



APO NEWS

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p. 5, EPIF 2008, Vietnam



p. 6, Study mission, Hawaii



p. 8, 10th anniversary, Fiji

EPIF visitors hit all-time high

The four-day Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) 2008 got underway to the cheerful rhythm of traditional Vietnamese drums and the visual spectacle of a dragon dance on 1 March. The opening stage, constructed in front of the National Convention Center (NCC) Hanoi, the fair venue, was surrounded by special guests comprising exhibitors, international participants, supporting organizations, and organizers, as well as local and international spectators and media.



Visitors through first floor of the exhibition hall

The EPIFs are among the largest international environmental exhibitions in Asia. Each one has been increasingly successful in showcasing the most advanced environmental technologies, providing opportunities to explore business collaborations, and promoting public awareness of environmentally friendly products and services since the first fair opened in Malaysia in 2004.

The 4th EPIF, organized by the APO in collaboration with the Directorate for Standards and Quality (STAMEQ), Vietnam Productivity Centre (VPC), and Vietnam Association for Conservation of Nature and Environment, was a smashing success. Over the course of the four-day event, close to 100,000 people attended, breaking the previous attendance record set in Singapore in 2006 by approximately three-fold. The EPIF 2008 also made history by being not only the first event held in Vietnam to promote eco-products and -services but also one of the largest exhibitions ever held in Hanoi.

More than 90 businesses and organizations exhibited state-of-the-art environment-friendly technologies, products, and services that can enhance productivity and competitiveness in harmony with environmental protection. Participants traveled to Vietnam for the EPIF 2008 not only from APO member countries such as Japan, the Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, but also from nonmembers like the People's Republic of China and Germany.

Vietnam was the natural choice for the EPIF 2008, as APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka stated in his opening address, "As a member of the APO, Vietnam has so far implemented more Green Productivity (GP)-related projects than any other member country, mostly in the field of community development. It was no surprise to us, therefore, when Vietnam expressed its readiness to host this EPIF."

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Growing competitive and innovative enterprises

Loh Khum Yean

Chief Executive, SPRING Singapore

At SPRING, our aim is to grow competitive, innovative enterprises. This supports Singapore's aim to be a leading global city of talent and innovation.

Small enterprises, big business

Small enterprises mean big business for Singapore. While they may not be international brand names yet, Singapore's 148,000 SMEs employ six of every 10 workers and account for nearly half of total value added in the economy. The SME sector has grown by an average 7.4% per annum over the past five years. This growth did not just happen by chance. It is a reflection of the passion and enterprising spirit of our SMEs, coupled with the efforts of Singapore to create and maintain a pro-business environment to allow enterprises to grow and flourish. At SPRING, we contribute to this growth by addressing the needs of SMEs in four dimensions: money, markets, management, and know-how.

Money: access to funding

Access to capital is one critical area for SMEs that are growing their capabilities and business. In Singapore, SME financing is addressed primarily by the market, while the government seeks to ensure a robust, orderly, competitive financial sector. However, the government plays a role in catalyzing new financing solutions for SMEs, often by sharing the credit risk. Through a network of 14 partner banks and financial institutions, SPRING lends some S\$600–700 million annually to more than 5,000 SMEs to finance their growth under the Local Enterprise Finance Scheme (LEFS) and Loan Insurance Scheme (LIS). LEFS is a fixed interest-rate financing program designed to encourage and assist local enterprises to modernize and upgrade their operations, while LIS provides partner banks and financial institutions with more flexibility to offer SMEs loan facilities that are insured against default. Under LIS, the government shares the insurance premium with SMEs, with the insurance covering 75% of the risk of loan defaults.

In addition, SPRING also provides equity co-



funding for promising start-ups. The Startup Enterprise Development Scheme provides innovative Singapore-based start-ups a matching dollar for every dollar an investor puts into the business, for up to S\$300,000.

