



Principles and practices of regenerative beekeeping

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Funding: The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research

Speaker Bio

Dr Cooper Schouten is the Project Manager for the Bees for Sustainable Livelihoods Research Group at Southern Cross University. Cooper has extensive beekeeping research, capacity building, training and extension experience working throughout the Indo-Pacific region with local government, private sector and NGO's. Cooper currently oversees a four-year Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research project in PNG and Fiji (LS/2014/42), he is an editorial board member of the journal *Bee World*, an active member of the NSW Apiarists Association and is an enthusiastic beekeeper himself with experience in organic commercial operations and as co-manager of a bee business in Northern NSW.

Presentation

The 'Three Pillars of Sustainable Agriculture' are: 1. Profit over the long term, 2. Stewardship of our countries land, air and water, and 3. Quality of life for farmers, and their communities. The profitability, sustainability and resilience of the Australian honey bee industry is under threat from exotic pests and diseases, drought, flood and fire, and reduced access by beekeepers to areas of native flora. Compounding these threats, limited succession planning within the sector and economic pressures on the honey producing industry requires that we consider not only how to meet and sustain current demand, but how we can do better than 'sustainable' and improve outcomes for the Australian honey bee industry. This paper critically examines threats and barriers to the Australian beekeeping sector and discusses principles and practices for regenerative beekeeping production systems that adds value to the honey bee industry through the consideration and optimisation of approaches and management for better bee business profits, environment, and communities. Topics that will be critically examined with reference to case studies from national and international research and beekeeping industries include; bee business and analysis of productivity vs profitability of enterprises, education and research diversification; strengthening honey value chains and relations; bee focused climate mitigation; enhancing farming systems for ecosystem services and apiculture; considerations for current and future honey bee pest and disease landscapes; enhancing access to floral resources; and policies for improving fair wages, ensuring gender equity, industry transparency of success strategies and enhanced effectiveness of outcome based education, training and extension services.