



Predsednica Republike Slovenije

**NATAŠA PIRC MUSAR**

**Speech by the President of the Republic of Slovenia  
Nataša Pirc Musar  
at the Golden Bee award ceremony**

Presidential Palace, 24 May 2023

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*President of the National Council,  
Ministers,  
Deputies of the National Assembly,  
Members of the National Council,  
State Secretary,  
Ambassadors,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*At the end of last week, during my visit to the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome, I attended the main international event celebrating World Bee Day. I am extremely proud of Slovenia's contribution to international efforts to protect bees and other pollinators, proud of the results that Slovenia has achieved in the five years since 20 May was declared World Bee Day by the UN General Assembly on our initiative.*

*Pollinators are an integral part of today's global environmental and food agenda. Coordinated international cooperation on this issue is more important than ever before. The day before yesterday, we marked World Biodiversity Day. The global ecosystem is at a critical point. The wellbeing of humanity – indeed its very survival – depends on the joint action of countries and every one of us. Yet the gap between the needs and measures is growing. Without a radical change in our attitude to the environment, our common future is in serious jeopardy.*

*Slovenia is a green land and home to the world's largest number of beekeepers per inhabitant. We therefore have a moral obligation to share our beekeeping knowledge and technology and encourage the protection of pollinators around the world. This is an invaluable contribution we can make to tackling the global environmental and food*

*crisis. Every third forkful of the food produced in the world and 90% of wild plant propagation depend on pollinators. At the same time, food and environmental security are also preconditions for international stability and peace.*

*The Golden Bee Award is undoubtedly one of Slovenia's main tools for raising awareness about the importance of pollinators and promoting special achievements in pollinator protection. This year's emphasis on science is consistent with its central role in overcoming global challenges. My sincere congratulations go to all three of this year's finalists.*

*I would like to thank the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food and her team, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the Slovenian Beekeepers' Association, the Beekeeping Academy of Slovenia, and all other organisations and individuals championing Slovenian beekeeping and thus also our apicultural diplomacy. At the same time, I call upon the minister and all of you to stay bold and ambitious in the further development of our common pollination story. We know that pollinators are the best indicator of the state of the environment, and that some of them are decreasing in number at an alarming rate. Wild solitary bees do not have a beekeeper to watch over them, which makes their habitats all the more endangered. More investment in research is needed, which is the motive behind this year's Golden Bee award ceremony.*

*But what can we as individuals do for pollinators?*

- We can plant honey plants, which should be diverse so that they bloom all year round and characteristic of the environment in which we live;*
- provide pollinators with refuge and access to water that they need both for drinking and staying cool during the summer;*
- avoid excessive use of pesticides in food production and mow the grass only when necessary, in late afternoon hours when pasture has ended;*
- and finally, as consumers, inform ourselves about the origin and the type of food we consume and support local beekeepers and farmers by purchasing their products.*

*Thank you for your attention and good luck with your activities. Keep doing what you are doing, for the good of the planet.*