



KUNGL. SKOGS- OCH LANTBRUKSAKADEMIEN

The Secretary's speech

199th Commemorative Meeting, 28 January 2012

Åke Barklund

***“Countless trees in the forest grow,
Let the logger's great axe swing.
Firewood aplenty for the family stove,
Let the logger's axe sing.”***

Your Majesties, Honorable Minister, Madam Governor, Madam Chair, Dear fellows of the Academy Dear guests and friends of the forest.

Today the 28th January the day's name is Karl – congratulations, Your Majesty.

I started singing the erstwhile popular nursery rhyme “The Little Logger” to illustrate one of the publications we gave out last year, the booklet “Children, Forest and School, about the planting of trees by schoolchildren in Sweden between 1880 and 1960”. In my opinion, the verse gives an accurate picture of attitudes towards the importance of the forest, and the importance of impressing this on children in their early years 100 years ago. That outlines the framework for my address tonight – the Forest.

But let me first strike a globally optimistic key and state that the world moves on positively. Infant mortality drops dramatically, literacy rates increase, fertility decreases in country after country – more than half the world's population today live in countries with a birthrate of two or fewer children per woman, the wars are becoming fewer and one country after the other turns up out of poverty, primarily by agriculture and forestry development. When and where we manage land properly, our plants are eternity machines that produce... and produce ... and produce ...

There are about 30 main types of soil on planet earth with widely differing characteristics and suitability for cultivation. Different soils behave differently, respond to different conditions differently and need to be cultivated in different ways. There are no blueprints to use in farming that match conditions everywhere. About 10% of the planet's surface is very rocky with only thin layers of soil. 12% are covered by a layer of permafrost, 23% are too dry to be cultivated – in other words they are desert and semi-desert – and 10% are too wet. 25% don't have by any

means enough nutrients, especially phosphorus; but the remaining 20% – some 3,000 million hectares of land – are eminently suitable for cultivation. The question is – suitable for cultivation of what?

The competition over *what* is proper use is intensely discussed, and last year the Academy arranged seminars on the four Fs: Food, Fodder, Fuel and Fibre. And the answer was, naturally enough, F and F, and F and F. But regardless of whether the four Fs are to be regulated in some administrative way, or decisions about what is to be cultivated are to be left to competitive forces, higher productivity provides much of the solution. Soil and crop types can and should be developed using precise and modern and effective methods, fertiliser can and should be added regardless of whether it is green fertiliser such as compost or undercropping, brown fertiliser (dung from animals and humans) or white fertiliser (nitrogen, phosphorus and potash in mineral form). What mix is chosen will depend on what the soil lacks, what the crop needs, availability and price. Research and development have taken us positively far ahead compared with the original natural condition, and of course development continues.

Before the age of agriculture, it took one person two weeks of hard work to gather 50 kilograms of grass seed from a hectare of land so that she could boil up a pretty bitter bowl of porridge. Today a Swedish farmer can gather 150 times larger harvests of cultivated crops than natural ones, it only takes half an hour and the porridge won't taste bitter.

The forest sector cannot produce the same exciting statistics as the fields, but the world of wood is developing at an astonishing pace at present. Well known products still predominate, the most important being saw timber logs, which gives the owner 70% of the net forest revenue, followed by pulp wood and wood for energy. Adding to this list products are now being pumped out of bio-refineries, as Madam chair just mentioned various types of liquid fuels for engines and bio fibres that offer a direct challenge to cotton. We'll be hearing more about these, you can be sure of that!

Down in the lobby of the Academy's building on Drottninggatan here in Stockholm we pin up a notice announcing each day's events. Last year we held 179 planning markets at various levels, which resulted in nine ordinary academy meetings and 74 seminars and book launches; and last year one film launch, that of "Almond Blossom, Cat's Foot and Blue Violet". It was about biodiversity.

The most frequent topics in 2011 were Food (7 events), Labour market (6), the Landscape questions (4), Fishing and fish-farming (3). In 2010 the predominant issues were Food, the Swedish Forestry Model, Animal Welfare and the Climate. The old *www.ksla.se* was scrapped last year and a modern website was introduced which has increased our external contacts a lot. Some 55 persons per seminar followed our discussions via the web.

The theme of last year's 28th January Commorative meeting was "Sweden the new culinary nation". Mealtime specialist Richard Tellström told us some wonderful tales on the topic of "From the nation of brown sauce to Sweden, the new culinary nation".

