ADAPTABLE MODEL

BUZZ NATURE · BEE RIGHTS

Municipal ordinance on the rights of bees and pollinators

Protection of wild bees and Apis mellifera within the municipal area

ENGLISH MODEL FOR MUNICIPAL ADAPTATION · 7 NOVEMBER 2026

Municipality of _____ · Subject to review by the Municipal Secretary

Model document: each municipality adopts it, amends it and makes it its own. It is not a law in force.

This model recognises the ecological rights of bees as principles guiding municipal administrative action. It operates solely within the municipality's powers, property, services, contracts and procedures and does not create civil legal personality, new penalties or general obligations for private parties.

Before adoption, the text must be reviewed against the municipal charter, applicable national and regional legislation and the functions actually assigned to the municipality. This document is not, in itself, a rule currently in force.

PREAMBLE

The Municipality of _____, having regard to the protection of the environment, biodiversity and ecosystems set out in Article 9 of the Italian Constitution and to the municipal powers provided for in Legislative Decree 267/2000;

recognising the intrinsic value of wild bees, of the honey bee Apis mellifera and of other pollinators, irrespective of their economic usefulness, as well as their contribution to plant reproduction, agriculture and the continuity of ecosystems;

adopts, within its powers, the following provisions.

Considering, furthermore, as a non-binding international experience, that the Provincial Municipality of Satipo, Peru, adopted in 2025 an ordinance recognising and protecting the rights of native stingless bees. This precedent is cited solely as a comparative reference and does not constitute a binding legal source or an interpretation of Italian or European Union law.

CHAPTER I RECOGNITION AND SCOPE OF RIGHTS

Article 1 Purpose

This ordinance recognises the ecological rights of wild bees, of Apis mellifera and of other pollinators, and establishes measures for representation, damage prevention, conservation and restoration.

Its purpose is to incorporate these rights into municipal action through specific obligations of consideration, consultation, reasoning and management, with gradual implementation that is

manageable for the Municipality.

Article 2 Protected bees and habitats

Protection covers wild bees, including solitary species and bumblebees, and Apis mellifera, both in managed colonies and in the wild. Ownership of a hive does not remove the need to consider the biological requirements of the colony.

Their life cycles and the elements needed for feeding, reproduction, nesting and shelter are protected, including floral resources, soils, embankments, stems, wood, cavities and other microhabitats. Measures shall be adapted to the species and the place.

For the purposes of this ordinance, bees are the hymenopterans of the group Anthophila; not all species of the superfamily Apoidea are bees. Other pollinators are animals that contribute to the transport of pollen between flowers.

Article 3 Recognition of rights

The Municipality recognises bees and other pollinators as ecological subjects that carry diffuse interests and constitutionally protected environmental values, and recognises the ecological rights established in this ordinance. This recognition concerns individuals, colonies, populations and habitats, according to the nature of each right.

The rights recognised are: to exist and maintain viable populations; to develop their biological cycles and natural behaviours; to have access to diverse and adequate floral resources; to preserve nesting, reproduction and shelter sites; to maintain the connectivity of their habitats; to receive protection from avoidable harm and displacement; and to benefit from restoration measures where municipal action degrades their habitats.

The right is also recognised for their ecological interests to be represented and considered before municipal decisions that may significantly affect them.

These rights are ecological, programmatic and administrative in nature, and bind the Municipality’s action only within its powers, property, services, contracts and procedures. They do not confer legal personality under civil law, legal capacity, patrimonial ownership or independent standing in legal proceedings; they do not alter the civil status of animals, private property, or the powers of the State or the Region.

Article 4 Scope of application

Management obligations are addressed to the bodies, services and activities of the Municipality and to its property and spaces, including parks, gardens, roads, cemeteries and municipal land. Measures may be incorporated into new tenders, contracts, concessions and renewals where relevant and legally admissible. Contracts in force shall not be amended unilaterally: any adaptation shall respect public procurement law, its terms and the procedures legally available.

On private land, voluntary agreements, training and assistance shall be promoted. This ordinance does not create new offences, penalties, economic burdens or general obligations of treatment or handling for farmers, beekeepers, businesses or landowners. The rules, authorisations, acquired rights and liabilities in force remain fully applicable.

