



APO NEWS

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EPIF 2009: undaunted by the economic downturn

The majestic sound of a gong heralded the opening of the Fifth Eco-products International Fair (EPIF), held 19–22 March at the SMX Convention Center in Manila. The four-day event was organized by the APO in collaboration with the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) and Philippine Business for the Environment. One hundred twenty-eight companies and organizations, the largest number of exhibitors in the history of the EPIF, displayed the latest in environment-friendly products and services. The theme of this year's EPIF was Sustainable Consumption, Sustainable Production, Sustainable Future. The EPIFs showcase the most advanced environmental technologies, provide opportunities for business collaboration, and increase public awareness of eco-products and -services.



Executive Secretary Ermita striking the gong to open the EPIF 2009

Since the first EPIF in Malaysia in 2004, each successive one in Thailand in 2005, Singapore in 2006, and Vietnam in 2008 has set new milestones in scope and scale. The EPIF 2009 not only brought together the greatest number of exhibitors in EPIF history, especially from SMEs in the host country, but also received strong support from the host government including visits by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and cabinet members of the Philippine government. The EPIF 2009 included exhibitors from the financial sector for the first time. Its 83,000 visitors were a remarkable achievement given the current economic downturn.



President Arroyo at Kitayama's briefing on eco-finance

The economic situation was a constant concern of special guests who gave presentations at the EPIF opening ceremony. Representing the coorganizers and supporting organizations, they offered encouragement for environmental initiatives in the current economic climate. Secretary Jose L. Atienza, Jr., Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines and EPIF 2009 National Executive Committee Vice Chairperson, delivered the opening remarks, followed by Green Productivity Advisory Committee (GPAC) Chairperson and Mitsubishi Electric Corporation Chairman Dr. Tamotsu Nomakuchi, who emphasized the continuing importance of environmental issues despite economic challenges, stating, "Whatever the state of our economy may be, we cannot turn a blind eye to the need to protect our environment." Dr. Nomakuchi also expressed optimism that the EPIF would help raise public awareness of the need to address mounting environmental problems.

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The Netherlands' social innovation

Dutch business life not only professes but also practices the superiority of labor market cooperation over confrontation. The long-standing institutions of its so-called Polder model provide mechanisms at all levels, from the national to firm level, to ease change, at the same time as almost guaranteeing employment (although not job) security. This is the ethos on which the country's productivity history has been predicated.

In the beginning of the post-World War II Marshall Plan, a bipartite (trade unions and employers) productivity promotion committee was set up by the government as an action-stimulating and research-commissioning body. Some three decades later, this Commission for Productivity Promotion (COP) was transformed into the Commission for Company Development (COB). For the benefit of fretful trade unionists who still associated productivity with working harder (which even today is not unknown), the aim of the name change was to play down the "P" for productivity while retaining the resonant "B," giving the body a broader investigative remit for corporate development. Both committees were bipartite and embedded in the influential Social and Economic Council (SER), the nation's top independent socioeconomic advisory council to the government.

"...Dutch research clearly shows that whereas technology explains only one-quarter of successful innovation, the human factor in enterprises determines the remaining three-quarters."

Since its stakeholders were insufficiently interested and involved and because its action was to some extent duplicating that of other bodies, the COB was abolished in 1995. The mid-1990s ushered in a series of institutional regroupings and



reorientations aimed at better meeting the changing social and economic demands of enterprises. One of the bodies concerned, the Institute for Work and Employment, a name to which the term "for quality of life" was subsequently added, of the country's major applied research organization (the Organisation for Applied Scientific Research [TNO], with some 5000 staff in total), assumed the national representational role of productivity center.