Markets: staying local, going global

Increasingly, SMEs are finding it necessary to extend their footprints overseas to grow their businesses and tap emerging markets. To help enterprises and companies comply with technical regulations and standards for export, SPRING set up the Export Technical Assistance Centre (ETAC) in October 2006. Since then, ETAC has provided valuable information and technical guidance to SMEs that want to export standard-compliant products. Together with public- and private-sector partners, several online initiatives to help SMEs gain market access were made available.

For example, the EnterpriseOne Business Information Service was launched in 2007 to equip SMEs with the necessary knowledge of overseas markets. It provides a suite of business information services including the latest industry updates and research reports, focused industry workshops, and other business information resources through the guidance of dedicated infoconsultants. The Singapore Business Federation Global Sourcing Hub is a one-stop sourcing e-platform offering SMEs the gateway to local and overseas opportunities. Buyers are able to create requests for quotations and tenders online, select suppliers from the directory, and alert the latter to respond to their requests.

BuySingapore is an online business-matching portal that allows Singapore-based enterprises to connect with overseas buyers or sellers and vice versa. A sister agency, International Enterprise (IE) Singapore, has an iAdvisory service that provides a Web-based platform for companies to seek export assistance and information from qualified international advisers.

IE Singapore's International Partners or iPartners Programme also encourages like-minded companies to band together to venture abroad to complement each other's product offerings, achieve economies of scale, reduce time to market, and pursue bigger projects. SMEs can also enjoy benefits arising from the free trade agreements (FTAs) Singapore has concluded with major economies like the USA, Japan, People's Republic of China, India, and ASEAN. Through various FTA guides and assistance packages, SMEs are tapping FTAs as a strategic market access instrument to gain a competitive edge when negotiating and closing deals overseas.

Management: world-class managers for world-class businesses

Poor management is often a stumbling block to SMEs' sustained growth. In a 2007 survey, Singapore-based SMEs identified leadership training, team building, marketing and promotion, and business planning as key areas that needed more professional development. To equip SMEs with talented managers, SPRING is investing S\$60 million in a Business Leaders Initiative (BLI) to create a pipeline of 1,000 trained SME bosses, senior executives, and aspiring executives. The BLI programs are targeted at three different groups of learners. The first are outstanding students who have demonstrated strong leadership capabilities, passion, and the drive to run their own businesses in the future. They will be offered the Executive Development Scholarships (EDS) to pursue undergraduate studies at any of Singapore's three specified local universities. Successful EDS graduates will be encouraged to join a growth-oriented SME or set up their own businesses upon completion of the bond.

The second are existing management staff of SMEs. They will be supported by Management Development Scholarships to upgrade their business management expertise to meet the challenges of a globalized economy. Customized postgraduate and executive development courses that focus on the business management needs of SMEs will be provided by local universities.

The third are business owners and top executives of SMEs. They will be supported by the Advanced Management Programme to take up postgraduate and executive development courses at leading local universities that focus on enhancing SME management and leadership skills and will put them in a good position to take on the challenges of the dynamic global marketplace.

Know-how: here's a TIP (knowledge means profits)

Innovation is essential for product differentiation in a highly competitive market but adopting new technology is still a challenge for resource-strapped SMEs. In August 2006, SPRING launched the S\$150 million Technology Innovation Programme (TIP) to cofund technology innovation projects by SMEs and strengthen infrastructure such as the Centres of Innovation (COIs).

SMEs that undertake such technology projects can apply for TIP grants, which support up to 50% of qualifying costs. Some 80 companies have already embarked on technology projects, and another 26 have engaged technical experts, both local and overseas, to build up in-house R&D capabilities.

TIP also supports the setting up of COIs for industry clusters that require focused technology support. As a result of such efforts, food manufacturing SMEs in Singapore can now utilize the Food Innovation and Resource Centre at Singapore Polytechnic launched last year to develop innovative packaging or extend product shelf life. More COIs have also been set up for SMEs in other industries, e.g., marine and offshore engineering, environmental technology, and precision engineering.