Provisions concerning licences, authorisations, planning, contracts or municipal procedures shall apply only where a State or Regional rule confers the corresponding function on the Municipality and within the limits of that conferral. The ordinance does not introduce enabling titles, authorisation conditions or additional requirements not provided for or permitted by applicable law.

In case of doubt, the provisions shall be interpreted in the manner most consistent with the constitutional and legal allocation of powers and with higher-ranking State and Regional law.

Article 5 Proportionality and coexistence

Decisions shall reconcile the recognised rights with public health, safety, fire prevention, accessibility, the protection of other species and lawful agricultural and beekeeping activity.

The mere presence of bees shall not in itself be considered grounds for destruction. Where a conflict arises, the feasible alternative that reduces harm shall be chosen, assessing the actual risk, the needs of the species and the resources available.

Exceptions on grounds of safety or technical necessity must be reasoned briefly and documented. Limited resources may justify gradual implementation of restoration and improvements, but shall not replace the assessment of alternatives in the face of avoidable harm.

CHAPTER II REPRESENTATION OF BEES

Article 6 Municipal Guarantor of bee rights

Within ninety days of entry into force, the Municipality shall appoint a Municipal Guarantor of the Rights of Bees and Pollinators.

This function may be performed by a person with demonstrable knowledge of biodiversity or conservation, assisted where appropriate by specialists. The function may be honorary, assigned to existing staff or shared between municipalities by agreement, in accordance with the statute and organisation of the Municipality. It shall not entail the automatic creation of an office, premises, employment relationship, paid post or expenditure without the corresponding administrative decision and budgetary cover.

The appointment act shall determine duration, replacement, grounds for termination and conflicts of interest. Until the appointment, the Municipality shall designate a contact point within its services to receive communications and activate technical consultation.

Article 7 Representation functions

The Guarantor shall represent the recognised ecological interests within municipal procedures. It may receive notifications, submit proposals, request technical verifications and issue recommendations on conservation, adaptation, rescue or restoration. It shall access only the municipal information necessary for its functions and in accordance with the rules on administrative procedure, data protection, confidentiality, secrecy and documentary access, without acquiring a general right of access other than that provided by law.

It may request reconsideration of municipal actions that may cause avoidable harm and refer issues to the competent authorities. Such requests do not automatically suspend the actions nor

confer additional standing in legal proceedings.

The Guarantor shall have no sanctioning power, coercive inspection power or right of access to private property without consent or legal authorisation. It shall declare its conflicts of interest and abstain in matters affecting it.

Article 8 Consultation and municipal response

Before a municipal action that may have a significant effect on known nests, identified nesting sites or areas of particular interest for pollinators, the responsible service shall consult the Guarantor. The consultation may be carried out by email or incorporated into the ordinary file, without opening a separate procedure.

The Guarantor shall have ten working days to submit observations, unless a different period is agreed according to the needs of the action. If no response is received, the service may proceed, recording the consultation and the precautions adopted.

Recommendations shall not be binding. Where the Municipality departs from them, it shall briefly explain the reasons and the measures to reduce harm. The decision shall rest with the competent body or service.

In emergencies, prior consultation shall not be required. The Guarantor shall be informed and the intervention documented as soon as possible. Ordinary tasks covered by a previously notified protocol shall not require individual consultation, unless a new relevant issue arises.

Article 9 Communication channel

The Municipality shall publish a contact point for reports of threatened nests, swarms, habitat damage and mortality events. It may use the existing municipal telephone or email.

Reports shall be recorded with date, place, description and the response adopted. The register shall be simple and avoid unnecessary personal data. Precise locations that could endanger nests, sensitive species or apiaries shall not be published.

The channel does not replace emergency services nor guarantee a permanent municipal capture or rescue service.

Reports may be submitted anonymously and shall be assessed where they contain sufficiently specific and verifiable elements. Submitting a report does not in itself confer the status of interested party nor a right to access protected procedural information.

CHAPTER III PROTECTION IN MUNICIPAL ACTION

Article 10 Conservation of nests and colonies

Where a nest, colony or swarm is affected by a municipal intervention, the following shall be considered, in this order: conservation in place, adaptation or reasonable postponement of the intervention, temporary protection and, where appropriate, rescue or relocation.