The Institute for Work and Employment spent the best part of the following decade consolidating its role into essentially a research and consulting body on occupational health, reducing its dependence on government financing and deriving three-quarters of its income from market services. It also became increasingly concerned with the nation's overall competitiveness as its own and other research indicated that the Netherlands' labor productivity and innovation record suffered from companies' relatively weak capacity to absorb new knowledge. As a contribution to enhancing this performance more holistically, in other words, blending economic and social aspects of societal development not only to increase wealth but also to improve welfare and wellness, the Institute for Work and Employment has recently been a prime driving force behind the establishment (2006) and servicing of the Netherlands Centre for Social Innovation.

Inspired by but not copying developments elsewhere in Europe, especially national programs in Finland and Germany, the purpose of the Centre

for Social Innovation is to ensure that significantly more importance is attached in future to enhancing the human determinants of innovation, or "social innovation" in Dutch parlance. This is because Dutch research clearly shows that whereas technology explains only one-quarter of successful innovation, the human factor in enterprises determines the remaining three-quarters.

"...the center's networking character means that each party provides not just human and financial resources but also unique contributions, such as bottom-up perceptions of enterprise issues, feeding into national policies, and the provision of best-practice advice and training."

Technology, however, receives the bulk of national and corporate resources. In other words, a successful company needs to pay considerably more attention to issues such as organizational flexibility, bolstering continuous learning, tapping workers' skills, promoting more forms of work organization which encourage employee involvement, and enhancing workers' mental and physical health than to "mere" technological innovation. Such issues have not been accorded their proper value in Dutch working life since they are not readily suited to collective agreements between employers and trade unions. But all are key to developing coherent national policies in the prime policy domains of industry, employment, education, and, particularly, health (both physical and mental).

The Centre for Social Innovation, under an independent chairman, is quadripartite in governance embracing trade unions, employer bodies,

universities, and the TNO. These founding stakeholders all provide annual financial support as do interested companies and public organizations through a Programme Council. Universities are also encouraged to join the Centre for Social Innovation for a reduced fee, thereby enhancing its role as a knowledge catalyst. To ensure national policy coherence, the center falls under the aegis of a newly created (2006) National Innovation Platform chaired by the prime minister. During the launch period at least, three ministries (economy, employment, and research) are providing annual grants earmarked for specific projects.

To ensure that these stakeholders are fully embedded within its action plans and to emphasize its networking and catalytic functions, the Centre for Social Innovation has been deliberately designed as a “semivirtual” organization. Thus it does not have its own full-time staff. Even members of its top management team are only employed for 80% of their time, whereas the five program managers continue to hold their posts in the stakeholder bodies while spending 60% of their time on center projects. The center is focusing on a limited range of proven types of activity. In addition to more traditional activities, such as training (focusing especially on the conditions for trust-based management within organizations), sending study teams abroad, cataloguing best practice social innovation examples in the Netherlands, and an annual conference, particular importance is attached to “action learning” approaches. Thus, learning networks are being established to resolve regional labor market problems; a trainee pool for young employees of the participating enterprises has been created to enhance mutual learning; and a game has been developed to be played by company teams to improve their real-life work situations. Teams that suc-

ceed in making innovations within their companies are invited to participate in an annual national tournament to determine the overall winning team, thereby further emphasizing the importance of social innovation. Competitiveness and cooperation are the watchwords of the Centre for Social Innovation.

In some ways, the center harks back to a past in which management and unions cooperated closely for the benefit of all corporate stakeholders. There are, however, three significant differences. First, there is a much greater involvement of the research and knowledge community in its action. Second, the center’s networking character means that each party provides not just human and financial resources but also unique contributions, such as bottom-up perceptions of enterprise issues, feeding into national policies, and the provision of best-practice advice and training. Third, the Centre for Social Innovation has a broader and hence more solid financial basis that is likely to be further enhanced by contracts from the National Innovation Platform as it develops its strategy to support 10,000 medium-sized and smaller firms in working smarter. Thus dynamic “win-win” situations can be propagated for the benefit of corporate, organizational, and national competitiveness and welfare through enhanced productivity, albeit 21st century style. 

