

Tiedekunta-Fakultet-Faculty Valtiotieteellinen tiedekunta		Laitos-Institution-Department Institute of Development Studies	
Tekijä-Författare-Author Valkila, Joni			
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<p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>Poverty and environmental degradation are intertwined problems in Madagascar. The need to protect Madagascar's unique nature and alleviate desperate poverty in rural areas has created the need to develop rural livelihoods. Beekeeping is one source of livelihood that can be developed to bring food and income in a way that causes minimal harm to environment.</p> <p>This thesis studies the possibilities and constraints of apicultural development in Ranomafana National Park in Madagascar. Using sustainable livelihoods approach as a theoretical framework the thesis studies the current forms of honey production and the possibilities to improve them. The likely impacts of apicultural development on rural poverty and conservation of biodiversity are studied. Social, cultural, economical and ecological factors affecting apicultural development are identified and discussed.</p> <p>The research is based on field work in Ranomafana National Park in Madagascar and literature review on protected areas, bees and tropical beekeeping and the livelihoods of the rural poor. Several types of interviews were used: semi structured interviews, participant observation and PRA methods. Additionally honey samples were collected and analyzed and statistics on honey and beeswax exportation and importation were analyzed.</p> <p>Honey production is an important source of livelihood in Ranomafana National Park and it has a potential to become significantly more important. Current forms of honey production are profitable and require very little investments in terms of money and time. More advanced methods of beekeeping require higher inputs and would provide higher outputs.</p> <p>New and old methods of beekeeping will likely co-exist in Ranomafana National Park in the future. The major constraints and challenges for beekeeping are lack of infrastructure, poor transport conditions, undeveloped markets for, honey and other bee products and the inability of beekeepers to invest in beekeeping equipment.</p> <p>Some honey is currently imported to Madagascar. Madagascar should enforce its legislation that makes possible the prohibition of bee and honey imports. This would prevent importation of bee diseases and parasites into Madagascar. Additionally this would protect Madagascar's own honey production which at the moment can not compete in international honey markets.</p>			
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