Through the specific efforts of SPRING described above, complemented by a general pro-enterprise environment, we seek to grow a robust, ongoing pipeline of competitive, innovative Singapore-based enterprises that will generate wealth and good jobs for the country. 



Comment board



Director and Principal Consultant, Kelvin Chan Keng Chuen, Teian Consulting International Pte Ltd, Singapore.

Resource Person, steering committee meeting on Basic and Advanced Training Courses on Productivity, 26–28 February, Japan.

“In the process of assisting industries or organizations, productivity practitioners (PPs) have to perform the roles of promoters, trainers,

and consultants in productivity. The position requires not only knowledge of productivity techniques such as 5S, total quality maintenance, just-in-time systems, Green Productivity, benchmarking, etc. but also ‘soft’ skills like training, consultancy, and promotion. The challenge for a training course on the Development of PPs is to equip participants with this breadth of knowledge within a narrow time frame. Therefore, members of the course steering committee deliberated on the development path for PPs, while streamlining the design and delivery of the current APO basic and advanced training courses for productivity specialists. In my opinion, both the basic and advanced courses must provide entry-level knowledge on productivity techniques and soft skills. Trainees must practice utilizing those before attending more advanced courses. The APO should standardize the training and adopt a more structured path for the development of PPs.”

Senior Project Officer Ma. Theresa Asuncion Agustin, Development Academy of the Philippines.

Participant, training course on the Food Safety Management Systems/ISO22000 for Food Processors, 18–22 February 2008, Republic of Korea.

“The course outlined the ISO22000 requirements and instilled the importance of adopting a food safety management system that enhances the competitive-

ness of SMEs in the food-processing sector. During the course I learned a great deal that will benefit my work in designing and implementing programs for SMEs. The resource persons were highly competent in delivering interesting, down-to-earth discussions on the interpretation of ISO22000 requirements. The group exercises and company visits were effective approaches to developing the skills for setting up a food safety management system and identifying compliance with ISO22000. Group activities also generated creative ideas, promoted camaraderie, and shared responsibility for team presentations of workshop outputs and plans of action. However, we missed the country paper presentations. They could have been squeezed in the action plan session. A trainers’ training is a good sequel to this course.”

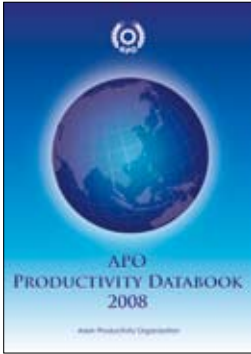
Managing Director Siri Sayavong, LTM Group, Lao Trademark Agency, Lao PDR.

Participant, workshop on SME Development in the Mekong Region, 19–22 February 2008, Japan.

“The economy of Lao PDR is driven by SMEs, which account for 97% of industry. Therefore, the main objective of my participation in this workshop was to learn the key factors in successful SME development from the host and other participating countries. Each session of the workshop introduced me to new concepts and ideas that can be adapted to the practice of SME development. In particular, I found the lecture on the SWOT tools given by JPC-SED Consultant Teruhiko Mitsufuji both informative and useful. After thoroughly analyzing Lao PDR’s SMEs’ strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, we could then tailor strategic tools such as 5S and kaizen to improve their productivity and competitiveness. We are now planning to develop a manual for SWOT analysis, 5S, and kaizen, and criteria for management assessment, after which we will organize a training workshop to disseminate this manual.”



New APO publication



APO PRODUCTIVITY DATABOOK 2008

APO 101 pp. March 2008
ISBN: 92-833-2385-8 (print edition)
ISBN: 92-833-7068-6 (e-edition)

APO relaunches databook series

In response to the increasing awareness of the importance of internationally harmonized productivity data, in 2007 the APO reemerged on the publication of the *APO Productivity Databook* series to cover productivity data from its member countries. Eighteen national experts met in Kathmandu, Nepal, in May 2007 to discuss the most appropriate indicators and methodology to be used.