Anthony C. Hubert is President of EuroJobs, an organization he established to promote efforts to raise the quality of working life and productivity in Europe. He was formerly Secretary-General of the European Association of National Productivity Organizations. He writes regularly for this column.

 **Common sense talk** 

“Most teachers have little control over school policy or curriculum or choice of texts or special placement of students, but most have a great deal of autonomy inside the classroom. To a degree shared by only a few other occupations, such as police work, public education rests precariously on the skill and virtue of the people at the bottom of the institutional pyramid.”

Tracy Kidder

“Take away my people, but leave my factories, and soon grass will grow on the factory floors. Take away my factories, but leave my people, and soon we will have a new and better factory.”

Andrew Carnegie

“Remember that happiness is a way of travel, not a destination.”

Roy Goodman

“Simplicity is the outward sign and symbol of depth of thought.”

Lin Yutang

“The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.”

Vince Lombardi

“Socialism failed because it couldn’t tell the economic truth; capitalism may fail because it couldn’t tell the ecological truth.”

Lester Brown

“The ultimate leader is one who is willing to develop people to the point that they eventually surpass him or her in knowledge and ability.”

Fred A. Manske, Jr.

“If you can’t sleep, then get up and do something instead of lying there and worrying. It’s the worry that gets you, not the loss of sleep.”

Dale Carnegie

“The first step to fixing America’s image problem will be for Washington to acknowledge that, despite its power, the United States is not invulnerable. If it’s going to thrive in today’s interconnected world, it needs new habits of cooperation based on a healthy respect for the interests of everyone else.”

Kishore Mahbubani

There is a boundary to men’s passions when they act from feelings; but none when they are under the influence of imagination.

Edmund Burke



Productivity methodologies, tools, and techniques

Cultivation of positive work attitudes through 5S—Kelvin Chan

5S is an abbreviation for the five Japanese workplace improvement practices of *seiri*, *seiton*, *seiso*, *seiketsu*, and *shitsuke* (Table 1), also known as “good housekeeping.” The origin of this productivity technique can be traced back to heavy steel industries in Japan more than 30 years ago. At that time, *seiri* and *seiton* were widely practiced to improve safety in steel mills and to save lives. Over the years, the automobile and other industries have also adopted 5S.

of raw materials completely before new materials were delivered to the sites. With this new policy, the company achieved savings because it did not have to handle four or more truckloads full of unnecessary leftover materials that would have had to be returned to the storage area or to suppliers at the end of the project. In addition, it has been confirmed that 5S can contribute to improved equipment performance, safety records, and quality in any enterprise.

Table 1. The meaning of 5S.

Japanese term	Meaning	Explanation
<i>Seiri</i>	Sort	Sort out & discard unnecessary items
<i>Seiton</i>	Arrange	Arrange necessary items in good order
<i>Seiso</i>	Clean	Clean the workplace & equipment thoroughly
<i>Seiketsu</i>	Improve, standardize, maintain	Maintain clean, tidy conditions; improve 3S
<i>Shitsuke</i>	Self-discipline	Make 5S practices a habit

Source: Teian Consulting International, Singapore.

Successful 5S implementation systems in companies must be structured and are commonly organized into the four phases of preparation, training, launch, and sustaining. Although good housekeeping may appear simple, the experiences of many organizations have shown that these simple activities are often hard to sustain as people can be distracted by seemingly more “modern” sophisticated improvement techniques available on the productivity market. Therefore, effective leadership and commitment by the top management is important for the success of 5S programs in organizations. 

5S is now a structured technique with the initial 3S meaning “sort, arrange, and clean,” respectively. They form the basis for daily practice of the technique. The fourth S represents “improving, standardizing, and maintaining the standard of current housekeeping practices.” Eventually, people at the workplace will develop sufficient “self-discipline” to carry out and maintain the “right” activities in the workplace. Through these practices, positive work attitudes will eventually be cultivated among employees, helping to create a high-performance workplace.

Table 2. Benefits of implementing 5S.

