



APO *news*

Green Productivity Practicum Workshop

A new e-learning dimension

The APO has been promoting the Green Productivity (GP) concept in Asia and the Pacific for the past several years with the message that both economic development and environmental protection are key strategies for sustainable development. The APO has been successful in introducing GP as a practical way to achieve sustainable development. However, in this endeavor, the need to develop the necessary human resources to introduce GP tools and techniques effectively was identified as a crucial step.

For this purpose, the APO has developed a number of GP training programs, which include a one-day forum for the CEO and executive management level to introduce GP awareness to upper-level management in organizations; a two-day workshop for the upper- and middle-management levels to introduce the importance of GP and how to implement it; and a five-day workshop for middle managers and technical personnel to teach them how to implement GP in their organizations through case study exercises. In addition to these activities focusing on various levels of organizations, the APO held the first pilot five-week practicum-oriented workshop on GP in Vietnam in 2000, and the second five-week workshop was organized in Malaysia. The course duration was revised, and since 2001, the APO has held an annual four-week practicum workshop for those who want to implement GP in their enterprises as well as to develop lead GP experts/trainers who can engage in promoting GP at the national level. These trained GP experts can then become lead GP trainers within their country.



A group exercise in progress

One of the practical difficulties that surfaced after this series of multi-country practicum workshops was the participants' initial level of understanding of GP. Since the practicum workshop usually attracts participants from multidisciplinary backgrounds who represent countries with different levels of economic development, it is natural that workshop participants have varying levels of GP exposure. It was therefore felt that some type of mentoring of the participants prior to workshop attendance to ensure that they had at least some knowledge of GP concepts would help make the practicum workshop more effective.

Recent advances in information technology (IT), particularly Internet-based e-learning platforms, offer a cost-effective, simple solution to this practical problem. Thanks to the chief resource person of the workshop, Dr. Suporn Koottatep of

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"Success or failure in business is caused more by the mental attitude even than by mental capacities."

Walter Scott

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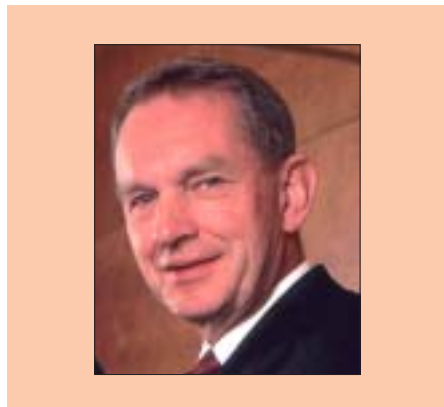
Productivity and the press

Productivity is currently portrayed as the Big Bad Wolf in much of continental Europe’s popular press. In the first place, it is seen as the cause of a growing number of corporate projects to restructure, outsource, and offshore—in other words, shed jobs. Firms in the “old” core of the EU, particularly in France, Germany, and Italy, are struggling to remain competitive in the single European market, let alone globally. Now that the cheap labor-cost countries of central Europe are members of the EU, companies can easily move their manufacturing facilities east. There, sometimes just a few kilometers across the border, labor costs are at most 20% of those at home. And in traditional industries such as automobiles, textiles, and steel, labor costs really count.

“But labor costs are not the whole productivity story; unit labor costs are all-important.”

Although it might make the headlines, there is comparatively little outsourcing, especially compared with the number of instances of downsizing. By reducing the cost of the components of finished products, skilled manufacturing in old Europe can actually increase its employment. Adam Smith’s rules of comparative advantage still hold true, provided that there is a will to change and learn.

Another corporate productivity approach disdained by the popular press is that of “beauty contests,” i.e., management forcing factories of a single company to compete with each other for future investments. Yet this means that local managers and employees work together to improve their productivity and quality, a wholly laudable approach. The results are flexibility in work patterns, increased working hours, and improved efficiency without raising wages. Thus, greater labor market flexibility in Sweden has boosted labor productivity annually by 6% since the early



1990s. Yet, for the popular press, higher productivity in old Europe equals still higher unemployment, which is now well on the wrong side of 10%.

But labor costs are not the whole productivity story; unit labor costs are all-important. Under growing competitive pressures, Germany’s unit labor costs have declined by 10% since 1999, contributing to its 10% rise in exports in 2004, essentially in high-tech, high-value niche products. Conversely, with less competitive pressure, Italy’s unit labor costs rose by almost 10% in the same period. Not unconnectedly, Italy, like the Netherlands and Portugal, has been experiencing negative productivity growth, declining exports, and rising unemployment.

