Professional Beekeeping

• Colonies of bees are moved to exploit multiple forage resources, which increases production
Colonies may be used for commercial pollination which is now the majority income of most professional beekeepers.
Professional Beekeeping

• Less absconding and starving colonies because they are fed when they need to be
Professional Beekeeping

- Better quality honey
But there are costs

- Epidemic disease levels
- Requiring regular medication
- Increasing pollination and pollutant stresses
- Increasing losses of colonies
And concern about a global bee crisis
Should we promote professional beekeeping in Africa?

• A cautious ‘Yes’
• Yes – because movable frames & movable colonies & extracted honey & better quality honey are necessary to generate profitable and sustainable beekeeper industries
• Yes – because the new pests and diseases in Africa will need management to deal with them
• Yes – because countries will need commercial pollination to grow their agriculture
• Yes – because beekeepers have to provide that pollination service
• Yes – because the best way to develop small-scale beekeeping is to develop professional beekeeping
But should learn from the current problems

- Keep the beekeeping as natural and extensive as possible
- Should feed bees only when absolutely necessary
- Should stay away from medication if at all possible
- Should keep apiaries small (pick-up size) and not dump colonies together
- Should make sure all colonies have extensive resting and natural phases, away from honey production and commercial pollination
- Should maintain the pure & organic advantage that African beekeepers presently have
A challenge and an opportunity for Africa

- To grow beekeeping in Africa by making it more modern and more professional
- Whilst retaining the advantages of traditional African beekeeping