Area	Benefit
Productivity	Waste reduction through systematic work systems
Quality	Fewer human errors through visual control & other systems
Equipment performance	Routine cleaning & inspection prevent unscheduled breakdowns
Safety	Reduction of hazards through proper storage & organization of items in the workplace

Source: Teian Consulting International, Singapore.

In many instances, 5S provided the foundation for the implementation and sustainability of many other popular productivity programs like total quality management (TQM), total productive maintenance (TPM), and just-in-time (JIT) production systems. In addition, a thoughtfully implemented 5S program involves every employee in tackling common issues related to good housekeeping practices. This can help bring about continuous improvement (kaizen) in the workplace. Table 2 summarizes the benefits of 5S.

It is known that good 5S practices can help to reduce the “7 wastes” in operations, thereby improving overall workplace productivity. For example, after putting a 5S system into place, an electrical contractor changed the company purchasing policy to one of buying raw materials for their project sites in smaller lots. This forced the workers to consume each bundle



Contributed by Director and Principal Consultant Kelvin Chan, Teian Consulting International Pte Ltd, Singapore, resource speaker for the APO training course on the Development of Productivity Practitioners: Basic Program.

p-Glossary

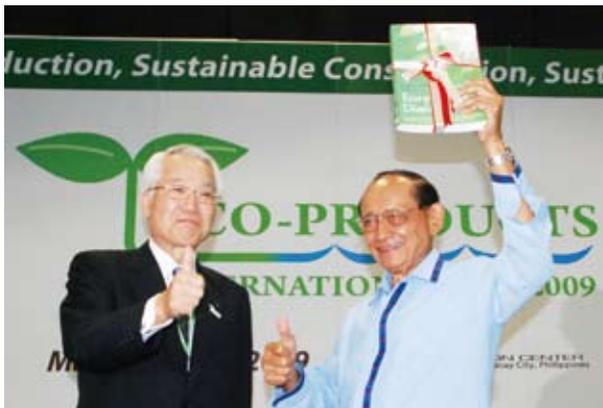


To provide easy reference to productivity-related terms including methodologies, tools, and techniques, the APO developed the p-Glossary, available on its Web site (www.apo-tokyo.org). Definitions and explanations of 5S and other relevant tools mentioned in this article such as TQM, JIT, kaizen, etc. are given in the p-Glossary.

EPIF Preparatory Committee Chairperson and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation Chairman Teisuke Kitayama complemented Dr. Nomakuchi's address by highlighting the positive changes that environmentally enlightened consumers could bring about by "encouraging the private sector to offer more eco-friendly and energy-efficient products." Former First Lady of the Philippines and EPIF 2009 Executive Advisory Committee Chairperson Amelita M. Ramos thanked the exhibitors and spoke on eco-friendly activities in the Philippines. In his keynote address, Executive Secretary Eduardo R. Ermita expressed full support for the EPIF as an event dedicated to showing the path to a sustainable future.

Prof. Ryoichi Yamamoto, Vice Chairperson of the GPAC, then presented Executive Secretary Ermita with a copy of the newly published *Eco-products Directory 2009*. The 2009 version lists more than 800 eco-products and -services available in the Asia-Pacific region. Around 1,000 copies were distributed over the course of the four-day fair. (The e-edition of the directory is available on the APO Web site.)

A three-day international conference, organized in parallel with the EPIF 2009 with the same theme, provided an open forum for the discussion of various green issues including eco-innovation, global finance in the context of sustainable development, the Clean Development Mechanism, green procurement, and marketing strategies for eco-products. More than 30 experts and practitioners shared their knowledge with an audience comprising representatives of private enterprises, NGOs, and public organizations involved in the promotion of sustainable production and consumption in APO member countries. Former President of the Philippines Fidel V. Ramos delivered the keynote speech at the conference and challenged both local and international delegates to take action to care for the environment and seek unity in purpose, vision, and action to achieve that goal. He suggested that the three key words "caring, sharing, and daring" were instrumental in dealing with environmental issues.



