



APO NEWS

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New Year message from the APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka

The New Year is a time to reflect on the past year as we look forward to the coming one. As such, it is my earnest hope that all readers of the *APO News* will see your productivity efforts bear fruit in 2009. I would also like to thank you for all your support for the APO in 2008. Your support was crucial to the success of our continuing efforts to improve the organization.

The year 2008 was an important one for the APO in several ways. The APO Governing Body introduced a new budgeting system and procedures for deciding total membership contributions by member countries in 2008. Last year also bore witness to new Secretariat initiatives to make APO programs more useful. One of the highlights was the introduction of in-country training programs for productivity and quality practitioners which were implemented on a pilot basis in India, IR Iran, and Pakistan. These pilot programs were the tangible results of the Need Assessment Survey coordinated by the Secretariat. I am certain that we will organize more improved, down-to-earth projects under this initiative in 2009. In addition, the 2008 Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) in Hanoi, Vietnam, was a resounding success, attracting 100,000 visitors over four days. That success will hopefully be repeated at the 2009 EPIF in Manila, the Philippines.

Another highlight was the successful implementation of the e-learning courses. e-Learning is by far the most cost-effective way to deliver knowledge to a wide audience in the APO region. Since such courses were first offered in 2005, the number of e-learning participants has increased. In 2008, we were able to reach more than 1,500 participants with about 60% of them from the private sector. This number will increase even more in 2009 with our current e-learning formats going from strength to strength, including the self-e-learning program that we embarked upon in the latter half of 2008.

Paralleling our efforts to implement new initiatives, the Secretariat explored ways to improve project quality. One important introduction was a test for training course participants in the final session. We have, in fact, been surprised by the participants' enthusiastic response to this. Another change was assigning officers in charge for the entire duration of projects, thus ensuring a high level of quality through meaningful coordination and commitment.

I sincerely hope that we will be able to make meaningful contributions to individuals, companies, organizations, and member countries through these continuous improvement efforts. In all this, we will be relying on your support and cooperation and looking forward to 2009 knowing that you are with us in our productivity endeavors. 



New Year messages from APO member countries

"A new year always comes with hope for progress and prosperity. In these changing times, life is gradually becoming more challenging and competitive than in previous years. In the era of global competition for survival, I hope that *APO News* readers can overcome all the challenges for a better tomorrow. I also wish the readers of the *APO News* a happy and productive 2009."

Director Dr. Md. Nazrul Islam, National Productivity Organization, Bangladesh

"In the face of various difficulties caused by the rapid changes in the global socioeconomic environment, the Cambodian government has developed its own national strategies not only to cope with those challenges but also as steppingstones to future growth. The National Productivity Center of Cambodia, in seeking out the best ideas for advancing our country, would like to join all *APO News* readers on their journey to productivity in this new year of 2009!"

Director Yea Bunna, National Productivity Center of Cambodia

"2008 brought drastic changes to the global economy, including energy price surges and the financial crisis. Although the economic environment will be full of uncertainties in 2009, I sincerely wish all *APO News* readers the vision to see in the crisis an opportunity for turning things around and hope that they will demonstrate courage in bringing about a more prosperous future."

President Dr. Pao-Cheng Chang, China Productivity Center

"After his landslide victory, US President Elect Barack Obama said that change had come to America. One wonders and hopes that he will be able to translate such changes into the global economy. What is certain, however, is that at the national level we have control over what we can change to bring about positive effects for our nation, enterprises, and ultimately our people. The challenges of 2009 will be considerable with forecasts of a slowdown in the global economy, but we must move forward in a positive manner with renewed hope for a positive change. We wish all member countries the very best in 2009."

Director General Jone Usamate, Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji

"We can all come out of the present economic crisis by 'being together,' having a 'cost focus,' and

being 'innovative in our approach' in all spheres of the economy. We wish a bright and prosperous New Year to all readers of the *APO News*."

Deputy Director General Udai Shankar Singh, National Productivity Council, India

"If your ships almost sank in 2008 due to the surging economic crisis, only one key can keep you afloat in the new year: Productivity."

Director of Productivity Yunani Roaidah, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Indonesia

"Each year is distinguished by its unique achievements and challenges. Each country responds to these challenges with different attitudes and different measures. But there is one common answer. Productivity improvement should be considered to be the fundamental strategy that can transform passive countries into proactive ones and lead to success in growth and development. I hope that 2009 will be the best year ever for the great APO family, much better than previous ones, and that we will enjoy the blessings of productivity."