Destruction shall be reserved for serious risks requiring intervention or for situations where no reasonable technical alternative exists. The responsible service shall record the risk, the alternatives considered and the reason for the decision.

Rescues of Apis mellifera shall be entrusted to qualified persons, respecting health and beekeeping obligations. Nests of wild bees shall require an assessment appropriate to their biology; it shall not be assumed that they can be moved like a hive.

Mandatory measures issued by the competent health or safety authorities shall be respected.

Article 11 Check before works and maintenance

Before intervening on trees, walls, roofs, embankments or soils showing signs of nesting, municipal staff shall carry out a proportionate visual check, without requiring a specialist study for every ordinary task.

Where activity or a known nest is detected, Articles 8 and 10 shall apply. The absence of visible insects on a single visit shall not be interpreted as sufficient evidence of abandonment where there are signs of immature stages or seasonal activity.

In works that may significantly affect identified habitats, the Municipality shall include conservation or restoration measures in the planning and, where appropriate, in the contract.

Article 12 Compatible mowing and maintenance

Municipal services shall incorporate staggered mowing and the conservation of small flowering strips or areas where conditions allow. They shall avoid removing all floral resources in the same area at once where a feasible alternative exists.

The schedule and areas shall be adapted to local flowering, the use of the space and the requirements of road safety, accessibility, public health and fire prevention.

Conservation shall be integrated into ordinary maintenance. There shall be no requirement to leave all green areas unattended nor to set a uniform minimum area for all municipalities.

Areas under differentiated management shall be marked simply and visibly (“biodiversity management — not neglect”) to avoid misunderstandings among residents.

Article 13 Flora and nesting sites

New municipal plantings and replacements shall prioritise native species suited to the soil, altitude and climate, with complementary flowering and proportionate water use. The choice shall consider the resources available for wild and honey bees.

Where compatible with the use of the space, small areas of unsealed soil, stems, cavities and wood providing shelter or nesting shall be preserved. Artificial shelters shall be optional and require adequate design and maintenance.

Species whose introduction or spread is prohibited shall not be used. Invasive-risk exotic species shall be avoided in habitat improvement actions.

Article 13 bis Voluntary municipal integration of flora in renewable energy installations

The Municipality shall promote the integration of native pollinator-friendly flora in solar and other renewable energy installations, especially on municipal land, buildings and projects. It may include proportionate measures in its own projects, tender specifications, contracts, urban planning agreements and voluntary agreements where legislation permits.

Where an ecological integration measure is agreed or legally required, the corresponding document may describe species, areas, establishment and maintenance works, flowering-compatible management, reduction of plant health risks and proportionate monitoring.

This article does not create a general condition for obtaining, renewing or maintaining authorisations for renewable energy installations, nor does it alter the administrative regimes established by State or Regional legislation. Any condition in a specific procedure shall require express legal basis and shall be proportionate to the nature and size of the installation.

Article 14 Plant protection products

Municipal management shall prioritise prevention, proper handling and feasible mechanical, physical or biological methods. Plant protection products shall be used only where there is a justified need and in accordance with their authorisation, label and applicable regulations.

Risks of exposure, drift and contamination of floral resources and water shall be reduced. Treatments during flowering or pollinator activity shall be avoided where they create avoidable risk; legal and label restrictions shall be complied with in all cases.

The responsible service shall keep a simple record of product, date, area, reason and precautions. Uses relevant to pollinators shall be included in the annual review.

A natural, ecological or organic label shall not be considered an automatic guarantee of harmlessness. Urgent health treatments shall follow the instructions of the competent authority.

Article 15 Joint protection and responsible beekeeping

Protection of Apis mellifera shall include consideration of its colonies, food resources and avoidable risks, in cooperation with beekeepers and the competent authorities.

Actions for wild bees shall be assessed on the conservation of their habitats and diversity. Installing hives shall not replace these measures nor be a requirement for joining the project.

Before promoting new hives in municipal conservation areas, floral resources, sensitive habitats and possible effects on other pollinators shall be assessed, seeking advice where necessary. The ordinance does not establish a general prohibition of beekeeping.

Good health practices and responsible management shall be encouraged, without replacing veterinary powers or the obligations of owners.