Corporate profits have also hit press headlines. Those of Europe’s largest firms rose by 78% in 2004 and are forecast to rise by a further 30% in 2005. A major reason for higher profits is higher productivity. Although nowadays few have ideological hang-ups about the necessity for profits, society does question why top executives persistently couple the announcement of rising profits with their intention to slim down corporate workforces still further. Admittedly, a firm can only maintain its competitive position for a while by continuously rationalizing. However, gurus proclaim that productivity increases are a win-win situation: that all who contribute to raising a company’s value should benefit from its results.

Now this tenet is being contravened as top executives compress their payrolls but increase their own share of the take.

“...productivity increases are a win-win situation: that all who contribute to raising a company’s value should benefit from its results.”

The more serious press expounds a two-pronged path of productivity development in Europe:

- 1) moving out of traditional industries or at least investing more heavily in R&D and going upmarket, especially since China’s challenge is not only in manufacturing but also increasingly in R&D; and
- 2) making labor and product markets more flexible.

This logic is in fact being applied not only in Scandinavia. The UK government countenances the loss of 2,500 manufacturing jobs every week while seeing better jobs created elsewhere in the economy, especially in skilled services. But when such a course is advocated in continental Europe, the political outcry can be deafening, as the proposed EU directive on the freedom of movement of services currently illustrates. A report commissioned by the French government indicated that 1.2 million more jobs could be created in services (hotels, shops, and restaurants) if France had proportionately as many service jobs as Germany, which is not a paragon of virtue in this respect. To achieve this, regulations to protect incumbent producers and employees would need scrapping. No action is being taken, however. Deregulation remains a dirty word in the non-Anglo-Saxon world.

The need for continuous change is much better understood in the new EU states. Their competitiveness in manufacturing stems from coupling

advantageous labor costs and high educational levels with attractive governmental policies. Thus they have made great efforts to simplify bureaucracy, enabling firms to be established rapidly; and they have reduced taxes to unitary levels of 20–25% for both companies and individuals. One result: all new facilities of the international automotive companies are being set up in these states.

But gradually the need for spring-cleaning is being recognized in old Europe. The business environment is being made more favorable for entrepreneurship. Thus Germany has reformed its labor laws from 2005 to get more unemployed off of welfare and into work and self-employment. Italy's new € 4 billion competitiveness program aims to cut red tape as well as boost the use of information technology, soften the impact of bankruptcy laws, and induce smaller companies to merge since most are too small to invest adequate resources in R&D. The UK government has announced a significant reduction in the number and variety of agencies overseeing firms as well as simplification of the tax payment system. Even the French government has, despite national strikes, made the 35-hour-a-week law more flexible.

The new European Commission will henceforth focus on “productivity growth and employing more people... [which] is needed to secure [Europe's] social cohesion and to make further progress toward environmental sustainability.” Thus, it will continue to fight “abusive monopolies, murky cartels, anticompetitive mergers and market-distorting state aid.” This means making it easier to start a business, taking a common approach on corporate governance, pursuing trade-promoting customs rules, and continuing to work for the opening of the single market. Those are fine words; let's hope that they are not sabotaged by, among others, the popular press. ☹

Anthony C. Hubert is President of EuroJobs, an organization he established to promote efforts to raise the quality of working life and productivity in Europe. He was formerly Secretary-General of the European Association of National Productivity Organizations. He writes regularly for this column.



p-TIPS

Giving them what they want (Simply better)

In *Simply Better: Winning and Keeping Customers by Delivering What Matters Most* (Harvard Business School Press, 2004), authors Patrick Barwise and Sean Meehan contend that customers rarely base choices on uniqueness. The *Simply Better* strategy relies on providing products/services that customers really want in the best way possible. They lay down six rules for achieving business success.

Rule 1) Think category benefits, not unique brand benefits. Colgate toothpaste's strength was its flavor but it was losing market share due to Crest's anticavity claims. In 1997, Colgate Total was launched, claiming to offer flavor, breath-freshening, whitening power, and dental health. Within four years, Colgate was the market leader with a 37% share.

Rule 2) Think simplicity, not sophistication. Shell, serving 25 million customers daily, chose to buck the trend of making service station operations more differentiated and sophisticated. Betting that motorists were mainly looking to refuel quickly at reasonable cost, it concentrated on delivering those basics, not on offering gourmet coffees and snacks. Sales increased by 10% and return on capital reached double digits.

Rule 3) Think inside, not outside, the box. Try redirecting creativity to learn how your customers make buying decisions and which current or future needs remain unmet.

