

Promotion of green public procurement

Sustainable development and growth based on green products and services is now a central planning concept for APO member economies. As in many efforts, governments are leading the way by promoting green public procurement (GPP), eco-labeling schemes, etc. An APO workshop-cum-expert meeting on GPP for Green Growth and Trade Competitiveness was held in Kuala Lumpur, 10–12 October, in conjunction with the Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC) and Green Purchasing Network of Malaysia (GPNM) and supported by the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology & Water. The 23 participants from 10 member countries had extensive experience in the field and were joined by four APO resource persons from the Asia-Pacific and four speakers from Sweden, Japan, Malaysia, and the UN Environment Programme-Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics invited by the local organizers, who also invited a Hong Kong Green Council representative as an observer.

The workshop kicked off with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the MPC and GPNM pledging to expand their collaborative GPP efforts. Participants then started wide-ranging debate on specific ways to promote GPP in three stages: implementation, e.g., legal enforcement, financial incentives, and knowledge transfer; establishment, e.g., prioritization, green certification, eco-directories/databases; and discovery/expansion, e.g., legal, financial, and market analyses of GPP in practice. Participants made several novel suggestions on spreading GPP, such as Lee-Kuo Hsiao of the ROC who believed that more countries could follow ROK and “motivate general consumers via a credit

card system.” A list of findings detailing the results of discussions was presented to Malaysian Minister of Energy, Green Technology & Water Peter Chin Fah Kui by the GPNM president. The findings will be finalized in consultation with participants and resource persons as an outcome document by the GPNM to serve as a road map for the region in developing GPP policy initiatives.



MOU signing ceremony (L–R): APO Secretariat Industry Department Director Setsuko Miyakawa; MPC Director General Datuk Razali, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology & Water of Malaysia Loo Took Gee; APO Resource Person, GPAC Vice President, and IGPN Chair Prof. Ryoichi Yamamoto; and GPNM President Dr. Izme Che Ismail.

Participants also attended the 3rd International Greentech & Eco Products Exhibition & Conference Malaysia (IGEM 2012) held simultaneously with the workshop. Malaysia was the host of the first APO Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) in 2004, and both the GPNM and IGEM were inspired by its message. The multiplier effects of the EPIFs thus continue to be felt, both in the hosts and throughout the Asia-Pacific. As Resource Speaker and Director of the Swedish Environmental Council Peter Nohrstedt noted, however, “The challenge is how to follow up and walk the talk. There will be a need for a focal point, like the APO/IGPN, to keep things going with GPP” 