CHAPTER IV COLLABORATION WITH THE TERRITORY

Article 15 bis Monitoring and management of wasps of health and ecological concern

The oriental hornet (Vespa orientalis) is a native species in part of Italian territory whose range is expanding. It may prey on bees and other insects, but shall not be treated as an invasive alien species merely because it is expanding its range. It shall be distinguished from Vespa velutina and from other species subject to specific prevention or control regimes.

The Municipality shall promote monitoring and correct identification: sightings and nests may be reported through the channel under Article 9 and, where relevant, communicated to the

competent authorities and local beekeepers. No species or cause of harm shall be attributed without sufficient identification.

Removal or management of nests shall be limited to situations justified by a specific risk to health, safety, beekeeping or other legally protected interests and shall be entrusted to trained and, where appropriate, authorised personnel. Species, location, risk and alternatives shall be assessed beforehand, avoiding indiscriminate destruction of native or protected fauna.

Where technically and legally justified and budget is available, the Municipality may take part in official or technically validated monitoring and control programmes. Traps or other devices shall be used only selectively, temporarily and under supervision, minimising the capture of pollinators and non-target fauna and respecting the instructions of the competent authorities.

Action shall be coordinated with the competent health, environmental and plant health authorities. The invasive alien species regime shall apply only to species listed or regulated in accordance with current law; this ordinance does not extend or amend the lists, obligations or authorisations established by law.

Article 16 Voluntary pact with farmers and landowners

The Municipality shall offer a voluntary pact to farmers, beekeepers, landowners, nurseries, businesses and associations, with commitments adapted to their activity and resources.

Commitments may include conservation of field margins and hedgerows, floral continuity, integrated pest management, drift reduction, advance notice of treatments and training. Joining shall not in itself impose costs, production restrictions or additional authorisation requirements.

The Municipality shall encourage dialogue and mediation. The subsequent siting of a hive shall not automatically alter the legal conditions of a pre-existing agricultural activity.

Article 17 Training and scientific support

Training may be integrated into existing activities of schools, associations and municipal services. Brief guidance shall be offered on bee diversity, coexistence, habitat maintenance and reporting of issues.

The Municipality may seek the collaboration of the University of Molise, specialists and competent bodies. Participation by any institution shall require its acceptance; this ordinance does not presuppose an agreement or scientific endorsement already granted.

Training and monitoring shall not require the purchase of sensors, a dedicated platform or a complete scientific census in order to begin.

Article 18 Collaboration with bodies and territorial representatives

The Municipality may collaborate with universities, research centres, scientific bodies, associations, third-sector organisations, professional bodies, businesses and other qualified entities for training, advice, participation, monitoring and restoration activities.

Partner bodies may propose trained persons to support participatory activities, collect reports and assist in expressly authorised actions. Any accreditation shall rest with the Municipality, be

limited in scope and duration, and shall not confer public powers, coercive functions, special access to property or substitution of licensed professionals.

Agreements shall specify purpose, responsibilities, safety, insurance where applicable, data protection, resources, duration and publication of results. Their selection and formalisation shall respect public procurement law, the regime applicable to the third sector and the principles of transparency, impartiality, publicity, competition and absence of conflicts of interest. No collaboration shall grant exclusivity, automatic funding, scientific or institutional endorsement, environmental certification or contractual preference.

Article 19 Collaboration between municipalities

Municipalities may share the Guarantor, advice, training, protocols and habitat connectivity actions. Cooperation shall allow costs to be reduced and measures to be adapted to small territories.

A network of municipalities, research projects, volunteering and international collaboration may be developed where agreements and resources exist. These initiatives shall not condition the start of municipal protection.

CHAPTER V IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Article 20 First year of implementation

Within the first ninety days, the Municipality shall identify the contact point, publish the reporting channel and appoint the Guarantor or agree on a shared appointment.

Within the first six months, it shall adopt brief instructions on nests and swarms, checks before interventions, municipal mowing and treatments. It may use Annex I and adapt protocols from other municipalities.

During the first year, it shall select at least one existing municipal space, of a size appropriate to its resources, to improve its management in favour of pollinators. The action may consist of adapting mowing or conserving existing habitats, without new plantings or works.