Rule 4) Think opportunities, not threats. Kirin Beer had a 90% share of all lager sold in Japan, but it made the mistake of ignoring demographics. Younger drinkers with different lifestyles flocked to the much smaller Asahi Breweries' Super Dry beer. Within 10 years, Asahi had the number-one beer brand with 33% of the market.

Rule 5) For creative advertising, forget Rule 3. Korea's Daewoo Motors did this brilliantly in its UK launch, using humor (real vs. human guinea pigs to test-drive cars free for one year) and a simple message. It also overcame a recognition problem and positioned itself as a customer-centered company.

Rule 6) Think immersion, not submersion. Everyone, not just marketing and sales staff, should immerse themselves in the market instead of submersing themselves in paperwork. Hindustan Unilever is a shining example, requiring all new recruits to reside for six weeks in a remote village to understand the reality of customers' lives.



APO publications online



The APO has made a number of publications on which it holds the copyright available on its Web site (www.apo-tokyo.org) as e-books. The following is a list of e-books on issues related to productivity in agriculture and community development. A list of e-books on Green Productivity will appear in the next issue.

Agriculture and community development

Evolving Sustainable Production Systems in Sloping Upland Areas—Land Classification Issues and Options

Report of the APO study meeting on land classification in sloping upland areas for sustainable production systems in July 2002.

Sustainable Farming Systems in Upland Areas

Report of the APO study meeting on sustainable farming systems in upland areas in January 2001.

Agricultural Diversification and International Competitiveness

Report of the APO study meeting on agricultural diversification and international competitiveness in May 2001.

Rural-Based Food Processing Industry in Asia

Report of the APO multi-country study mission on the rural-based food processing industry in March 2001.

Non-Farm Employment Opportunities in Rural Areas in Asia

Report of the APO seminar on nonfarm employment opportunities in rural areas in September 2001.

The Financial Crisis and Agricultural Productivity in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the APO study meeting on effects of the Asian financial crisis on the productivity of agriculture in December 2000.

Rural Life Improvement in Asia

Report of the APO seminar on rural life improvement for community development in April 2002.

Integration of Agricultural Research and Extension

Report of the APO study meeting on the integration of agricultural research and extension in March 2002.

Development of Agribusiness Enterprises

Report of the APO seminar on development of agribusiness enterprises in November 2000.

Agrarian Reforms and Agricultural Productivity

Report of the APO study meeting on agrarian reforms and agricultural productivity in June 2001.

Impact of Land Utilization Systems on Agricultural Productivity

Report of the APO seminar on the impact of land utilization systems on agricultural productivity in November 2000.

Processing and Utilization of Legumes

Report of the APO seminar on the processing and utilization of legumes in October 2000.

Organizational Change for Participatory Irrigation Management

Report of the APO seminar on organizational change for participatory irrigation management in October 2000.

For order and inquiry on APO publications and videos, please contact the Information and Public Relations Department, 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) 5226-3927, Fax: (81-3) 5226-3957, e-Mail: ipr@apo-tokyo.org

COMMON SENSE TALK



“You’re right not because others agree with you, but because your facts are right.”

Warren Buffet

“Recognize the skills and traits you don’t possess and hire people who have them.”

Howard Schultz

“Don’t be a credit hog. If you’re constantly in the neighborhood of good things, good things will happen to you.”

Meg Whitman

“In life you need mentors and you need models. Models are the people you want to emulate. I recommend that your models be dead. You don’t know how people are going to finish up.”

Rick Warren

“A good leader knows he is doing a good job when he knows with certainty that he can say yes to anything his staff asks and feel totally confident that they will do the right thing.”

Hector Ruiz

“Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.”

Colin Powell

“The first rule of any technology used in a business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify the efficiency. The second is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify the inefficiency.”

Bill Gates

“Success or failure in business is caused more by the mental attitude even than by mental capacities.”

Walter Scott

Development of niche markets

Successful marketing today involves market research, product or service development, production, sales, delivery, and after-sales service. The research aspect identifies specific segments, referred to as niches, based on demographics, usage, purchasing power, and sometimes ethnic and other specific group preferences. The niches are then targeted with specific products or services. Alternatively, niche marketing can mean meeting the needs of a limited market that is not currently being serviced by mainstream products or services.

Niche marketing strategies differ from those for saturated-demand commodities. Identification of the needs and size of the targeted segments is the first priority; product time to market is crucial. In manufacturing, flexible capacity is necessary to meet small-lot, varied demand. In the past, bigger rivals, with their financial and technical superiority, could take a market niche from SMEs. Now, however, with the information and communications technology revolution, SMEs are no longer inferior in niche markets, which demand economy of speed above all.