APO Director of IR Iran Mohsen Haji Mirzaie, Head of National Iranian Productivity Center

"Facing the global financial crisis, the role of NPOs in enhancing the foundation for sustainable economic growth has become ever more important. The productivity movement, centering on the human element and long-term management vision, is the antipode of management practices that solely pursue tangible profit, one of the main causal factors in the crisis. We need to reconfirm the importance of the productivity concept and implement practical activities, especially ones leading us to an improved quality of working life."

President Tsuneaki Taniguchi, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development

"The new year of 2009 offers hope that the ever-expanding economic crisis and social confusion will subside. I strongly believe that we are able to overcome any problem if we work together. We all have moments of desperation, but in facing problems head-on, we find out just how strong we really are. Faith and humanity are great assets when coping with hardship and creating positive change in our Asia-Pacific region. It is my belief that the new year will bring new hope and a better tomorrow. I wish all *APO News* readers a Happy New Year."

Acting CEO and Chairman Woo Keon Park, Korea Productivity Center

"The year 2008 has been challenging for all nations, due to the fluctuation of oil prices, financial crisis, and other effects of the economic downturn. We recognize that such challenges will be a great opportunity for growth. The new year of 2009 has arrived. I sincerely hope all nations will have a good start on the journey to a prosperous and successful future."

Director General Somdy Inmyxai, Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion and Development Office, Lao National Productivity Organization

"Malaysia has been well insulated from recent global economic and financial challenges due to initiatives and continuous support from many quarters. One such supporter is the APO, which has spearheaded programs and activities to prepare NPOs to meet these challenges. I hope that all *APO News* readers will continuously support APO initiatives to create new knowledge and human capital development in our quest to enhance member countries' competitiveness."

Director General Dato' Nik Zaimiah Nik Abd. Rahman, Malaysia Productivity Corporation

"Greetings from a hopeful Mongolia! 2008 was an eventful year; the events were by turn good, delightful, surprising, disappointing, and depressing. Now, we are entering a new year with our hearts filled with the hope that 2009 will bring good news in all aspects of our lives. May all your dreams come true in this new year and may all your efforts bring great achievements."

Chairman and President Dr. Pagvajav-Un Shurchuluu, National Productivity and Development Center, Mongolia

"The National Productivity and Economic Development Centre, the NPO of Nepal, would like to wish all *APO News* readers a joyful and prosperous New Year. Although recent months have been difficult and have brought clouds of doubt to many countries including APO member countries, we hope that future prospects for all our fellow members will be as clear and golden as the views on a sunny day from our majestic Himalaya Mountains."

General Manager Yuddha Bahadur Pant Chhetri, National Productivity and Economic Development Centre, Nepal

“NPOs are catalysts, the agents of change that bring prosperity to our countries through the enhancement of productivity and quality under the umbrella of the APO. We are the ones to change the quality of life of our people and take the lead in making Asia and the Pacific stronger so that we can live with dignity and honor and ensure that future generations will prosper in the years to come. I hope that all *APO News* readers will help their NPO carry out its mission by sharing productivity experiences, knowledge, ideas, and wisdom in the new year of 2009!”

Chief Muhammad Javed Malik, National Productivity Organization, Pakistan

“Inspired by the philosophy of continuous improvement and the mission to propagate productivity and quality improvement, may the year 2009 usher in our renewed commitment, hope, and confidence that productivity practitioners in APO member countries will be able to contribute to alleviating the firm-level, economic, and environmental challenges ahead. Wishing all *APO News* readers a joyous, peaceful, healthy, and productive 2009!”

President Antonio D. Kalaw, Jr., Development Academy of the Philippines

“It has been a fruitful year for the APO despite the economic downturn in the last quarter of 2008. 2009 will pose new challenges for all of us as the global economy suffers a significant slowdown. Hence, there is an even greater role for NPOs to help their respective economies, industries, and enterprises to improve productivity to cope with the challenging environment. I wish all *APO News* readers every success in the new year.”

Chief Executive Png Cheong Boon, SPRING Singapore

“Every month the *APO News* brings us good news about productivity-related activities in member countries. It has bound us together in our efforts to overcome development challenges. I hope that the momentum generated by the *APO News* will be further strengthened in 2009 and wish all *APO News* readers a happy and a prosperous new year.”