At the end of the first year, it shall publish the first review. Delays shall be explained together with a timetable for completion. Precautions for known nests shall not be conditional on approval of an overall plan.

Article 21 Resources and gradual development

Initial measures shall be integrated into existing staff, channels and tasks. Any action involving additional expenditure shall require budgetary availability and approval by the competent body.

The Municipality may subsequently approve a simple plan of floral resources, nesting areas and habitat connections. The scope of the plan shall be adapted to the data and resources available.

Restoration arising from municipal actions shall be incorporated into project planning and carried out through proportionate measures. Where it requires several phases, the actions and timelines shall be indicated.

Where damage to protected habitats results from a municipal action, the cost of its restoration shall be entered, as far as possible, in the budget of the project or action that caused it.

Resources may be obtained through calls, agreements, donations and transparent sponsorships, in accordance with the applicable accounting, integrity and procurement rules. Relevant relationships shall be published and no contribution shall be allowed to condition the Guarantor's independence, municipal decisions or technical results.

Article 22 Public review and evaluation

The responsible service shall prepare, with the Guarantor's collaboration, a brief annual review that may be integrated into another municipal report. It shall include reports and responses, actions on nests, habitat improvements, relevant uses of plant protection products, consultations with the Guarantor, difficulties and next steps.

Ordinary records and the basic indicators in Annex II shall be used. Species observations shall be voluntary and shall distinguish confirmed data from pending identifications. An increase in reports shall not be interpreted as automatic proof of improvement or decline in populations.

The reporting channel may also be used to collect voluntary observations from residents, treated as citizen science and clearly distinguished from the Municipality's technical data.

The Municipality shall review implementation every two years, with local participation, to adjust procedures and extend measures where feasible. Public communication shall distinguish between adherence, declaration of intent, normative approval and actual implementation, and shall use verifiable data without presenting participation as environmental certification.

Article 23 Prevention and correction

Implementation shall rely on information, representation, prevention, mediation and restoration.

Where a municipal action incompatible with the adopted measures is detected, the responsible service shall assess its correction and respond to the Guarantor's observations. Where damage exists, it shall consider proportionate restoration of the habitat.

Facts that may constitute a breach of other rules shall be reported to the competent authority. Existing legal obligations and liabilities remain in force.

Article 24 Clauses on competence, precedence and safeguard

The provisions of this ordinance shall apply exclusively within the powers conferred on the Municipality by State and Regional legislation. They do not create obligations, prohibitions, penalties, enabling titles or additional requirements outside those powers.

In the event of incompatibility, the Constitution, European Union law and the applicable State and Regional provisions shall prevail. The ordinance shall be interpreted in conformity with those rules and shall not prevent compliance with health, veterinary, environmental, civil protection or safety orders issued by the competent authorities.

Any invalidity, inapplicability or annulment of a provision shall not affect the others, which shall remain effective provided they can be applied autonomously and consistently with the purpose of the ordinance.

References to collaborations, informational materials or external experiences do not constitute commercial recommendation, institutional endorsement, environmental certification or an obligation to purchase products or services.

Article 25 Adoption and entry into force

Adoption, publication and entry into force shall follow the legally appropriate municipal procedure and instrument, subject to review by the Municipal Secretary.

The Municipality shall publish the text together with the implementation contacts. Measures requiring agreements or subsequent development shall be implemented in accordance with the deadlines in Article 20 and the corresponding budgetary decisions.

ANNEX I BASIC MUNICIPAL INSTRUCTIONS

Model to be adapted by the responsible service with the Guarantor's advice. The specific response shall take account of the species, the risk and the powers of each authority.

On receiving a report: record date, location and description; check whether an emergency exists; prevent handling by unqualified persons; request identification or support if necessary.

For a nest: assess conservation in place and adaptation of the task; consult the Guarantor on significant impacts; entrust any handling to suitable personnel; record the outcome and the reason for exceptions.

Before works: check for signs in the elements affected; conserve identified nests where feasible; provide for harm reduction and restoration measures.

In green areas: spread mowing where possible; conserve floral resources and microhabitats compatible with safety; adapt plants to the territory; explain differentiated management areas to residents.