While the APO has made several previous attempts to compile productivity-related indicators in the past, the *APO Productivity Databook 2008* marks a clear departure from those efforts in terms of both the focus and methodology. First, the new edition focuses on international and regional comparative analyses. Second, it provides data on labor productivity performance in Asian countries covering the three decades since 1975. Hence, it enables assessment of the status and evolution of labor productivity in APO member countries in the context of past national trends, as well as in comparison with reference benchmark economies or regions worldwide (the EU, People's Republic of China, and USA). It therefore offers a fresh perspective on regional growth and development and likely future directions of socioeconomic development.

This edition is divided into an overview of the analytical results, the findings from the 19 countries, explanations of how the results were interpreted, and a chapter on industry performance broken down into the subsections "Industry Structure and Economic Development," "Industry Origins of Economic Growth," and "Labor Productivity Growth by Industry." The raw data are also given in more than 50 pages for the convenience of readers who want to carry out their own analyses following the APO model. In addition to numerous figures and tables, a notable feature of the *APO Productivity Databook 2008* is the inclusion of 11 "boxes" explaining concepts and giving information of current interest, e.g., purchasing power parities, how measurement in the informal sector can be performed, real income and terms of trade, and the impact of now nearly ubiquitous information technology on economic growth.

The *APO Productivity Databook 2008* is the fruit of efforts coordinated by the APO Secretariat's Research and Planning Department; a team of productivity specialists at the Keio Economic Observatory, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan, namely Professor Koji Nomura, Ms. Eunice Y.M. Lau, and Mr. Hideyuki Mozobuchi; and the 19 national experts.

The APO will continue efforts to improve the quality of the data and methodology used for analysis in the databook series in coming years. A new edition is planned for 2009. With time, total factor productivity (TFP) analysis should be possible for many member countries. That goal will become increasingly important, since TFP reflects the results of innovation, adoption of appropriate technology, and learning, all of which are indispensable in the globalized economy.

For order and inquiry on APO publications and videos, please contact the Asian Productivity Organization, Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F, 1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093, Japan. Phone number: (81-3) 5226-3920, Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950, e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org.

Common sense talk



"Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives."

William A. Foster

"There are three principal means of acquiring knowledge available to us: observation of nature, reflection, and experimentation. Observation collects facts; reflection combines them; experimentation verifies the result of that combination. Our observation of nature must be diligent, our reflection profound, and our experiments exact. We rarely see these three means combined, and for this reason, creative geniuses are not common."

Denis Diderot

"Excellent firms don't believe in excellence, only in constant improvement and constant change."

Thomas J. Peters

"The surest way to establish your credit is to work yourself into the position of not needing any."

Maurice Switzer

"If you have the same ideas as everybody else but have them one week earlier than everyone else then you will be hailed as a visionary. But if you have them five years earlier, you will be named a lunatic."

Barry Jones

"We are built to conquer environment, solve problems, achieve goals, and we find no real satisfaction or happiness in life without obstacles to conquer and goals to achieve."

Maxwell Maltz

"Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

Vince Lombardi

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

Mahatma Gandhi

"People underestimate their capacity for change. There is never a right time to do a difficult task. A leader's job is to help have vision of their potential."

John Porter

Vice Chairman of the National Assembly Nguyen Duc Kien, in his opening remarks, spoke passionately on the importance of sustainable development, referring to major policies that the Vietnamese government had undertaken to achieve “Sustainable Development and a Better Life,” the theme of this year’s fair. “The year 2008 is an important year in the five-year plan 2006–2010 leading up to the special 1,000-year anniversary of Thang Long [a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage complex] in Hanoi. This Eco-products International Fair is a meaningful milestone for those events,” said Vice Chairman Kien.