Last year's other eight formal meetings dealt with:

- Who is to drive the tractor?
- Higher education in forestry in Sweden.
- Why don't you do what we say? A rhetorical question posed by scientists.
- Spring excursion to Western Sweden, including a visit to Norden's Ark

- Braviken sawmill, at the cutting edge in the Nordic countries.
- A Green economy.
- The competitiveness of farming; and finally
- Last years – the year to come.

Twice in the past the Academy has invited Swedish parties with interests in the green sectors to join in taking action to influence the government's scientific research bill in the making. We did this again last autumn and 24 colleagues in the green sectors heeded our call and jointly with us submitted a proposal entitled "A bio-based economy for sustainable development" (22 well-filled pages of it), an invitation from the green sector to the government to make strategic investments in:

- Adaptations and measures against climate change
- A bio-based economy
- Secure food supplies
- Human and animal health

In the autumn, together with the "Swedish Seafood Award" and Norway's fish export promotion committee, we arranged a seminar on the minimisation of subsidiary catches at which the ministers of fishing and fisheries from Denmark, Norway and Sweden agreed on and signed a treaty to stop the dumping of caught but unwanted fish – a practice known as discards in EU jargon – in the Skagerrak. "A fantastic breakthrough in our fisheries policies", said European Commissioner Madame Damanaki, who attended and cheered.

Three of the academy committees went to the USA for weeklong study tours on separate topics. At the March formal meeting we will discuss our different impressions from those tours under the topic "KSLA goes west". I myself joined in the forestry tour visiting four states in the deep south. We visited the world's biggest plant for wood chips production called Cottondale in Florida. There we found an illustration to the very powerful European energy policy, because 100% of the wood chips were profitably shipped to Europe.

Our Secretariat for International Forestry Issues, (SIFI), which to date has been funded by the Academy, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and the Ministry for Rural Affairs, really got off the ground last year. An independent study of its activities showed that it was amazingly effective; this year the WWF will become a co-financier. Prior to 2013 we are seeking stable support for the continued development of SIFI, primarily from the Government Offices. Among other things, we have a very exciting collaboration with Finland as regards the supply of international forest expertise.

Carbon dioxide concentrations increase by several PPM each year, mainly due to the combustion of fossil fuels, but another major contributory factor is deforestation in the tropics. This is why mechanisms are being discussed by the UN for ways to pay poor tropical countries not to clear forests. This is called "Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation" (REDD). Is there a radically different way to approach this, an more active way?

Yes, there is, and the developed REDD + and ++ open up such ways. The World Resources Institute (WRI), and her partners have drawn up a description of the world showing on maps how previously forested land that has no obvious use today – around 2 billion hectares – could be afforested! WRI and our SIFI are now developing the idea of making "Forest and Landscape restoration" a matter of key interest for Sweden; we believe that active planting of trees on bare

land will increase carbon sequestration in soil and in growing trees in the forested terrain extremely effectively and with little risk of conflict.

Madame Chair just harangued our Minister of Rural affairs for the national initiative “The Forest Kingdom – with values for the world”. Good, I liked that. The initiative's mandate is very similar to the Royal Academy's and when speaking about implementing the fourth branch of the initiative “Sweden in the world” I hereby directly offer the services of SIFI. Because it looks like our Honorable Minister has borrowed the SIFI concept directly.

Our ANH unit for agrarian and forest history among other things last year arranged four book releases in various parts of the country for the publication “In between timber interests”, an almost affectionate description of timber measurement and registration development in our country. Timber measurement is unknown to many but provides a remarkable information base for timber trading and logistical planning. The ANH electronic monthly letter “Freja” reaches 2 500 subscribers. It describes the resources and the activities in the best research library on agriculture and forestry history in the northern Europe, ours.

During the year we also released the Academy's most spectacular book project to date, “Agriculture and Forestry in Sweden since 1900”, in the form of an atlas and an anthology. Our thanks go to the Minister for Rural affairs for an excellent preface, to Sweden's National Atlas for good cooperation and to the Moritz Fraenkel and Marcus and Amalia Wallenberg foundations for valuable financial backing! We have had both books translated into English and sent 700 packages of books, each weighing 3.2 kilos, out into the world. We have received some 50 letters of thanks for “two fantastic books”. I will cite one of them: “The books are very impressive. I am going to place these books in my home library and I will use them in my future research. The level of careful detail and synthesis brought together in each of these volumes is simply fabulous.They are simply a role model for the world.” Sincerely / Elinor Oström.