Former President Ramos (R) giving a thumbs-up for the 2009 directory with Dr. Nomakuchi (L)

The EPIF 2009 was also an important venue for discussions of how to create synergy from the success of the fairs. Chaired by APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka, delegates from the previous hosts Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, and Vietnam shared their experiences in organizing this mega event and major achievements with representatives from the Philippines, India, and Indonesia, the host of the EPIF 2010. On the second day of the fair, these delegates joined conference experts and participants at the handing-over ceremony, during which the EPIF flag was passed from the Philippines to Indonesia.

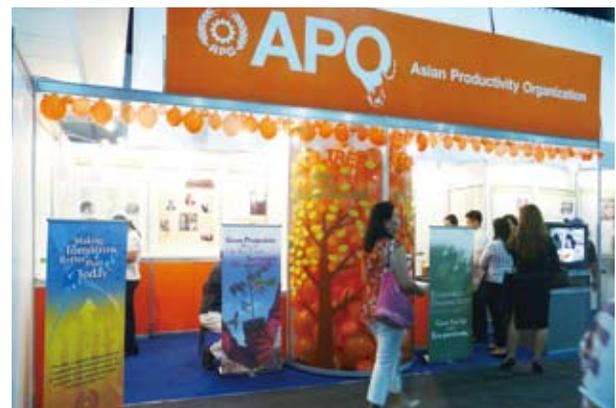
The APO had a booth at the EPIF 2009 to promote its programs, especially Green Productivity (GP). Visitors to the booth received brochures, leaflets, and other GP-related publications, including the *Eco-products Directory 2009*. Many local SME entrepreneurs expressed enormous interest in the directory as a means of identifying future business partners. They also expressed a desire to register their products in future editions. Visitors were invited to post notes on their commitment to greening their lives on an eco-tree decorated with APO balloons, which proved as popular as at previous fairs. Many messages pledged to practice the 3Rs (reuse, recycle, reduce) and to plant more trees.



EPIF Handing-over Ceremony (L-R): Vice President Rachmat Gobel, Industry, Technology and Maritime Affairs, Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Takenaka, Kitayama

Various parallel events educated and entertained visitors. The main stage of the exhibition space hosted cultural performances, speakers, and raffle drawings for prizes such as four motorcycles, an LCD TV, and a green air-conditioner. Another event was a two-day meeting of the International Green Purchasing Network.

Director Jan Tan, Waste Management and Recycling Association of Singapore, a coorganizer of the EPIF 2006, confirmed the quality of this year's fair, noting, "I think that the quality of this year's exhibition is quite good in all aspects, such as the exhibitors' booths, dimensions of the exhibits, governmental support from the host country, and the quality of the conference and other side events." The APO received other encouraging news when the organizers of the EPIF 2009 confirmed that they would hold a domestic eco-products fair next year to continue eco-efforts in the Philippines. The APO hopes that even more companies and organizations from APO member countries will participate in the EPIF 2010 in Jakarta next March. 🌱



APO booth at the EPIF 2009

Evolution in public-sector management

The public sector in APO member countries faces growing pressure to evolve. That pressure, whether generated internally or externally, translates into demand for public management to become more productive and transparent. Common barriers to changes in public management include subjective result measures, the lack of a holistic planning approach, and fragmented work structures. The APO therefore organized a training course on Performance Management Systems for the Public Sector with the collaboration of the National Iranian Productivity Center in Tehran, IR Iran, 14–17 February 2009.

The course was the second in a series of public-sector projects started in 2008 to create a pool of public-sector productivity catalysts in member countries. The first was held in the Republic of Korea on Sustainable Management Strategies for the Public Sector in November 2008. The follow-up course in IR Iran was particularly welcomed by the host country, since the current national agenda is reexamining the performance of the public sector. Thirteen international and 10 local participants representing mid- to senior-level management from various governmental organizations involved in national budget planning, implementation, and evaluation attended.