Guests of honor at ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the EPIF 2008

As part of the opening ceremony, Prof. Ryoichi Yamamoto, Vice Chairperson of the GP Advisory Committee (GPAC) presented Vice Chairman Kien with the newly published *Eco-products Directory 2008*. The directory contains a trove of more than 700 eco-products/services developed by environmentally advanced enterprises, of which more than 400 are categorized as effective in preventing global warming. The *Eco-products Directory 2008* greatly expands on the 591 items in the 2006 edition, with new categories introduced. The previous editions have attracted attention from various environment-related groups not only within Asia but globally. In light of international interest in the directory, the APO is planning to distribute the most recent edition to participants and local media attending the G8 summit meeting to be held in Hokkaido, Japan, this summer.

They were joined by more than 150 local attendees. Renowned international and local speakers delivered presentations on the best eco-practices of industries, regions, and countries for sustainable development including the keynote address made by GPAC Chairperson Dr. Tamotsu Nomakuchi, Chairman of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation. All the presentations were simultaneously interpreted into English and Vietnamese.

Other concurrent events included the Forum on Eco-Community for Asia held at Hanoi Architectural University on 3 March, and Workshop on Green Purchasing and Green Supply Chain at the NCC. Various cultural and artistic activities at the venue drew large audiences during the entire duration and included musical recitals, puppet shows, and student dramas.



Fun-fair photos with an environmental twist

In parallel with the EPIF 2008 was the International Conference on Promotion of Eco-products for Competitiveness and Sustainable Consumption, organized by the APO and VPC. Thirty-nine APO participants attended the conference in the NCC conference hall. They included representatives of private enterprises involved in eco-product development, concerned NGOs, and members of the public involved in the promotion of sustainable con-

sumption. The organizers’ booth distributed the APO introductory leaflet as well as postcards featuring winning photographs from the APO photo contests, including those from Vietnam. STAMEQ and the VPC also displayed various publications and leaflets to promote the concept of productivity and sustainability. The eco-wish tree where visitors were invited to post their environmental messages was as popular as at previous fairs, especially with the addition of cherry blossom notepaper. Many messages from students showed their determination to protect the environment: “Let’s protect our planet”; “Clean environment for peace for life”; “Protect our environment for your and our future”; etc. Most students emphasized the importance of working together to save the earth and nature. “I came here to see how the eco-concept is adopted into products or services. I am so excited to see all these new ideas and products,” said college student Vu Thi Thu Hang, with a shy smile during an interview at the APO booth. Tran Ngo Khanh, a consultant in the field of building materials, echoed that sentiment: “I am very happy to know that Vietnam hosts this kind of grand exhibition. I hope this event will be held next year as well.”

The APO’s efforts to promote the eco-spirit will continue. The excitement and attention that the EPIF 2008 generated will only encourage the host of the next fair. It is hoped that Vietnam will follow the lead of Thailand, a previous host country, by holding a domestic Eco-products Fair in the near future. ♻️

— Aloha state center of excellent environmental industries —

Hawaii, the “Aloha state,” consists of eight pristine islands. It is among the 10 least polluting of the 50 states in terms of discharging toxins into the environment and also uses the least amount of energy per capita in the USA. The state has a deserved reputation as a center of excellence for environmental services such as bioremediation, toxic waste cleanup, wastewater treatment technologies, and integrated watershed management. Therefore the APO, with support from the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT), State of Hawaii, organized a study mission to Hawaii, 11–15 February, to expose participants to a range of best practices in environmental management, especially in wastewater treatment and waste management.

The ultimate goal of the mission was to enable participants to develop and use smart solutions for environmental challenges in their home nations, thereby conserving the environment and contributing to a better quality of life. Seventeen participants from the private sector, NGOs, academia, industrial associations, and environmental research institutions joined the mission along with two APO experts. During the mission, participants took countless photographs of state-of-the-art environmental technologies and facilities at four sites. At the Honolulu wastewater treatment plant and water reclamation facility, delegates observed one of the world’s largest water treatment plants busily processing wastewater back into potable form. The second visit was to HPower, a local company that daily converts 2000 tons of waste into 4 megawatts of environmentally sound electricity. The third visit was to Houma Technologies, a US industry leader in the design and manufacture of high-technology medical waste treatment and energy recovery systems. The last visit examined groundwater remediation systems installed by Environment Inc., an environmental consulting firm, to address the offsite migration of residual subsurface petroleum.

