

MESSAGE FROM THE *Secretary-General*

The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) has been conducting various activities related to the environment over the past 10 years to increase environmental awareness and promote policy, technology, and know-how on the protection and improvement of the environment among its member economies.

In line with the 1992 Earth Summit recommendations that both economic development and environmental protection would be key strategies for sustainable development, the APO launched its Special Program for the Environment in 1994 under a special grant from the Japanese government. In an endeavor to find practical and attractive approaches for its members to deal with both productivity and environmental protection for sustainable development, the APO introduced the concept of Green Productivity (GP).

By the definition as coined by the APO, GP is a strategy for enhancing productivity and environmental performance for overall socio-economic development. It is the application of appropriate productivity and environmental management policies, tools, techniques, and technologies in order to reduce the environmental impact of an organization's activities.

In launching its GP program formally, the APO organized the First World Conference on Green Productivity in Manila in December 1996. The "Manila Declaration on Green Productivity" was issued and endorsed by the conference delegates.

Since then, the objective of the APO's GP program has been to enhance productivity and simultaneously reduce the negative impacts on the environment in its member economies. It seeks to realize this objective by propagating GP consciousness; by performing the roles of think tank, catalyst, regional adviser, institution builder, and clearinghouse of information on GP; and by promoting and disseminating GP skills in its member economies.

Initially taking off in the industrial sector, GP is now being increasingly applied to agriculture, the service industry, and even communities. GP is thus evolving as a driver with comprehensive strategies for sustainable socio-economic development and better quality of life for all.

The APO takes pride in pioneering the GP concept as a practical approach to sustainable development and addressing global environmental issues. Our experiences of operationalizing GP through the APO-sponsored demonstration projects have shown that GP works in the industry, agriculture, service sectors as well as in communities to address the issues of resource management, environmental protection, and enhancing bottom-line benefits.

We are happy to share our GP achievements and the lessons learned with the world community on the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. Through this special publication, the APO would like to make its official statement on GP known to the world community.

The message is simple: it is essential to integrate productivity concerns in our quest for sustainable development. GP is a practical and workable strategy for this aim. The APO would therefore like to urge all stakeholders to adopt GP principles and practices in their pursuit of sustainable development and millennium development goals.

The APO is committed to continuing its efforts in GP. It is also committed to the objectives of the WSSD and millennium development goals. It is an exciting challenge to expand the horizons of the APO GP program. The APO invites cooperation from like-minded organizations in this endeavor, so that together we can make this world a better place for future generations.



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August 2002

