

BEEES MAKE MONEY

Honey bees play an important role in pollination services, especially in agroecological food-growing systems. Pollinators have a positive impact on plants and increase production of fruit setting, quality, and quantity of the fruit.

One such study that was taken up for the FAO by Keystone Foundation in coffee farms in one of the indigenous hamlets, the coffee production showed that bee species such as *Apis dorsata*, *A. cerana*, *A. florea*, and *Trigona* species are active pollinators in coffee farms. This resulted in 95% of well-formed coffee berry production and an overall increase in the crop yield. It was estimated that on an average 400kg of berries was harvested from an acre of a coffee farm and sold at Rs. 250 per kg amounting to a value of INR1,00,000 (1200USD).



Coffee- Flowers



Coffee- plant



Sapindus _ fruits



Sapindus- Tree

Farms near forests had more pollinators visiting the crops.

In the case of honey bee pollination of the soapnut berry tree – *Sapindus emarginatus* and *Sapindus trifolius* our field studies showed that the yield of 2000kg from 5 individual trees sold at INR6 per kg, the non-timber forest produce gatherer made an income of INR12,000 (144USD). Sapindus fruits are used as a substitute for hair wash.

The pollination service that honey bees contribute, strengthens the relationship between farmers, farms, and bees leading to higher incomes through improved crop yield for indigenous people.