Additionally, the DBEDT initiated a business-matching session with local environmental business companies. The session allowed participants to discuss spe-



A local expert explaining water reclamation

cific environmental problems and possible solutions with seven local companies. The results were immediate. Managing Director Matthew Tan, SIF Technologies Pte Ltd Singapore, informed the APO that his company was in the process of signing an MOU for collaboration with one company and that two joint projects with two other companies were underway. Panel discussions, group exercises, and country paper presentations were also part of the mission. “I believe that the experience and knowledge gained from the mission will be a great asset in my business, with a lot of ideas on environmental preservation for a better quality of life and future,” said Korean participant Eul Taek Jung. The mission allowed delegates and Hawaii-based companies to understand each other’s requirements for the evolution of future solutions. 🌀

— Training agricultural officials in policy analysis —

Improving the productivity of agriculture in a sustainable way is a challenge for all governments. They also have goals of food security and price stability, supporting farm incomes and employment, protecting the environment, and providing affordable, safe food to consumers. Agricultural policies play a major role in achieving these, and various instruments are used, including import tariffs, input subsidies, and support for R&D, education, and training.

Achieving those objectives is difficult. Improving productivity may require farms to be bigger, employ fewer workers, and use more capital. High prices for farmers can penalize poor consumers. Providing subsidies for farmers to purchase inputs may lead to environmentally harmful production. Therefore, policymakers must have good information on how agricultural policies help or hinder productivity growth while meeting other objectives. The starting point is to understand how agricultural policies operate and calculate the transfers policy instruments provide to farmers, individually or collectively. Fortunately, there is a well-established method of estimating agricultural policy transfers, the Producer Support Estimate (PSE), used by the OECD for more than 20 years. The PSE provides a common yardstick to calculate the monetary value of the transfers provided by agricultural policy instruments.

The APO’s five-day training course on Basic Agricultural Policy Analysis held

in Tokyo, 4–8 February, provided an opportunity to discuss the PSE concept, review provisional PSEs calculated by national analysts from eight member countries, and reflect on the uses of the PSE for policymakers. Participants agreed that a good understanding of how policies work and are implemented is necessary for estimating policy transfers to farmers from consumers who pay higher prices due to import duties and from taxpayers. They concluded that the PSE is primarily a tool to assist policymakers in choosing instruments to achieve the best return from policy transfers. While the PSE does not measure the impact of policies on productivity, it is a starting point for statistical analysis or modeling. The course gave confidence in calculating PSEs through shared experiences and discussion of common problems. Further insights could be gained from a follow-up program with other countries, broadening the discussion of how the data and calculations are used elsewhere. 🌀



Contributed by Wilfrid Legg, Head of Agricultural Policies and Environment Division, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, France

Program calendar

July

ROC

Multicountry observational study mission on Value-adding Technologies for Fruit and Vegetables, 14–18 July.

► Objectives: To review recent developments in the management of fruit and vegetables; learn about modern technologies and strategies for fruit and vegetables; observe the best practices in the host countries; and discuss and formulate strategic approaches to adopt the identified valuable-adding technologies for fruit and vegetable management.

► Participants: Managers, officials, or researchers in private enterprises, the public sector, or producers' associations involved in developing and disseminating value-adding technologies for fruit and vegetable processing.

Indonesia

APO Alumni Forum, 14–16 July.

► Objectives: To take stock of the activities of APO societies/alumni or productivity associations in member countries; and motivate NPOs to develop and/or strengthen APO alumni activities in their countries.

► Participants: NPO heads/senior coordinators in charge of alumni relations, officer bearers of APO alumni associations, or former participants with strong leadership and initiative.

Malaysia

Training of trainers in Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) and Benchmarking: GLOBALGAP for Fruit and Vegetables, 14–23 July.

► Objectives: To acquaint participants with the key concept and understanding of GAP, GLOBALGAP, and benchmarking for harmonization of GAP standards; and provide training on how to develop a GAP scheme.