The Mary Francke Gustafson's donation of Barksätter estate in Sörmland and A.W. Bergsten's donation of Enaforsholm estate in western Jämtland are under development. At Barksätter the forest is growing like mad and the newly constructed arboretum with all of Sweden's 13 types of deciduous tree is shaping up well. On the small island Risön in Lake Viren we have cut out the scrubs to give living room for the Oaks making the island a nice rambling area for the people of the nearby town Katrineholm and others. Coming spring we will construct a new bridge for pedestrians out to the island. At Enaforsholm, after an upgrade to a multi-star boarding-house standard, we are focusing this summer on the alpine garden to inspire cultivation in growth zone 8, i.e. just below the tree line. Welcome to Enaforsholm, members and non-members, for skiing, rambling, hunting and fishing.

The activities of our Academy are built on two pillars; first and foremost, our dedicated fellows who come with ideas as to what we should be doing and who then volunteer help in the planning and execution along with the 15 employees of the Academy; and also the income from some 40 donations that we have received over the years dating back to 1812's inception fund. It is with joy and proudness I hereby will formally announce that we have just received a new donation named “Ulla and Birger Håstadius Foundation for the Promotion of Plant Research and Development”. Birger was a fellow of the Academy and a keen advocate of plant research and development. Birger and his wife Ulla have left 7 million kronor to the Academy in their will. Thank you Ulla and Birger!

It is donations like these that make possible our dynamic and challenging meetings between theoreticians and practitioners in the process of developing the Green and also the Blue sector. The average age of our foundations is 56 years, however, and the most common and most obvious purpose is “agriculture”. Naturally, this is a noble purpose, but the world changes and “new” activities such as fishing, fish farming/aquaculture, reindeer herding, hunting and outdoor recreation, rehabilitation, tourism, nutrition, water, bioenergy, rural issues and more come along, without any clear financing in any of our foundations. In order to become more proactive on these issues, we have recently established a special Financing and Donations Council for three years, which is mandated by the academy board to try to find new financial resources. The first concrete measure with our 200th anniversary coming up next year is to establish a fund-raising foundation, “KSLA 200 years”, where we welcome contact and involvement with people and businesses that wish to support KSLA’s independence and important activities! We will be launching “KSLA 200 years” shortly, so keep your eyes open!

Madam Chairman. This is my 6th and final secretarial report on the academy’s activities during the just passed year. By June this year I hand over to a new academy secretary, recruitment starts next week. It’s a great satisfaction to be the daily leader of the Royal Academy of Agriculture and Forestry, I have fun every day and it will be sad to part from the work in office with Anette, Gun, Keiko, Bosse, Per E., Stefan, Fredrik, Lars, Jimmy, Ylva, Eva, Helle, Magnus, Roland and Per Th. And my cooperation with the academy’s executive boards over the years; firstly Mårten Carlsson and Jan-Åke Lundén, now Sara von Arnold and Åke Bruce, and, in a few minutes, Kerstin Niblaeus and Bo Andersson – I must say is very creative. In my letter of interest in the secretarial job to Chairman Mårten Carlsson in February 2006 I wrote: “To be there to tame, harness and interpret the cross winds from experience, research, education, administration and policy in the green sector through working in the Academy is a privilege.” Our outstanding asset – the fellows are fantastic to meet, work with and learn from.

I must tell you a wonderful memory from the academy meeting on 8th March 2007, the International Women’s Day, I remember it so clearly. Discussion topic was “Fogelstagrupper, reality, vision or dream life?” A theater group from Södermanland made a drama about Elisabeth Tamm and her amazing activities with and among women in the early 19-hundreds. They did it very well when it came to Medborgarskolan at Fogelsta, which until 1954 supported female leadership training, but then the drama group mixed up the time and the technics a bit when they described the modern milking introduction at Fogelsta. “Well, that was not really what happened”, said the fellow, late Ove Samuelson, and explained the situation: “it was I who supplied the equipment from AlfaLaval.” Whereupon academy fellow Henrik Lovén added “yes, and Gustaf Liljenqrantz from Fogelsta was a practical student with me at Sätuna 1960/61. He later became an agronomist.” We had the best expertise with us in the room and everything was being sorted out in the best of spirits.

*“Countless trees in the forest grow,
Let the logger’s great axe swing.
Firewood aplenty for the family stove,
Let the logger’s axe sing.*

*When at last the fire starts,
during winter evening long.
We keep singing our happy song,
yes, we do, all night long.”*

*Let the saw-blade saw away,
that is right, catch a good hold!
In a hurry we are today,
catch a good hold!*

Thank you!