Secretary Mahinda Madihahewa, Ministry of Labour Relations and Manpower, Sri Lanka

“The year 2008 was recorded as one of the most turbulent years for Thailand in history, both politically and economically. This is a prelude of what is to come in 2009. In this situation, only those who are the strongest will survive. The strongest companies are characterized as quality driven, focusing on customers, ethical, and people and result oriented. These characteristics are what we call productivity. Let 2009 and beyond be the years that we focus on productivity as we conduct our business and also our lives. By doing so, we will be producing a brighter future and will be prepared to face any upcoming economic crisis.”

Executive Director Dr. Phanit Laosirirat, Thailand Productivity Institute

“The year 2008, a remarkably hard year, is over. In this new year, I believe that we will be able to turn all the obstacles we face into keys for achieving improvement by responding proactively to internal and external difficulties with passion and rationality. If so, then for us, and for all *APO News* readers with the right spirit, 2009 will become the Year of Golden Opportunity. With that thought, I am happy to wish you all a Very Good New Year!”

Managing Director Nguyen Anh Tuan, Vietnam Productivity Centre

Messages from Secretariat directors

“The staff of the Research and Planning Department wish all readers a very fruitful 2009 ahead. The past year saw our think tank function strengthened with new research modalities and the introduction of projects on emerging issues impacting member countries. We will step up our efforts to ensure that the outcomes of the research activities will be of benefit to member countries to cope with new challenges arising from the global business environment.”

Research and Planning Department Director Mukesh D. Bhattarai

“The Agriculture Department wishes all *APO News* readers another productive year in 2009. The past year was a very challenging one for the agriculture and food sector as food supplies became scarce, food prices soared, and food contamination cases alarmed consumers worldwide. These issues highlighted the relevance of our intervention in this sector as a catalyst for strengthening regulatory institutions in the food industry and the development of national capabilities in the area of food quality and safety management. Our initiatives supporting the modernization of agriculture and sustainable production of biofuels also helped policymakers make informed decisions in pursuit of national food security, climate and environmental goals, energy security, and opportunities for creating jobs and income in the countryside. We remain focused in our interventions in areas that are critical in addressing these persistent issues in member countries.”

Agriculture Department Director Song H. Choi

“The staff of the Industry Department wish all readers good health and happiness. The key word for this year is ‘change.’ No matter which types of change occur, whether economic, political, or social, we should not forget that these are created by humans. Human resources development also changes results. We would like to keep this point in mind in organizing our programs for further productivity enhancement in the region.”

Industry Department Director Takuki Murayama

“Everyone in the Administration and Finance Department extends best wishes for 2009 to the *APO News* readership. Although 2008 ended with economic turbulence and uncertainties in the news, we should remember that the basis of productivity is doing more with less. With prudence and creativity, productivity-related practices in our personal lives and at work can make 2009 a prosperous, peaceful year for our region.”

Administration and Finance Department Director Dr. A.K.P. Mochtan

Developing productivity practitioners

In 1996, the APO started the training course on the Development of Productivity Practitioners. The main objective was to assist NPOs in member countries in developing a pool of fully qualified productivity practitioners to act as trainers, consultants, and promoters.

The annual project has two stages, the basic and advanced courses. The basic one provides newly recruited NPO staff with fundamental knowledge of productivity-related matters. The advanced one augments the basic course with updated methodology and techniques for productivity enhancement. The framework for these courses was improved and standardized by a committee of experts in February 2008.

“In addition to the standardization of the syllabus of the basic and advanced courses, the committee deliberations led to the adoption of a common framework for the development of productivity practitioners and incorporation of the six core competencies of the APO’s productivity education, training, and accredited learning systems or PETALS project. The new syllabus for both courses is flexible and can be adapted to any situation and requirements of the host country,” said Director and Principal Consultant Kelvin Chan, Teian Consulting International Pte Ltd, Singapore, the cochair of the committee.

