

ApiTrade Africa October 2006

Statement of establishment, prepared by *Bees for Development*

Rationale

The potential of the apiculture industry in Africa is far from being realised. The aims of the emergent association, named **ApiTrade Africa**, are to promote African honey, address barriers that hinder access to wider markets, and ultimately unlock the potential of the apiculture industry to benefit people in Africa. African honey producer groups and traders are confident that through co-operation and collaboration, some of the challenges facing their honey businesses will be overcome. In short, the aim of the new association is to *Launch African bee products on to global markets as quickly as possible.*

ApiTrade Africa believes that African honeys are special products. They are produced in the “last frontier”, with indigenous bee stocks and no introduced bee diseases or predators, therefore enabling bee colonies to survive without the use of medicines to maintain bee health.

African honey is harvested by smallholder farmers, many of whom are the poorest in society. Selling bee products can provide a feasible way out of their poverty. Beekeeping is the ultimate environmentally sustainable activity. The indigenous species of honey bees contribute to biodiversity through pollination and provide economic incentive for rural African people to conserve natural forests, which provide an abundance of excellent bee forage.

ApiTrade Africa will have two membership categories: core membership made up of traders, packers and processors, whilst those involved in service provision may apply for associate membership.

Next actions

At the Workshop in October 2006 a Task Force was formed. Represented in this Task Force are African honey businesses and organisations engaged with the promotion and development of the African honey trade. The Task Force is responsible for establishing the association, and a constitution is being drawn up, towards adoption at the next meeting of **ApiTrade Africa**, planned to be held in Tanzania in February 2007. The Task Force agreed that the first major public event for **ApiTrade Africa** would be to promote African bee products at next year's Apimondia Congress to be held in Melbourne, Australia.

Background

The concept of an ‘African Honey Trade Forum’ to establish a trade association for businesses engaged with the trading of bee products, first emerged during **Bees for Development's First African Honey Trade Workshop**, held in Dublin prior to the Apimondia Congress in August 2005. The concept was progressed further at **Bees for Development's Second African Honey Trade Workshop**, held at Seeta, near Kampala Uganda in October 2006. Sponsors for these events were DFID's Business Link Challenge Fund (BLCF) and Rowse Honey Ltd. UK. For the second Workshop in Uganda, **Bees for Development** worked closely with Uganda's Ministry of Agriculture (MAAIF) and the national beekeepers' organisation TUNADO to organise the event.