

Beat: Vips

## UNESCO & GUERLAIN EMPOWER WOMEN & SUPPORT BIODIVERSITY VIA WOMEN FOR BEES PROGRAM

UNDER AEGIS OF ANGELINA JOLIE

Paris, Washington DC, 24.03.2021, 01:18 Time

**USPA NEWS** - UNESCO and GUERLAIN have launched a state-of-the-art female beekeeping entrepreneurship programme, "Women for Bees." Implemented in UNESCO designated biosphere reserves around the world with the support of the French training centre, the Observatoire Français d'Apiculture (OFA), the programme will have actor, film maker and humanitarian activist Angelina Jolie for a Godmother, helping promote its twin objectives of women's empowerment and biodiversity conservation. Starting on 21 June 2021, ten women from five biosphere reserves will be welcomed to a 30-day accelerated training course at OFA's Domaine de la Sainte-Baume (Provence, France) every year. Over five years, 50 participants will learn the theoretical and practical bases of beekeeping, including the running of a professional apiary. At the end of the training, participants will have acquired all the protocols allowing them to sustain the life of their bee colonies and to become fully professional beekeeper-entrepreneurs, and members of an international network of female beekeepers.

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THE WOMEN FOR BEES PROGRAMME NOT ONLY HIGHLIGHTS OUR INTERDEPENDANCY AUDREY AZOULAY SAID

"Because the role of women in biodiversity management and decision-making processes is not fully recognized, supporting and promoting their contribution as agents of change is essential and a global priority for UNESCO," said UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay. "The Women for Bees programme not only highlights our interdependency with other living species, it also encourages women to be designers of change, to create, educate and experiment with sustainable beekeeping in UNESCO designated Biosphere Reserves as a way of living on Earth in harmony with other species. Such is the spirit of our commitment to biodiversity, and the purpose of our global partnership with LVMH."

Angelina Jolie, who as Godmother of the programme will meet with the female beekeepers and track their progress, said: "When women gain skills and knowledge their instinct is to help raise others. I'm excited to meet the women taking part in this programme from all over the world. I look forward to getting to know them and learning about their culture and environment and the role bees play in that. I hope the training will strengthen their independence, their livelihoods and their communities." Guerlain Chief Executive Officer Véronique Courtois said: "I'm personally very proud of the "Women for Bees" Guerlain x UNESCO programme which manages to combine two core pillars of our Maison's strong commitment, In the Name of Beauty: Bees conservation on one side and women empowerment on the other side, a pledge for one of the nature's most precious wonder & a concrete positive social impact for women of the world. I believe each of us and each organization has a role to play to serve society and to fulfil a goal of a more beautiful and responsible world which is bigger than us."

The five-year programme is part of a partnership between UNESCO and the LVMH group to support UNESCO's scientific Man and

the Biosphere (MAB) programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves that has been conducting pioneering research into the interaction between human activity and the environment to advance sustainable development.

The biosphere reserves involved during the programme's first two years include Central Balkan (Bulgaria), Tonle Sap (Cambodia), Xishuangbanna (China), Kafa (Ethiopia), Iles et Mer d'Iroise (France), Sila (Italy), Katunskiy (Russia), Volcans (Rwanda), and Kozjansko & Obsotelje (Slovenia).-----

By 2025, 2,500 hives will have been built within 25 UNESCO biosphere reserves and 125 million bees will have been restocked. The 50 women to graduate by that year, will have been trained and supported in establishing their own beekeeping operations while participating in a vital, socially beneficial project. Indeed beekeeping can generate income for disadvantaged rural populations and improve food security in areas where agricultural production is minimal. Angelina Jolie, long associated with Guerlain, will support the programme as a committed advocate of women's rights, environmental conservation and humanitarian values. Source: UNESCO

**Article online:**

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-18437/unesco-und-guerlain-empower-womenundsupport-biodiversity-via-women-for-bees-program.html>

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619