One of the principal challenges in the public sector is creating an integrated performance appraisal system that results in transparency and accountability. The five-day course focused on practical application of performance-based budgeting (PBB). Chief expert Dr. Arunselam Rassapan, senior advisor to the Center for Development and Research in Evaluation and technical policy adviser to many governments on public-sector management, addressed the need for a holistic approach to planning and development within the government framework. In addition, various principles and methodologies were discussed, including the



Group exercise on budget design

horizontal/vertical principle and program activity structure in PBB, development of performance frameworks, result-based management systems, design of performance appraisal frameworks (output planning, impact assessment, and contingency planning), and national report cards for the public sector.

Participants gained a realization that the lack of an integrated approach to address public-sector performance undermines the overall quality of the national management system. They also suggested that additional projects specifically addressing the public sector be held to ensure that member countries are sufficiently prepared for the new challenges in productivity. The APO plans more efforts in this area in 2009 and thereafter to meet strategic development needs in its membership. 🌀

Management innovation for service excellence

The APO Top Management Forum (TMF), launched in 1985, is a special project designed to improve the capability of corporate senior managers. In welcoming the 32 APO participants and 11 local observers to the TMF 2009 held in Kyoto, 2–4 March, Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka spoke about the forum's achievements. "During its 24-year history, the forum has given the opportunity for the top managers of business corporations in APO member countries to gain practical insights into a variety of pertinent topics from Japanese best practices," he pointed out.

Secretary-General Takenaka also explained that the theme of this year's forum, Management Innovation for Productivity Improvement in the Service Sector, was based on Japanese efforts to improve productivity in the service sector, since it accounts for nearly 70% of national GDP. He noted the APO's dedication to developing the service sector in member countries, adding, "Let us persist in endeavoring to build up the service sector in the Asia-Pacific so that one day the APO region will not only be called the manufacturing center of the world but also the center of service excellence." Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development President Tsuneaki Taniguchi, Kansai Productivity Center Chairperson Kiyoshi Otsubo, and Director-General Economic Policy Department Junichi Ozawa, Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade, and Industry, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, also gave addresses at the TMF.

After presentations by seven Japanese top managers, the format of the wrap-up discussion was changed to a brainstorming discussion with special facilitators. To broaden the spectrum of experience in management innovation, the APO invited two non-Japanese speakers to this year's TMF, Senior Specialist and



APO Secretary-General Takenaka explaining the forum theme

Chairman Yu-Chia Wang, Old-Don Co., Ltd., Republic of China, and Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC) Director-General Dato' Nik Zainiah Nik Abdul Rahman. Wang, former vice president of Rich-Mill Co., Ltd., a successful restaurant chain, detailed Rich-Mill's success in transforming traditional Chinese breakfast stands into a chain store network. In her presentation on Service Innovation for Malaysian Service-sector Competitiveness, Dato' Nik Abdul Rahman gave an overview of the service sector in Malaysia, the MPC's consultative panel for the sector, and the service innovation, benchmarking, and award system. As one of the Japanese speakers represented Ganko Food Service Co., Ltd., participants had the opportunity to visit the company, observe Ganko-style management, and sample its food offerings. The group discussions coordinated by resource persons-cum-facilitators will be included in a publication summarizing all the presentations, which will also be available on the APO Web site soon. 🌀

Program calendar

June

Islamic Republic of Iran

Workshop on Participatory Approach to Water Resources Management in Agriculture: Participatory Irrigation Management, 11–16 June.

► Objective: To enhance participants' understanding of the current global trends, opportunities, and challenges in participatory irrigation management.

Malaysia

Study meeting on Knowledge Management in the Service Sector, 15–18 June.

► Objective: To review and highlight the best practices of knowledge management (KM) in the service sector and explore the possibility of customizing the APO KM framework.

Philippines

Multicountry observational study mission on Quality Management in the Food-processing Industry, 15–19 June.