Last year, the APO organized three pilot in-country training programs to train more member country practitioners. This was in addition to the regular basic and advanced training courses held in the Philippines in October and in Malaysia in November, respectively. These training courses introduced participants to various productivity concepts and techniques, providing in-depth knowledge of and skills in productivity improvement activities and problem solving. Practitioners must be able to diagnose an organization’s current productivity performance, create solutions for improvement, and implement them. Practitioners must also be able to deliver and disseminate productivity enhancement knowledge effectively. Therefore, they must have excellent presentation, com-



Committee members discussing new training framework

munication, interpersonal, and management skills. These skills play a vital role in the development of productivity practitioners. The training curriculum is carefully designed to cover all the necessary areas. The basic course teaches fundamental techniques such as productivity measurement and data analysis, employee suggestion schemes, 5S, quality control circles, and ISO standards. The advanced course supplements this with more difficult material such as Six Sigma, lean production systems, the balanced scorecard, and knowledge management.

“The training course is very effective in supporting member country efforts to enhance the capacity of NPOs. It equips their productivity practitioners with productivity concepts, tools, and approaches,” commented Expert Batbileg, NPDC Mongolia, after completing the advanced course held in 2008. She had previously completed the basic course in 2007.

Given the growing interest in developing qualified practitioners in member countries, efforts to improve this training course will continue in 2009. In this context, the *APO News* will introduce a new column from the February issue to introduce major productivity tools and techniques taught in the courses. Course trainers will be invited to contribute, and it is hoped that the monthly update on productivity tools and techniques will be of use for the productivity endeavors of all readers of the *APO News*. ☺

Common sense talk

“If we were logical, the future would be bleak indeed. But we are more than logical. We are human beings, and we have faith and we have hope, and we can work.”

Jacques Cousteau

“What a man accomplishes in a day depends upon the way in which he approaches his tasks. When we accept tough jobs as a challenge and wade into them with joy and enthusiasm, miracles can happen. When we do our work with a dynamic conquering spirit, we get things done.”

Arland Gilbert

“Civilizations should be measured by the degree of diversity attained and the degree of unity retained.”

W.H. Auden

“When evil men plot, good men must plan. When evil men burn and bomb, good men must build and bind. When evil men shout ugly words of hatred, good men must commit themselves to the glories of love.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Whatever your grade or position, if you know how and when to speak, and when to remain silent, your chances of real success are proportionately increased.”

Ralph C. Smedley

“Comfort has its place, of course, but if that becomes the guiding value in getting dressed—or anything else—then we’ve got a problem. This misplaced priority has arguably contributed to our current troubles with credit, education, and productivity.”

Sameer Reddy

Joint effort to boost entrepreneurship in Asia

"Entrepreneurship is neither a science nor an art. It is a practice," asserted the father of modern management theory Peter Drucker, who believes that entrepreneurship entails action, specifically starting new businesses in response to identified opportunities. This, however, is often such a difficult undertaking that only individuals with an entrepreneurial spirit driven by the need "to search for change, respond to it, and exploit it as an opportunity" instinctively seek to do so.


In an effort to nurture the entrepreneurial drive in member countries, the APO organized a joint conference on Entrepreneurship in Asia in collaboration with the nonprofit Honda Foundation (HOF), which promotes innovation and entrepreneurship, and various Japanese business incubators, 17–23 November 2008. The conference ran concurrently with Japan's Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) starting November 17. GEW began in 2004 when the UK's then-Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown proposed collective promotion of entrepreneurship which expanded to the USA and Japan.

The conference, a series of presentations, site visits, and GEW events, introduced the basic concepts and options and opportunities for entrepreneurial initiatives. "It was a great learning experience for all participants. The conference confirmed our belief that an entrepreneur needs to be innovative and passionate about his or her work and venture," commented Technology Specialist Muhammad Usman Habib, Technology Upgradation and Skill Development Company, Pakistan. All 19 participants were entrepreneurs, NPO trainers, consultants, or governmental officials involved in promoting entrepreneurship.



At Rainwater Recycling System in Sumida ward

Two events commemorated GEW Japan, in Tokyo and Kyoto. The APO, HOF, and Graduate Institute of Policy Studies and Center for Entrepreneurship and Leadership Studies for Regional Economies jointly organized a one-day lecture in Tokyo. In Kyoto, the event was held in collaboration with Ritsumeikan University. Invited speakers included successful entrepreneurs, potential entrepreneurs, officials from supporting organizations and institutions, and academics training future entrepreneurs. A presentation on a successful venture, Tully's Coffee Japan Co., Ltd., was given by founder Kouta Matsuda and venture capitalist Hitoshi Suga. William H. Saito, a Japanese-American entrepreneur known for creating a security business based on fingerprint identification technology, also gave a lively account of his venture. These presentations were

particularly appreciated by participants. "Their passionate delivery was very inspiring and effective, so that all of us were eager to hear and learn more," said Director Data Magfur, Data Enterprises Ltd., Bangladesh. A site visit to the Rainwater Recycling System in Tokyo's Sumida ward was called "an eye-opening experience." 

