



**Kg Tudan bee keeping farmers getting technical tips from expert bee keepers from the Tenom Agriculture Research Station (TARS).**



**Return of the honey bees for the first time since 1997! A Kg Tudan bee keeper shows his honey bee boxes.**

# The bees return after 17 years absence

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to improve bee keeping

**B**ELIEVE it or not, honey bees are back in Kg Tudan after long absences due to El Nino 1997 – 1998! Suzuki exuded his excitement. “So, the community here are rediscovering that nature can rebound and looking forward to sharing it with the world,” he added. “In fact, what separates the local people of Kg Tudan from many others is they are farming based on proven traditional knowledge and techniques.” “Their environment-friendly traditional knowledge and techniques, most of which inherited from their ancestors since a long time ago, are real,” Suzuki asserted. “One example is bee keeping. The honey produced here is 100pc pure and free from chemicals due to the pristine environment. Generally, people dislike imitation and fake products but unfortunately, some honey available in the market in city and towns is not real but allegedly contain chemical compounds,” he asserted. “But the happy return of the honey bees is not to say the Tudan folks know it all,” Suzuki noted.

“For the purpose of improving productivity, we organised technical sharing between the Tenom Agriculture Research Station (Tars) and community members on bee keeping in Tudan aimed at 1) to share technical knowledge between TARS and honey farmers of Kg Tudan ; 2) To give hands-on activity on honey colony transfer and 3) to establish networking between both sides,” Suzuki said. “Tars gave presentations on bee species and their ecology, traditional methodology and modern honey bee management, followed by giving Tudan villagers onsite demonstration of honey bee colony transfer,” Suzuki elaborated. “From all these talks and practical demos, we expect the eventual merging of traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge and scientific-based new apiculture technology can be developed and evolve,” Suzuki hoped.

**Encouraging agriculture officers to push low impact agriculture**  
Suzuki hailed a historic first experience for many agricultural extension officers. “On 27-28 August, 10 agricultural

extension officers from districts across Sabah and three officers from Sabah Parks, participated in a training workshop on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) held in Kg Tudan, hemmed in by the hills of the Crocker Range Park,” Suzuki noted. “PRA refers to a set of approaches and methods aimed at engaging local communities, understanding local settings, utilising local knowledge, and working in close collaboration with the local community.” “To me, there is no other setting more ideal than Kg Tudan to conduct a Participatory Rural Appraisal because farming practices in this highland community has evolved over time into a complex system which allows the local community to grow crops on steep slopes while having limited impact on soil fertility and stability,” Suzuki pointed out. Group discussions with 10 members of the local community followed by a visit to the farms surrounding the village enabled the agricultural extension staff to learn and apply PRA, according to Suzuki.

“But overall, the idea behind PRA is to enhance the communication skills and knowledge of officers in identifying and developing appropriate agricultural programmes that are environmentally sustainable and tailored to the requirements of the target community,” Suzuki explained. “Feedbacks from the participants at the end of the workshop were favourable,” he said.

**Capacity Building – villagers become local researchers!**

Capacity building is indispensable to sustainable ground-based activities such as making compost, organic agricultural practices and so on,” Suzuki noted. “But developing local researchers is a key pillar of capacity building,” Suzuki said. “We appoint such local researchers whose job is work on information gathering through discussions and field survey,” Suzuki said. “These researchers are motivated by livelihood improvement and the conservation of their own environment,” he said. “Here again, SDBEC organised training courses, which provided the opportunity for villagers to acquire skills to use basic computer software and the digital camera for the purpose of producing documents and presentation slides, and use English for socializing with people from outside and promote their village products, with success.

**Women group guarantee**

pesticide-free vegies  
“In 2013, a group of 20 strong women committed themselves to venture into agriculture and handicrafts to strengthen the contribution of women to family development to increase their sources of income,” Suzuki said. “This group of enterprising women guaranteed pesticide-free cabbage, leeks, onion and other leafy vegetables. At the same time they also keep their traditional crop losun or local leek to ensure future generations retain their knowledge and tradition,” Suzuki added. “In fact, there is room in their farms which can be used by outsiders who want to gain experience to become farmers,” Suzuki said. “But consumers in Kota Kinabalu can buy their fresh produce at the Donggongon Farmers Market every Wednesday from 7am to 12.30pm and



**Juicy looking honeycombs!**



**Young girl enjoying a honey comb!**

also the road side stall on a daily basis from 7am to 5pm, before the junction to Kg Tudan, on the Tambunan Road,” Suzuki said. **Awareness – Kitchen wastes and cooking oil are resources** “The Environmental Action Centre conducted three waste management demonstrations, namely 1) making compost from kitchen wastes; 2) making candle from used cooking oil and 3) making enzyme from fruit peels and skin,” Suzuki said. “The whole idea was to create awareness on how to manage wastes wisely; provide villagers, particularly the women with an opportunity to acquire the skills on how wastes can be turned into useful materials; and involving women in environmental education and awareness activities,” Suzuki concluded. – **Kan Yaw Chong**

**Sign of successful composting worms helping to decompose organic wastes into compost.**



**Composts ready for use.**



**Turning garden wastes into composts – part of establishing a habitual recycling system to improve livelihood.**



**Establishing a recycling system for livelihood improvement in Kg Tudan.**