► Objective: To understand specific quality management issues in the food-processing industry and identify best practices for adoption by other member countries.

Thailand

Workshop on Applications of Nanotechnology in the Food Industry, 15–19 June.

► Objective: To review the current status and formulate strategic recommendations for promoting the safe application of nanotechnology in the food industry.

Republic of Korea

Multicountry observational study mission on Waste Management in the Agroprocessing Industry, 16–19 June.

► Objective: To examine the development and use of environment-friendly technologies in the agroprocessing sector.

Republic of China

Multicountry observational study mission on Entrepreneurship and Agrotechnology/Agribusiness Incubation, 22–26 June.

► Objective: To understand agrotechnology/agribusiness incubation and formulate strategies for promoting the best practices in member countries.

Indonesia

Training course for Certified Lead Auditors for the Occupational Health and Safety Management System: OHSAS 18001:2007, 22–26 June.

► Objective: To learn how to manage and conduct audits of OHS management systems by becoming certified lead auditors under the requirements of OHSAS 18000:2007.

Japan

Multicountry observational study mission on the Management of Technology, 22–26 June.

► Objective: To observe the key concepts and priorities in the management of technology among Japanese manufacturing companies.

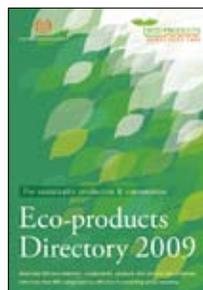
Indonesia

Seminar on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Safety for Fruit Crops and Vegetables: Managing Food Quality, 29 June–3 July.

► Objective: To review the key concepts of GAP and formulate measures for promoting the best of GAP in member countries.



New APO publication



ECO-PRODUCTS DIRECTORY 2009

More than 800 eco-materials, -components, -products, and -services are included, with more than 400 categorized as effective in preventing global warming.

Green your life with eco-purchasing

APO 445 pp. March 2009

ISBN: 92-833-2392-0 (print edition)

ISBN: 92-833-7077-5 (e-edition)

Obituary

The *APO News* regrets to announce the demise of APO Director for Mongolia Dr. Pagvajav-Un Shurchuluu, Chairman and CEO of the National Productivity and Development Center (NPDC), on 21 March 2009. He was the founder of the NPDC and had served as APO Director and Head of the NPO for Mongolia since 21 July 1992. He also served as APO Liaison Officer for Mongolia for more than 12 years until October 2004. His immense contributions to the APO and regional organizations were widely recognized, and he was the recipient of the APO National Award in 2000.

APO/NPO update

New name of NPO for Japan

The names of the NPO for Japan and the department of the Liaison Officer for Japan were changed to the Japan Productivity Center and International Cooperation Department, respectively, w.e.f. 1 April 2009. Mailing address, phone and fax numbers, and Web site address remain the same.

New APO Liaison Officer for Republic of Korea

Mr. Jun-Ho Kim, Director, International Cooperation Department, Korea Productivity Center, was appointed APO Liaison Officer for the Republic of Korea, w.e.f. 19 March 2009. His e-mail address is: jhkim@kpc.or.kr.

Industry Department Senior Program Officer in APO Secretariat

Ms. Setsuko Miyakawa, former Program Officer, Secretariat Industry Department, was appointed as Senior Program Officer, Industry Department, w.e.f. 1 April 2009.

Erratum

In the photo caption on page 5, March 2009 issue, Wagoen Agricultural Producers' Cooperative Corporation was incorrectly identified as Deco-Pon Farmers' Union.

Kindly contact your NPO for details of future activities, including eligibility for participation. The project details along with the address of your NPO are available from the APO Web site at www.apo-tokyo.org.