Web-based e-learning course on customer relationship management

The APO organized a 10-day e-learning training course on Customer Relationship Management (CRM), 6–17 October 2008. The objective was to promote CRM in the private sector, especially SMEs, in member countries to assist in the development of trained manpower, marketing specialists, and decision makers.



APO expert delivering a lecture online

This Web-based distance-learning course was conducted via the APO e-Learning Portal. Eighteen hours of online technical sessions, question-and-answer periods, and an examination were augmented by two days of homework and self-study. The 35 participants from six member countries came from industry, NPOs, banks, research institutes, and other organizations. More than 50% represented the private sector. The examination was conducted via the e-forum platform on the APO Web site on the final day. Despite some technical difficulties, 22 participants completed the examination and all passed.

New officer at Secretariat

The Research and Planning Department of the APO Secretariat gained a new program officer when Masaya Amau took up the post starting 15 December 2008. With a Bachelor of Law degree from Keio University and an MBA from Hitotsubashi University, Amau has had significant experience in the private financial sector in areas such as SME financing. During his MBA course, he



was seconded to the Asian Development Bank in Manila as an intern and researched microfinancing in Bangladesh. He enjoys jogging with his wife in his spare time. In his work at the Secretariat, he looks forward to contributing to the in-depth research on emerging issues affecting productivity, especially from the perspective of service-sector expansion.

The path to sustainable production of biofuels

Countries all over the globe are turning to biofuels to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Governments are pursuing policies to reduce fossil fuel use not only for energy security but also to slow global warming and meet environmental goals. Both are important topics in the APO's Green Productivity (GP) Program. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Production of Biofuels held in Manila, 26–28 November 2008, addressed a host of important issues related to biofuel production.



Senator Zubiri speaking on the Philippines Biofuels Law

“The topic of this forum is indeed relevant and timely not only to the countries of the Asia-Pacific but also to all countries where food and energy are ever-increasing concerns,” stated President of the Development of Academy of the Philippines Antonio D. Kalaw, Jr. in his welcome remarks during the inaugural session attended by 42 participants from 15 countries, eight international experts, APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka, and Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri. Secretary-General Takenaka

expressed his admiration of the Philippines for contributing to GP practices. “I am pleased to note that the Philippines has always been at the forefront of the development of GP,” said Takenaka in his welcome remarks. After giv-

ing a briefing on APO projects to promote biomass utilization and biofuels, he asked all participants for their commitment to the goals of the forum. “We have high expectations that this forum will lead to new partnerships, cooperation in knowledge sharing, joint projects, and research among leading experts and institutions in the field.”

Senator Zubiri presented the highlights of the Philippines Biofuels Law, which came into effect in February 2007. He then explained the future prospects of the biofuel/ethanol industry in the country, emphasizing the importance of consistent efforts for the mandated use of biofuels: “It is a continuous, evolving process that requires foresight, adaptability, and a careful balance between consensus and political will.” He stressed that the establishment of policy and legislation is an important first step.

The forum agreed with Senator Zubiri, and it was pointed out that a holistic framework is needed to consider economic, social, and environmental outcomes. It was recommended that governments focus on nonfood crops for biofuel production so as not to compete for land where food crops are traditionally grown. Plants meeting these criteria include jatropha and algae species.

The forum also recommended that the APO and UN FAO facilitate the establishment of a regional technical working group to review quality and safety standards of products and processes. Networking among key regional players in the biofuel industry would enhance their competitiveness against those in the Americas. Participants and experts suggested that the forum be followed up by meetings on specific biofuel issues. ☺

Public-sector innovation: Sustainability strategies

The public sector is the single largest body of resources in a country and is chartered by its people to protect and enhance the well-being of its citizens through productive socioeconomic development policies and management. Only an efficient, effective public-sector administration can meet this goal. The APO launched a series of public-sector innovation projects to address the need for innovation, productivity, and the pursuit of excellence. The first project, held in collaboration with the Korea Productivity Center, was a workshop on Sustainability Strategies for the Public Sector in Seoul, 11–14 November 2008. The generally accepted definition of “sustainability” as “the principles of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” was the touchstone of the workshop. The Republic of Korea was chosen as host because of its success in public-sector reforms and provides a model of sustainable management policies at the national level. The enactment of the Framework Act on Sustainable Development in 2000 was the country’s first step toward becoming a sustainable economic model in the long term.