► Participants: Trainers or consultants of research and training institutions, representatives of quality assurance/certification bodies, NPOs, or other organizations, or academics directly involved in training fruit and vegetable producers, retailers, exporters, and importers in GAP.

e-Learning Course

Energy Efficiency (based on the Global Development Learning Network of the World Bank platform).

Phase 1: 9–12 June for Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam, and Mongolia

Phase 2: 7–10 July for India, I.R. Iran, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan

Phase 3: 22–25 July for Fiji, Malaysia, Philippines, and Indonesia

► Objectives: To acquaint participants with the concept, principles, and fundamental elements of energy management including energy audits, energy efficiency measurement, and development of preliminary energy management plans for industries.

► Participants: Energy professionals, industry managers especially from SMEs, building engineers/architects, energy managers/consultants, and energy auditors.

Making the APO carbon neutral

While promoting sustainable socioeconomic development in the Asia-Pacific region, the APO also decided to take the lead in becoming carbon neutral. The organization's main carbon emissions are due to air travel by project participants, experts, and staff, with some from other sources like office use, hotel rooms, etc. The project on Making the APO a Carbon-neutral Organization started in late 2007 and is being undertaken in three steps: assessing carbon emissions from APO activities; reducing emissions; and finally offsetting remaining emission equivalents through Green Productivity (GP) projects. The project is being carried out in consultation with the Energy Management Group of the NPC, India, and expert Dr. Albert Kaupp, Manager of the Indo-German Energy Programme. By becoming carbon neutral, the APO will set an example for other organizations in the region and underline its commitment to GP by practicing what it preaches.

APO/NPO update

Director of Administration and Finance Department and Senior Program Officer in APO Secretariat

Dr. A.K.P. Mochtan, Acting Director of the Administration and Finance Department, was appointed Director of the Administration and Finance Department, and Mr. Joselito Bernardo, Program Officer (Agriculture), was appointed Senior Program Officer (Agriculture), w.e.f. 1 April 2008.

New APO Liaison Officer for India

Mr. Chandraker Bharti, Deputy Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, was appointed APO Liaison Officer for India, w.e.f. 13 March 2008.

New address and phone/fax numbers of NPO for Lao PDR

The address and phone/fax numbers of the NPO for Lao PDR were changed to:

Nong Bone Road, P.O. Box No. 474

01005 Ban Fai Area, Saysetha District

Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Tel: 856-21-414064 ext. 105 Fax: 856-21-263590 e-Mail: info@smepdo.org, productivity@smepdo.org, skhamphasith@smepdo.org.

New name of NPO and new e-mail address of APO Liaison Officer for Malaysia

The name of the NPO for Malaysia was changed to: Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC), w.e.f. 21 February 2008. Its new Web site address is: www.mpc.gov.my.

The e-mail address of Mrs. Safniwati Jasri, APO Liaison Officer for Malaysia, was changed to: safni@mpc.gov.my.

New e-mail address of APO Liaison Officer for Mongolia

The e-mail address of Ms. Batchimeg Chimeddorj, APO Liaison Officer for Mongolia, was changed to: npdc-mon@aiax.mn.

New NPO Head for Nepal

Mr. Yuddha Bahadur Pant Chhetri, General Manager, National Productivity and Economic Development Centre, was appointed NPO Head for Nepal, w.e.f. 17 January 2008.

New title of APO Liaison Officer for Singapore

The title of Mr. Wong Wai Meng, APO Liaison Officer for Singapore, was changed to: Head, Board & Legal Affairs and International Partnership Office (Asia-Pacific), Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board, SPRING Singapore.