Before a treatment: check necessity and alternatives; comply with authorisation and label; reduce exposure and drift; record the reason and precautions.

In the event of a mortality event: record location, date and circumstances; avoid attributing causes without investigation; contact the relevant veterinary, environmental or plant health services; follow their instructions on samples and actions.

ANNEX II SIMPLE REGISTER AND ANNUAL REVIEW

Each action may be recorded in a spreadsheet or in the existing municipal system with these fields: date, place, type of report or task, risk identified, consultation and recommendation of the Guarantor, decision and reason, responsible officer, measures taken and available outcome.

The annual review shall summarise: number of reports and responses; nests conserved, interventions and reasoned destructions; consultations with the Guarantor and decisions departing from its recommendations; spaces and areas improved where estimable; relevant municipal treatments and their reasons; collaboration activities; resources used; difficulties and planned actions.

Management data shall be distinguished from ecological results. Where species observations are made, the method, date, effort and level of identification shall be stated to allow prudent

comparison.

ANNEX III TECHNICAL NOTE FOR ITALIAN ADMINISTRATIVE ADAPTATION

This note accompanies the proposal and does not form part of the articles. The recognition of ecological rights is framed as a municipal programmatic and administrative principle, not as the creation of legal personality under civil law or of standing in legal proceedings. Its admissibility and effects must be verified in each Municipality within the functions conferred on it by State and Regional legislation.

The Municipal Secretary shall verify the choice between a municipal regulation and other acts of adoption and implementation, the competence of the Council, the Executive and service managers, the appointment of the Guarantor, consultations within files, procurement, data protection and applicable Regional legislation. It shall be verified that no provision addressed to private parties produces a sanctioning, authorising or restrictive effect not enabled by law. The Spanish title “ordenanza” does not predetermine the Italian instrument.

Official supporting references reviewed on 7 November 2026

Italian Constitution, Article 9. Senato della Repubblica: https://www.senato.it/istituzione/la-costituzione/principi-fondamentali/articolo-9

Legislative Decree No. 267 of 18 August 2000, in particular Articles 7, 7 bis and 42. Current text and applicable adaptations to be verified in Normattiva: https://www.normattiva.it/eli/id/2000/09/28/000G0304/CONSOLIDATED

European Commission, pollinators initiative: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/pollinators_en

European Environment Agency, Protecting and restoring Europe’s wild pollinators and their habitats: https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/analysis/publications/protecting-and-restoring-europes-wild-pollinators-and-their-habitats

Precedent cited in the preamble (indicative, non-binding): Provincial Municipality of Satipo (Peru), Municipal Ordinance No. 33-2025-CM/MPS, recognising rights of native stingless bees (21 October 2025). Earth Law Center, «Satipo approves historic ordinance in world-first: an insect is granted legal rights» (November 2025): https://www.earthlawcenter.org/elc-in-the-news/2025/11/satipo-approves-historic-ordinance-in-world-first-an-insect-is-granted-legal-rights-xt8de

Italian Constitution, Article 117, in particular State competence in environmental matters and municipal regulatory power over the organisation and development of conferred functions: https://www.senato.it/istituzione/la-costituzione/parte-ii/titolo-v/articolo-117

Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 on nature restoration, in particular obligations on pollinator diversity and decline: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1991/oj

Legislative Decree No. 190 of 25 November 2024 on administrative regimes for renewable energy production: https://www.normattiva.it/eli/id/2024/12/12/24G00205/CONSOLIDATED

Legislative Decree No. 36 of 31 March 2023, Public Contracts Code, in its current text: https://www.normattiva.it/eli/id/2023/03/31/23G00044/CONSOLIDATED

ISPRA, information and assessment on Vespa orientalis and on native and invasive hornets. Species and protocol verification must be carried out with the competent authorities: https://www.isprambiente.gov.it/

Directive (EU) 2024/825 and the Italian transposing legislation on environmental claims in commercial communications. Institutional communication must be precise, verifiable and distinguish adherence, intention, approval and implementation: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/825/oj

For the adoption version, the legislation in force on plant protection products, beekeeping, animal health, wildlife, data protection, procurement, energy and spatial planning must also be verified; the provisions of the competent Region; the statute of the Municipality; and the administrative functions actually conferred on the body.