The South East Asia Beekeeping Project aims to increase agricultural education and extension services throughout Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. The project is co-ordinated jointly by Mean Chey University, Cambodia and the University of Sydney, Australia and involves at least six other universities throughout the region. The purpose is to increase regional educational collaboration in sustainable agriculture practices between the counterpart universities. Project emphasis is on sharing resources and experiences for teaching and training so that appropriate levels of environmentally friendly technology are deployed in family-sized mixed farming enterprises. The three major project components are: beekeeping, mushroom production and improved cropping practices.

Technical advisors and co-ordinators of the beekeeping component include Dr Yorn Try (Mean Chey University, Cambodia), Dr Pham Hong Thai (Hanoi University of Agriculture, Vietnam) and Sam Malfroy (Plant Health Australia). The group met in Mean Chey University at an international workshop in February 2013 to:

- Review progress and teaching materials;
- Meet researchers and teachers and make suggestions for further training;
- Advise on any other requirements to enable the universities to set up colonies and practice and teach beekeeping with the Asian honey bee *Apis cerana*.

### Beekeeping manual

The project is developing a beekeeping manual for villagers and students (in English, Khmer and Laotian), and delivering practical and theoretical training workshops. Information on honey bee classification, biology, queen rearing, selection and multiplication of colonies, seasonal bee management, nectar and pollen resources, and diseases and enemies of honey bees is included in the manual that will be released later in 2013.

### End products

In Cambodia the project is concentrating on beekeeping by villagers, farmers and local communities, as well as including it in the syllabi of the participating universities. This will allow honey to be produced and sold quickly and easily (before fermentation starts) to other village markets and not face competition from the high honey producing countries.

Another end product that is being promoted is the pollination benefits from *Apis cerana* for a variety of widely grown crops, including longan and lychee. Training materials will describe pollination, the benefits, and how to manage pollinators.

### Next steps

A second workshop is planned for February 2014. By this time, it is envisaged that numbers of *Apis cerana* will have increased and be sufficient to run pollination trials in agricultural crops.

### Acknowledgements

The project is supported by funding from the Public Sector Linkages Programme of the Australian Government and Plant Health Australia.