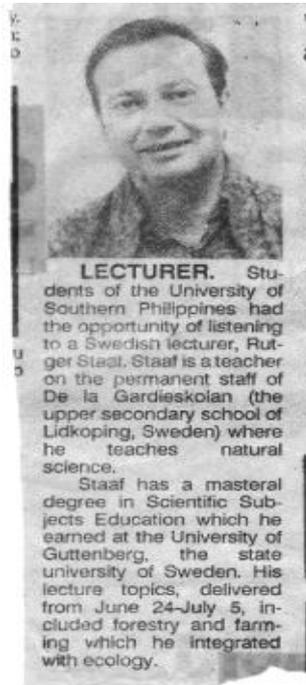


Teaching in the Philippines

By Rutger Staaf

First time that I was teaching in the Philippines was in 1991 in June. It was in Cebu City. I came there right after the eruption of Mt Pinatubo, I experienced the ashfall in Manila which was was facinating. In Cebu City I had the privilege to teach most of the time in "The University of Southern Philippines" but I also gave some lectures at "The University of San Carlos" and "The University of Visayas". There was an little article about me in a local paper, Sun Star.



After I married a philippina teacher from Albay in 1993, that I happened to meet through some contacts I have met pupils in some schools in the city of Tabaco and have given lectures about ecology.

Last summer I was invited to another school in Tabaco. TTabaco South Central Elementary School". I spent a day there meeting pupils from the sixth grade. I met a lot of lovely youngsters that were very able in english. It was a pleasure to meet them. You can see some of them in the picture.



I was invited to teach about environment and climate.

One thing that I thought was important to teach about the environment was the plastic littering that is much more worse in the Philippines than in Sweden. Philippines has so many beautiful beaches but everywhere when you go along the beaches you find plastic litter. And still more along the streets and roads. The theme of one of my PowerPoint presentations was "Plastic and Ocean". You can find both the summary of this problem that I made from what a marine scientist has written and my PPT presentation.



Small pieces of good-looking plastics look like food to small fishes and colourful bottle caps look like food for sea birds but when they get too much of this in their stomach they will die. My message to the pupils was "Throwing plastic in the ocean means less fish to eat". Later on in the afternoon all the 200 pupils had to go out in the school area to clean it from litter mostly plastics. All shops in Albay have now stopped with plastic bags which is a start to deal with the problem.

I also gave lectures about ozone layer and UV-radiation and its regeneration, (The ozone miracle), forests (the very good example of the Man-Made forest in Bohol), climate especially typhoons and if these are really increasing in numbers.

I used some diagrams from PAGASA-DOST which is the weather service in the Philippines.

Philippines is a country that is very much affected by natural disasters as typhoons, earthquake and volcanoes. And it is very expensive for a country with many natural disasters. I remembered one time in Cebu City when I was comparing the Philippines with Sweden and I told my students that in Sweden we have no typhoons, earthquake and volcanoes. Then a boy raised his hand and asked me "What kind of problems do you have in Sweden"?

Well we don't have problems like that. It was a very good question from a little boy.

In the future I hope to meet these pupils in Tabaco once more but now as students.