- and biodiversity-related workshops and promotional activities. The Slovenian Embassy also boasts a rooftop beehive and organises local World Bee Day celebrations.



## BEEKEEPING AS MEANS OF EMPOWERING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**Location:** Ukraine – Kharkiv region

**Duration:** since 2024

**Partners:** Hadiatsk Agricultural College, "Pavik" Cooperative in Cherkasy, National University of Bio-Resources and Nature Management of Ukraine, ITF Enhancing Human Security, Beekeeping Academy of Slovenia (KIS)



The project empowers war-affected people with disabilities to realise their talents and skills through beekeeping – an important source of income, life quality and social integration. It combines training with psychosocial rehabilitation and includes several phases, from theoretical beekeeping basics and practical training in honey processing to courses on marketing, branding, financial planning and management, as well as master classes on the elaboration of honey products. Moreover, the project's positive impact on the local biodiversity preservation is a much welcome bonus.

## BEEES ARE OUR FRIENDS

**Location:** Romania and Moldova

**Duration:** since 2021

**Partners:** Beekeeping Association of Romania, Ministry of Education of Romania, National Association of Beekeepers of Moldova, Ministry of Education and Research of Moldova

The project fosters a love of nature and bee advocacy among children. It encourages the national educational authorities to integrate pollinator-related contents into school curricula. It also trains the teachers to raise pollinator-awareness among children. Through sessions with beekeepers and field trips to local apiaries, children discover the importance of bees and pollinators for the ecosystem and themselves. After two successful editions in Romania, the project now continues in Moldova.