■ Nepal improves energy efficiency through biomass utilization ■

Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have millions of tons of potential energy sources in the form of rice husk, waste wood, coconut shells, horticultural and agricultural waste, palm oil waste, organic solids, bagasse, etc., which could easily be utilized in boilers to replace fossil fuels. As part of its commitment to promoting biomass energy use in SMEs in its member countries, the APO organized a project on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy for SMEs in the Greater Mekong Subregion of ASEAN in 2006. This was followed by a South Asian regional workshop on Biomass Utilization for Industrial Boilers in Pakistan in 2008. The second phase of the regional workshop took the form of a series of national projects in selected countries. One of the most successful of those national seminars was held in Nepal, 5–6 March 2009, which was jointly organized by the APO and the National Productivity and Economic Development Center.

The two-day seminar was opened by Minister of Environment, Science and Technology Ganesh Shah and conducted by APO expert A. K. Asthana, Senior Technical Specialist, Indo-German Energy Programme, India, and local expert Ramesh Prasad Nepal, an energy efficiency expert with the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI). Both experts gave presentations and facilitated group discussions to help participants prepare action plans for the promotion of biomass boilers in Nepal. The seminar was attended by 57 participants, 60% of whom were from the private sector. Representatives of the Federation of Cottage and Small Scale Industries Association and FNCCI were also present. The level of interaction between experts and participants was remarkably high. “In Nepal, biomass utilization in industrial boilers is quite popular since the country does not have its own petroleum refinery, no fossil fuel



Minister Shah delivering the opening address

deposits, and all energy sources are imported,” explained local expert Nepal. Secretariat Research and Planning Department Director Mukesh D. Bhattarai, who oversaw the seminar, commented it had been one of the most successful APO projects held in Nepal. The seminar concluded with closing remarks by Minister of Industry Asta Laxmi Shakya.

The APO plans to establish model companies on the use of biomass boilers in Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka to promote regional dissemination of the potential for improved energy efficiency. A training manual on biomass utilization will soon be completed and distributed to the model companies and other interested stakeholders. It will also be available as an e-book on the APO Web site. ☺

People behind the scenes: Program Officer Setsuko Miyakawa

Jackie Chan, the world-famous action movie star and director, is known for the outtakes at the end of his films giving a behind-the-scenes view of the people and process. Here is an up-close, personal view of the APO Secretariat’s own action star, Industry Department Program Officer Setsuko Miyakawa, who was responsible for the recently concluded EPIF 2009 (see page 1).

Preparations for a mega event like the EPIF span a year, starting as soon as one fair finishes and only ending when the next begins. Managing the event means taking final responsibility for everything, from coordinating with exhibitors, coorganizers, supporting organizations, and Secretariat staff to overseeing procedures, preparations, management, and execution. The final days are especially hectic and require many late nights at the office.

Miyakawa smiled through stress and weariness, constantly encouraging others with warm words, a cup of coffee, or a quick meal. After working late on 12 March before an early-morning flight to Manila, a Secretariat coworker jokingly said, “You had better go home early if you want to be in one piece by the end of the EPIF.” However, the next morning, that coworker opened an e-mail message from Miyakawa sent after 02:00. Her dedication was reflected again when she sent a message informing the Secretariat of her safe arrival in Manila, with details on preparations and instructions for other staff.

Prior to the EPIF opening ceremony, a series of coordination meetings were convened to check major programs and an endless list of items for review.



Miyakawa (L) checking EPIF preparations at the venue

Miyakawa was the troubleshooter for the entire series, chairing all the meetings in a calm, professional manner despite bloodshot eyes due to lack of sleep and stress. One of the coorganizers who worked with Miyakawa on the EPIF 2006 in Singapore described her as a “perfectionist” while expressing concern for her health. Although Miyakawa generally deflects compliments, anyone who has worked with her praises her professionalism and kindness in putting others first on all occasions. “I am still having nightmares about missing details at the EPIF,” she said almost a week after the EPIF 2009 had concluded. Her eyes were still tired, but all know that she will spring into action when needed. Miyakawa’s schedule remains full with the EPIF 2009 wrap-up, but she will soon be on her way to Indonesia, the venue of the EPIF 2010, to start the sequel. ☺