Recognizing that its members could benefit from an update on niche marketing strategies, the APO organized the Seminar on Niche Market Development in Bangkok, Thailand, 24–28 January. The seminar was attended by 14 participants from 12 member countries. One resource person was deputed by the APO, and six local resource persons from a variety of specialties helped shape the content. Topics discussed included how to identify and reach niche markets; time-based competition; niche marketing in the fashion industry; customer relationship management niche market style; Web-based niche marketing; enablers for niche marketing success; niche marketing of agricultural products; and successful examples of niche marketing in Thailand.

To bolster the participants' understanding of niche marketing for agricultural products and in the fashion industry, two site visits were conducted in Bangkok. One was to the Lemon Farm, a supermarket specializing in organic food and cosmetics, which caters to the urban health-conscious segment. Thai Itokin hosted the other, allowing participants to observe its marketing operations for men's and women's ready-made and tailored clothing, fashion accessories, and line of work



Participants in the seminar

uniforms. The company also exports some products and conducts Web-based sales.

The results of the syndicate discussion at the seminar indicated that while SMEs still face some difficulties in niche marketing due mainly to lack of funds and limited access to technology, they can be successful if they:

- 1) Pay attention to customer relationship management;
- 2) Determine what customers really value and establish product and service differentiation strategies;
- 3) Use customization strategies;
- 4) Avoid possible "cannibalization";
- 5) Conduct marketing testing, including pretesting of finished products, advertising, and distribution channels; and
- 6) Undertake benchmarking.

It was also concluded that the government could play a role in helping to expand niche markets by the development of infrastructure, particularly to enhance information and communications technology capacity, and by fostering the development of business incubators. ☺

Green Productivity (Continued from page 1)

Thailand, the APO was able to utilize an e-learning platform that was originally established for an EU project to organize an e-course on GP for Industry. That project was developed in a collaborative venture between the Aalborg University, Denmark, and Chiang Mai University, Thailand.

Twenty-one participants who were slated to attend the one-month practicum workshop in Malaysia in March were invited to participate in a two-week e-learning pre-workshop course on GP from their respective home countries before leaving for Malaysia. They participated in the course online, spending approximately 10 hours logged on, 10 hours in study on their own, and four hours completing assignments in both weeks. Afterward, most indicated that the e-learning course was useful and that the exercise had made them better prepared to get the most from the face-to-

face workshop. The resource persons for the practicum workshop also reported that the pre-workshop course had made it easier to transfer GP knowledge to the participants compared with previous workshops. They also strongly recommended the permanent use of similar pre-workshop Internet-based exercises. However, a few difficulties are associated with this recommendation. The Internet and computer access of prospective participants, particularly of those from developing countries, may form a major bottleneck. The lack of computer skills is another problem. It is hoped that with increasing Internet access and the acquisition of computer skills in all member countries, this and other online platforms can play a vital role in future APO activities. The APO is planning to introduce similar warm-up courses before other future projects. ☺

— Sustainable commercial floriculture —

With its diverse agro-climatic conditions, the Asia-Pacific region is emerging as an important region for commercial floriculture. In addition to meeting traditional local demand, the region has considerable potential for the export of floricultural products to major flower markets worldwide. With the continual increase in expendable incomes, domestic demand for floricultural products has been growing fast. Many member countries are attempting to expand floriculture to cater for the domestic and overseas markets. However, the development of commercial floriculture is not an easy task for developing countries because of its specific features of perishability, volatile markets, seasonality, and quality sensitivity, to name a few. The small size of production also hinders the vast majority of floriculturalists in the region.

The Asian region has diversified experience in floriculture, and APO member countries are in different stages of commercial floriculture development. For example, as the largest producer and consumer of flowers and potted plants in the Asia-Pacific, Japan has developed a modern and very sophisticated floriculture market chain. Some developing member countries such as Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia have developed specific floriculture sectors aimed at overseas markets.

To share experiences among member countries and discuss issues and strategies in the development of sustainable commercial floriculture, the APO held a seminar on the “Development of Sustainable Commercial Floriculture” in Islamabad, Pakistan, 7–12 March 2005. The program was implemented by the National Productivity Organisation in collaboration with the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council. Nineteen participants from 12 member countries attended the seminar.