10th anniversary of Fiji Business Excellence Awards

This year the Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji (TPAF) is taking a trip down memory lane as it celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Fiji Business Excellence Awards (FBEAs). Since their launch in 1998 by late President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, the FBEAs have grown in stature and are now a full-fledged business excellence process for Fiji. They were conceived at the first Roundtable Conference in 1995, where it was unanimously agreed that the country required a business excellence framework if it was to be competitive in the international arena. Thus the guiding principles were formulated to enhance productivity excellence and help organizations in Fiji attain world-class quality in products and services, pay recognition to outstanding enterprises, and provide a framework for sustainable improvement through quality management.

The journey that commenced in 1998 at first attracted only two companies. Like any new venture, progress was slow as the FBEAs were viewed with skepticism. However, the modest success of the first year saw perceptions change and an increase in the number of applicants in 1999. Although the awards suffered a setback with the coup in 2000, they were down but not out and resurrected in 2001. The process regained lost momentum, and the TPAF has not looked back since.

The FBEAs provide four levels of recognition: Commitment to Business Excellence; Achievement in Business Excellence; Fiji Business Excellence Prize; and the highest level, the President's Business Excellence Award. In 2004, Vodafone Fiji Limited became the first organization to receive the coveted award from President Ratu Josefa Iloilovatu Uluivuda of the Republic of the Fiji Islands. In the same year, the TPAF received a record-breaking 20 applications from enterprises seeking recognition in the four levels. This encouraging trend continued into 2007.

This year, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the FBEAs, the TPAF has embarked on various strategies to increase the number of organizations taking part. First, the TPAF will offer Category Awards to allow applications for an award in one of seven categories of the FBEAs: Leadership and Innovation; Strategy and Planning Processes; Data, Information, and Knowledge; People; Customer and Market Focus; Processes, Products, and Services; and Organizational Performance. Applicants select the category they perceive to be their foremost strength. The FBEA Secretariat, through its evaluators, will compile a feedback report providing applicants with their strengths and opportunities for improvement in the specific category applied for. It is envisaged that the introduction of these awards will minimize entry barriers for enterprises.


The TPAF has also enhanced its training and consulting programs for heads of local organizations to encourage them to participate in the FBEAs. One successful effort was seen in the Reddy Group of Companies, the parent body of Tanoa Hotels, a local chain. It marked the beginning of its quality improvement process on 17 January 2008. As part of its entry into the FBEA program, Reddy Group Human Resources and Training Manager Naveen Lakshmaiya facilitated training programs for managers and team leaders. Managing Director Rohit Reddy



The Reddy Group Team poses for the camera after FBEA-based training

inculcated the need for committed teamwork to realize the vision of the group at the launch ceremony held at the Tanoa International Hotel in Nadi. He also highlighted the need to remain competitive in the face of adversity.

According to Lakshmaiya, Reddy Group's decision to participate was the result of the company's recognition that the FBEA framework was a holistic approach that looked at an organization in totality from leadership to organizational performance. He also stated that when the leadership of an organization was supportive of such an initiative, the organization was surely destined for success.

The first decade is complete, and the FBEA Secretariat is now looking to the future. The TPAF is confident that the FBEAs will become an essential component in the continuing evolution of Fijian organizations which allow more enterprises to take their place among the best companies in the world in terms of quality goods and services. 

Contributed by Manager, Productivity Promotion, Viliame Waqalaivi, TPAF

"Productivity: Tomorrow's Hope" APO Photo Contest 2008

The APO Photo Contest, a biannual productivity promotion event, will be held this year with the theme "Productivity: Tomorrow's Hope." The contest, generously cosponsored by Fujifilm, is open to all nationals of APO member countries. The competition will serve to collect all the beautiful images capturing meaningful moments in your own or others' productivity efforts. The deadline for receipt of entries is 15 August. The 12 prize-winning photos will be featured on the 2009 APO calendar and other promotional materials. With the recognition of the universality of digital technology, this year's contest will accept digital photographs to encourage more people to enter. The detailed rules and regulations are available on the APO Web site (www.apo-tokyo.org, click APO Photo Contest 2008) or from your NPO or the APO Secretariat (1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093, Japan; slee@apo-tokyo.org). Please share your visions of hope for a better tomorrow via higher productivity.