



“Their parents use chemicals in the paddy fields despite the high cost. We think our students can help transfer the idea of chemical-free farming to their parents”. School Teacher in Nakhorsawan Province.

After a SFS, students demonstrate to themselves that healthy rice crops can be grown without necessarily using pesticides. They are able to identify pests and natural enemies, understand the relationships between pests and natural enemies and understand the implications of their management decisions, eg. using insecticides

“We wanted to educate our students about natural farming and let them experience how farmers grow rice and what kinds of problems they face”. Teacher, Manas Burapa, Phayuhakiri district.

Key Aspects of SFSs and Ecological Learning

- Prominent use of student-centred and activity-based learning
- Use of the environment as a teaching resource
- Coverage of many topics in the Science and Social Science Curricular
- Effectiveness of introducing students to practical science, including direct participation in the research process and the development of scientific skills
- Use of integration: allowing students to apply and practice language and mathematic skills in learning about other subjects
- Effectiveness of strengthening school-community relationships through the involvement of farmers in teaching, and community members' role in monitoring and management
- Focus on relevant 'life skills' for students from rural schools, many of who will not proceed to higher education
- Development of teachers as resource people for other farmers in their communities, promoting a broader role for the school community
- Relevance to rural schools where most of the students and teachers come from farming families

The program is currently in 44 schools in Thailand, involving both rice and vegetable IPM programs. FAO has been supporting activities of World Education who are working with the Ministry of Education and local NGOs, to organise pilot IPM activities in 9 provinces in Cambodia. In the Philippines, approximately 4, 000 school children have completed season-long IPM training during the last three years. On a smaller scale, FAO has supported pilot activities for school children in Indonesia and Sri Lanka. In Bangladesh, CARE has covered over 285 schools.

Plans for the future include institutionalising EAST programmes as part of national school systems and incorporating experiential learning approaches in agricultural colleges and universities - which has already been initiated in Thailand.



Further Information

Web Sites

- Thai Education Foundation www.thai-ed.org, NEW SITE: www.ecoschools.net
- Community IPM Website has a collection of links focussing on environmental education www.communityipm.org/links.html
- David Orr is a leading thinker and writer on the subject of ecological literacy. Orr's essay *What is Education For?* is available at this site: www.context.org/ICLIB/IC27/Orr.htm

VideoTape

- *'Discovering Ecology in Rice Fields'*, produced by Thai Education Foundation, Thailand, 1998 (20 minutes, VHS/PAL), available on request from communityipm@attglobal.net

Sample Documents

- *Report of the Regional Workshop on Schools IPM*, prepared by Thai Education Foundation, Thailand 1998
- *Report of National Conference on IPM in Schools, and Case Studies of Student Filed Schools*, Nos. 1,2 &3, World Education, Cambodia, 2000
- *Progress reports of the Children's Participation Initiative*, 1997-2000, CARE Bangladesh

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