The 17 participants, mostly mid- to senior-level public officials, agreed that present approaches to policy development and management posed a problem in the era of sustainability, especially in public works where social costs are vague and public welfare has strong vested interests. Past solutions that had unforeseen negative side effects due to a lack of understanding of the complex interconnections of various players may pose major problems. With this in mind, two international experts introduced system thinking and the World Café approach. The system thinking session was conducted by Dr. Robert Cavana, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand; President Chaiwat Thirapantun, of the Civicnet

Institute, Thailand, conducted the World Café sessions. System thinking uses system dynamic modeling to simulate complex problems in policy management, and the World Café approach involves creating healthy ecosystems through consensus building with inputs from multiple perspectives for policy development and planning. A short site visit was also made to a model public-sector enterprise, the Korean Gas Corporation, which showed how a sustainable management policy is implemented in real life.



System dynamics modeling exercise

Participants found the workshop beneficial both in the short and long terms, as the examples it provided could be applied immediately to their own contexts. They hoped that future projects on the public sector would anticipate new developments in sustainable public-sector management. As part of the Secretariat’s capacity building initiative to create a pool of public-sector productivity catalysts in member countries, a continuation of this workshop is planned for IR Iran in early 2009. ☺

Program calendar

March

Pakistan

Workshop on Development of Competitive Supply Chains in Agribusiness, 2–6 March

► Objective: To review the supply chain models studied in the previous research, examine and assess the findings of the previous research for wider dissemination and identify issues and impediments in their adoption, and formulate action plans and roadmaps to resolve such issues and impediments.

► Participants: Experts who conducted research from the previous project in participating countries and experts directly involved in agribusiness supply chain development/operation from countries that did not participate in the previous project.

Japan

Multicountry observational study mission on Food Traceability Systems for Agro- and Food-processing Industries, 10–13 March

► Objective: To share recent developments in food safety management, with emphasis on efficient application of traceability systems; examine current state-of-the-art technologies and techniques in applying traceability systems in the operation of agro- and food-processing companies; and identify best practices for further promotion of SME-level traceability systems in member countries.

► Participants: Managers or officials of food industry associations and SMEs, NPO consultants, government officials, and researchers involved in the promotion of food safety management.

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.

APO/NPO update

New NPO Head for India

Shri N.C. Vasudevan, IAS, Director General, National Productivity Council, was appointed new NPO Head for India, w.e.f. 3 December 2008.

New APO Director for Nepal

Mr. Tana Gautam, Secretary, Ministry of Industry, National Productivity and Economic Development Centre, was appointed new APO Director for Nepal, w.e.f. 15 December 2008.

New address of NPO for Republic of Korea

The address of the NPO for ROK was changed to:
Korean Productivity Center
57-1 Sajik-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul 110-751, Republic of Korea

The APO News is soliciting contributed articles on productivity endeavors, rewarding experiences during and after APO projects, and/or encouraging and inspiring examples of the productivity mindset in action, which will provide new ideas and energy to the dissemination of the productivity movement in member countries. Those whose articles are accepted for publication will receive an APO T-shirt. If you would like to share your valuable experiences, please contact Information Officer Sunju Lee at the APO Secretariat (slee@apo-tokyo.org).



New APO publication



FROM PRODUCTIVITY TO INNOVATION

Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Technology and Innovation for Knowledge Management

APO 194 pp. January 2009
ISBN: 92-833-7074-0 (e-edition)

Photo report



National Centre of Organic Farming Director Dr. A.K. Yadav (R) explaining the process of manufacturing biofertilizers.

Study meeting on the Development and Utilization of Biofertilizers for Promoting Sustainable Agriculture and Green Productivity, India, 5–11 November 2008.

