



Eco-products International Fair returns to Singapore

For the second time, Singapore hosted the APO's Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) at Sands Expo & Convention Center, Marina Bay Sands.

On 14 March, H.E. Grace Fu, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, was the guest of honor at the event organized by the APO and Waste Management & Recycling Association of Singapore (WMRAS). SPRING Singapore was the principal supporting organization. Minister Fu said that, "Eco-products make us think about the impact on the environment when products are produced, used, or disposed of. The products that are being promoted and exhibited in this fair illustrate to us that innovation and creativity can bring us solutions that will enable development in a sustainable way." Chairman Jerome Baco of the WMRAS pointed out that, "The 2013 EPIF is an ideal international platform where the different stakeholders, government representatives, trade exhibitors and visitors, and the public can exchange their experiences, build networks, and share the best practices that can be global solutions to environmental challenges."




Ribbon cutting at the Opening Ceremony (L-R): Yukio Yanase, Senior Advisor of ORIX Corporation, GPAC Vice-chairperson; Japanese Ambassador to Singapore H.E. Yoichi Suzuki; Kazuyuki Sakai, Senior Advisor for Technology, Teijin Limited, GPAC Vice-Chairperson; WMRAS Chairman Baco; Minister Fu; GPAC Chairman Kitayama; Secretary-General Yamazaki; Cheong Boon Png, Chief of Executive of SPRING; and Dr. Ryoichi Yamamoto, Emeritus Professor, University of Tokyo, GPAC Vice-chairperson.

The exhibition, themed One Environment, One Future: Towards a Sustainable and Greener Asia, focused on the B2B (business-to-business) model and exhibited cutting-edge, environmentally friendly eco-technologies, eco-products, and eco-services in pavilions representing six APO members. In addition, the Japan Pavilion debuted at the EPIF with the support of Japan's Ministry of Environment, alongside the booths of more than 25 leading Japanese corporations including Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, Teijin Limited, Hitachi Limited, Mitsubishi Electric Corporation, and Toshiba Corporation.

A concurrent, high-impact international conference on Opportunities and Challenges in Sustainable Urban Living was also organized with a parade of renowned speakers such as Teisuke Kitayama, Chairman of the Board of Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, who is also Chairperson of the Green Productivity Advisory Committee (GPAC), and Johannes Christian Wichards, Deputy Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization. Kitayama stated that, "Continuing industrialization and increasing reliance on modern-day comforts threaten our natural heritage. That is why I believe eco-products can help stop the further ravaging of nature." He added that there was a misconception that eco-products were costly, when in fact they could be affordable and accessible. "I also think that the promotion of eco-products contributes directly to establishing a green economy."

APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki commented that the EPIF had started in 2004 with the unwavering support of APO member countries and the GPAC to address the challenges of achieving sustainable economic growth through the promotion of Green Productivity. He added, "After a total of more than 700 exhibitors and some 370,000 visitors later, APO member countries are reaping the rewards of the past seven EPIFs... the establishment of green purchasing networks and policies in many member countries, initiatives to host national green exhibitions, and here in Singapore, the development of the eco-city model that promotes a sustainable urban environment for achieving green growth."

The EPIF flag handing-over ceremony was held on 15 March with delegates from Singapore consisting of WMRAS and SPRING Singapore passing the EPIF flag to the ROC delegation from the Chung-Hua Institution for Economic Research and Taiwan External Trade Development Council. The 2014 EPIF will be held in Taipei and promises to assemble an exciting line-up of exhibitors from the Asia-Pacific and beyond. 

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Asian Productivity Organization (APO)
Leaf Square Hongo Building, 2F
1-24-1 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku
Tokyo 113-0033, Japan

Tel: 81-3-3830-0411

Fax: 81-3-5840-5322

e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org