

LICEO'S MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Liceo de Monterrey Redwood

United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)

Topic: Reviewing the Causes, Consequences, and Global Alternatives to Bee Extinction

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I. COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) was founded in 1972 by its first director, Maurice Strong, following the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. It was established in order to monitor the state of the environment and respond to grave changes within it. UNEP also contributes to assisting developing countries with sustainable practices. The programme strives to spur environmental action and advance solutions to biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution. Their headquarters are located in Nairobi, Kenya.

In this year's LIMUN edition, the UNEP committee will be taking place in the year 2095, meaning this committee will be futuristic. Delegates must make use of their imagination and creativity to find solutions, all while maintaining a diplomatic and realistic measure.

II. TOPIC OVERVIEW

As of last year, all bees in the world have gone extinct, removing one of the world's most important pollinators. Bees used to play a crucial role in food production and biodiversity, helping plants reproduce, supporting entire ecosystems. Since then, humans no longer have access to the amount of fruit they used to consume, as their production has declined by over 30%. This problem affects ecosystems in many different ways and the world as a whole will never look the same.

III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The extinction of bees is traced back to the early 21st century, when severe climate change and pesticide overuse reduced pollinator productions. In the year 2040, the situation worsened when a new disease called the "Apis Virus" spread through several colonies worldwide. UNEP and

other organizations tried to act with programs like the “Pollinator Rescue Plan” of 2055, but these attempts were coordinated poorly and not effective enough to stop the decline. In the 2070s, genetic engineering experiments to try and “create synthetic bees” actually harmed the environment unexpectedly. The final remaining bees were officially declared extinct in November of 2094, making plant production extremely limited and expensive for human beings.

The combination of climate change and the Apis Virus created a brutal, sudden loss of bees in less than a century. Rising temperatures and unpredictable rainfall disturbed blooming cycles for plants, leaving bees without sources for pollen and nectar. Meanwhile, the immune systems of colonies were affected by heat stress, making the insect more vulnerable to the disease. The Apis Virus, first identified in the 2040s, spread like wildfire through managed hives, creating a holocaust of bees in just a few short years. It attacked bees’ immune systems, leading to disorientation, infertility, and death.

In the year 2055, the surviving bees made up only 45% of the original population, meaning that more than half of the world’s most important pollinators had gone extinct. This raised many questions about what human beings can do to help the environment, which is why the UN and UNEP took action with many different projects and the help of many organizations. These plans were somewhat successful for about three years, but they later presented weakness, leading to our situation in 2095. Today, UNEP must address the consequences of a world without bees and propose urgent solutions.

IV. CURRENT SITUATION

As of 2095, the extinction of bees has become a severe global crisis, threatening environmental stability and food security all around the world. Crops that rely on fruits, nuts, and vegetables have suffered serious declines, leading to worldwide shortages and astronomical food prices. Wealthier countries like Japan, the United States, and the European Union have managed to soften the impacts by investing millions in pollination drones and lab-grown alternatives, though at a large financial cost. Meanwhile, developing countries in South Asia, Africa and South America face worsening hunger and instability as they do not have such easy access to the newest technologies.

International trade tensions have grown, as food-exporting nations are struggling to meet their demands, and the cost of their products are rising due to their unavailability. The UN has previously attempted different interventions to help with this dilemma, and UNEP has called for emergency meetings and has donated money several times over the past 50 years to environmental research and lab-grown alternatives. Today, UNEP is at the center of global coordination efforts and biodiversity restoration. Looking forward, the programme warns that without collective action, the collapse of pollinators may serve as a warning sign for other species vital to human survival.

V. PAST INTERNATIONAL ACTION

In the 2010s and 2020s, UNEP often spoke up about how bee extinction was no longer a possibility, but an active reality. The UN even declared May 20th as “World Bee Day” in an attempt to advocate and raise awareness for the alarming rates of bee loss. Later on in the 2030s, the United Nations began treating bee extinction as a global priority. Many General Assembly and UNEP resolutions called on member nations to phase out harmful pesticides and invest in pollinator-friendly agriculture. By the 2050s (after the Apis Virus pandemic), biodiversity conventions were amended to specifically recognize pollinator protection as crucial to food security.

Despite this, implementation remained uneven; throughout the 2060s and 2070s, UNEP coordinated global campaigns to restore ecosystems and promote international research cooperation. While many of these efforts postponed the full extinction of bees, the lack of legally mandatory punishments and dependence on spontaneous national contributions meant that progress was too slow for the quick deaths of the vital insect.

VI. PROBLEMS TO ADDRESS

The extinction of bees has created a multidimensional crisis that UNEP and the international community must urgently resolve. Food scarcity leaves notable differences in social class and inequality between developed and developing countries. Poorer populations are relying strictly on cereal grains after having to give up many fruits and vegetables due to rising prices.

Economically, global trade has become easy to overturn as the world's most reliable exporters are now struggling to meet their demands, leading to political tensions. Environmentally, the disappearance of bees has triggered cascading biodiversity loss, reducing the survival of countless plant and animal species by a landslide, and weakening ecosystems worldwide.

Beyond these, several ethical debates have arisen; communities and political parties are starting to question the morality and virtue of investing in artificial pollination and genetic engineering to replace natural ecosystems. With citizens' tax money going towards these causes, political stirs have gotten intense and countries are considering giving up UNEP's goal.

VII. INVOLVED ACTORS

Several key actors have taken different positions in the aftermath of bee extinction. The European Union and the United States have invested heavily in artificial pollination drones and lab-grown food, which has been helpful, but received lots of criticism regarding the ethics of designed food over the restoration of natural ecosystems. China has emerged as the leader in large-scale artificial pollination systems, exporting the newest technology abroad. However, its dominance has created opposition with other powers who view their market as a threat.

Developing countries in Africa, South Asia, and Latin America are the hardest hit, facing food shortages and economic decline. Many argue that wealthier countries have failed to deliver enough funding and technology transfers to the struggling nations. Environmental alliances led by Scandinavian countries, New Zealand, and Costa Rica have put all their effort and money into the restoration of biodiversity, with very little advocacy for artificial ecosystems.

VIII. QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

The Ethics of Artificial Ecosystems: With governments spending millions of dollars on artificial pollination and genetic engineering, people are now asking themselves: should humanity continue to invest in “fake” ecosystems or prioritize restoring what they ruined? Is the restoration of biodiversity even possible?

Supporting Developing Countries: Developing countries, which are the ones suffering the most from the extinction, are crumbling quickly. With costs rising and nature declining, some argue that first-world countries have an obligation to assist poorer nations with technology and financial aid. However, the bee extinction is a global problem, which leads to some leaders believing that their priority should be on their nation only. What responsibilities do developed countries have in helping those who are suffering? At what point does it become “too much”?

Balancing Environment and Economy: This crisis has not only become dangerous for animals and mankind, but it has also been incredibly expensive for everyone from the common folk to entire governments. With produce declining and costs rising, groceries are quickly becoming unaffordable. Meanwhile, countries are investing so much money into research, development, and awareness. How can governments balance the urgent need to protect biodiversity with the economic interests of agricultural exporters? Will wheat become the new apple?

Preventing Further Extinctions: The extinction of the bee has been fatal and extremely detrimental to all forms of life. With so much decline in what we once lived off of, it is not crazy to think about what else is at risk. We have cereal grains, but how long until global warming or another virus comes along and ruins it all? Humans and politicians need to start considering what else we must protect before it is too late. How can the UNEP help to maintain what we have not yet lost? What lessons were learned from this and how can the UN push for global change in the future?

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