APO Secretary-General visits the Philippines



(L–R): Ermita, Ramos, and Takenaka

APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka paid an official visit to the Philippines, 25–27 November, mainly to promote the APO's Green Productivity (GP) Program, Eco-products International Fair (EPIF), and APO Asia-Pacific Forum on Biofuels. He made a courtesy call on Executive Secretary to the Office of the President E.S. Ermita, accompanied by EPIF 2009 Advisory Committee Chairperson Amelita M. Ramos, former First Lady of the Philippines, on 25 November. During the meeting, Executive Secretary Ermita confirmed the full support of the Government of the Philippines for the upcoming EPIF 2009. Secretary-General Takenaka later delivered the opening address at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Biofuels. He also gave interviews to three local media companies on subjects relating to the APO, GP, and EPIF during his stay.

Productivity Association of Sri Lanka established

On 2 November 2008, the National Productivity Secretariat (NPS) of Sri Lanka in collaboration with the Sri Lankan Presidential Task Force for Productivity Improvement established the Productivity Association of Sri Lanka (PASL), the Sri Lankan APO alumni body. The inaugural ceremony took place at the Labor Secretariat in Colombo.

Secretary to the President of Sri Lanka Lalith Weeratunga and APO Director for Sri Lanka Mahinda Madihahewa, who also serves as the Sri Lankan Ministry Secretary for Labour Relations and Manpower, cochaired the inaugural meeting. During the session, Madihahewa was elected to serve as the first president of the PASL. The ceremony was attended by about 300 members of government and representatives of industrial organizations and institutions, the private sector, and trade unions.



PASL inaugural ceremony

The PASL was established with the participation of local productivity experts, who also compose the bulk of its membership. The association's main objective is to develop mechanisms that will allow them to use their knowledge, skills, and experience as catalysts to add impetus to the national productivity movement. The PASL is an independent nonprofit organization operating with guidance and support from the NPS and the Ministry of Labour Relations and Manpower. The NPS will work with the association to meet the rising demand for productivity-related services by using the PASL as a resource pool for its activities.

"Participants in the ceremony were very taken with the idea of establishing a productivity network like this. The PASL will provide a great many people

the opportunity to join the productivity movement. The majority of people attending the ceremony applied for membership, as did many institutions," commented APO Alternate Director and Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Labour Relations and Manpower D.L. Kumaradasa. Kumaradasa took part in the 2008 APO Alumni Forum held in Indonesia and gave a presentation on that forum to the PASL audience.

The PASL will also work closely with the APO alumni bodies of other member countries to learn from their experience. This will also allow APO alumni bodies to develop a collective best practice network. The APO will continue to provide necessary assistance to its alumni bodies via the NPOs of the countries involved. 🌐

Philippines to host EPIF 2009

The Eco-products International Fair (EPIF), the largest international environmental exhibition in Asia, will be held in Manila, the Philippines, 19–22 March 2009, with the theme "Sustainable Production, Sustainable Consumption, Sustainable Future." The fifth EPIF will be jointly organized by the Development Academy of the Philippines, Philippine Business for the Environment, and the APO at the SMX Convention Center, Metro Manila's newest and largest such facility.

The EPIF brings key international players and executives of eco-product and eco-service providers together under one roof, providing a platform for multifaceted business networking, national projects, business-to-business transactions, and green branding promotion strategies. Since the first EPIF in Malaysia in 2004, each successive fair has been larger and generated more publicity. The 4th EPIF in Vietnam in 2008 drew nearly 100,000 visitors over four days and was covered by more than 30 newspapers and magazines.

The APO has conducted various activities to promote this mega event and its Green Productivity (GP) Program. This included participating in the Eco-products 2008 exhibition at the Tokyo International Exhibition Center (Tokyo Big Sight), 11–13 December. The APO booth there distributed APO and EPIF brochures, the *Eco-products Directory*, and other publications. At the Sumitomo Mitsui Environment Business Forum and on the Nikkei Eco-Presentation Stage, Industry Department Program Officer Setsuko Miyakawa presented APO and GP activities, focusing particularly on the EPIF. The 10th annual Tokyo Eco-products 2008 received more than 170,000 visitors over three days.



Takenaka being interviewed by NHK World

The APO's activities generated a great deal of interest from the general public, industrial players, and environmental organizations. It also drew widespread media attention. The international broadcasting service of NHK (Japan Broadcasting) visited the APO booth to interview Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka on APO activities and the EPIF.

For more information, including the complete EPIF brochure, please access the official Web site of the EPIF 2009 at www.epif09.org. 🌐