Seven resource speakers from Thailand, the Netherlands, India, and Pakistan took part. They spoke on: 1) Floriculture: worldwide patterns in production,

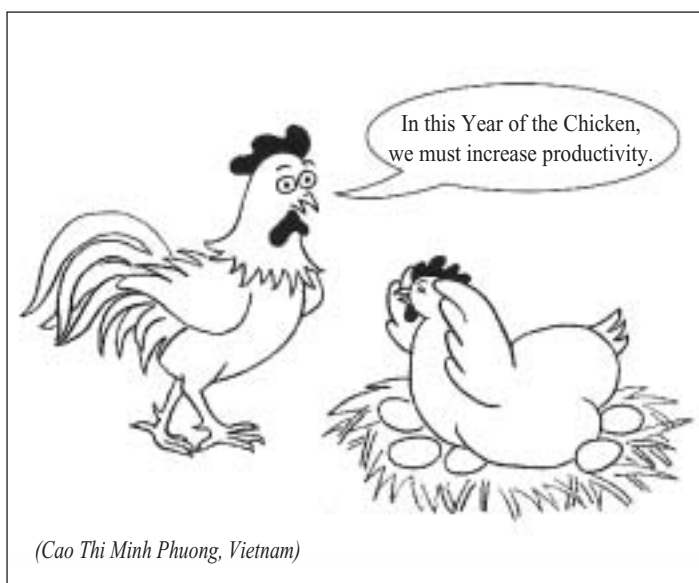


Participants examining a rose garden

trade, and consumption; 2) Development of commercial floriculture in Asia and the Pacific; 3) Management skills required for better floriculture production; 4) Harvesting, postharvest handling, and packaging of flowers for consumer satisfaction and better marketing; 5) Successful export of floriculture products: experience of Thailand; 6) Indigenous roses and rose culture in Pakistan; and 7) Promoting effective marketing strategies for floriculture products of Asian developing countries.

The seminar generally agreed that the importance of floriculture is growing in all member countries but preharvest practices, postharvest management, and marketing of floricultural products are far from satisfactory. Postharvest losses of floriculture products are especially high in the region. This high level of postharvest losses must be reduced or eliminated to increase growers' incomes. Efficient production and postharvest management are necessary to ensure the top quality that is such a stringent demand of the international market. Postharvest management activities including marketing should be undertaken with a country, regional, and international perspective.

The participants identified issues and problems confronted in the floriculture chain (preharvest, postharvest, and marketing). Preharvest issues include the lack of quality plant materials and insufficient germplasm; inadequate information on large-scale plant material propagation methods; lack of technology in growing structures such as greenhouses; poor knowledge of modern culture techniques; disruptions in the supply of quality inputs; too few cooperatives/producers' associations; and insufficient capital and skilled manpower. Some postharvest issues/problems are unavailability and/or poor dissemination of technology; lack of national quality standards in some countries on the one hand and strict international standards on the other; lack of or poor-quality, high-cost packaging materials; poor packaging design; and poor infrastructure, including cold storage chains. Floriculture marketing is hindered by limited markets, underdeveloped domestic markets, insufficient market research and market information databases, insufficient marketing structure, underdeveloped market niches, and little market promotion. 🌹





p-Experts deputed by the APO

BANGLADESH

Mr. Milind Arun Mirkar, Textile Engineer, Sultex India, was deputed to serve as expert on the Provision of Technical Services of Expert Technicians to Improve Productivity, 18–26 April 2005.

REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The following were deputed to serve as resource persons for the symposium on Redesigning Integrated Community Development, 25–29 April 2005: **Dr. Lutz Laschewski**, Lecturer and Researcher, Faculty for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Institute for Rural Management, University of Rostock, Germany; **Dr. Takeshi Sakuirai**, Senior Economist, Policy Research Institute, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan; and **Mr. Shigeki Yokoyama**, Senior Researcher, Research Strategy Section, National Agriculture and Bio-oriented Research Organization, Japan.

FIJI

Prof. Tor Hundloe, Director, Environmental Management Center, University of Queensland, Australia, and **Mr. Haridas Nayar**, Malaysia, were deputed to serve as resource persons for the workshop on Green Productivity Approaches to Sustainable Development, 11–15 April 2005.

Mr. Han Kyu Cho, Chairman, Janong Natural Farming Research Institute, Republic of Korea, was deputed to serve as resource person for the Technical Expert Advisory Service for Yaqara Farm for Effective Utilization of Available Resources, 18–21 April 2005.

Dr. V.R. Reddy, Research Leader, Crop Systems and Global Change Laboratory, USA, was deputed to serve as resource person in the study meeting on Employment Generation in Rural Areas through the Development of Agro-industries, 26 April–2 May 2005.

APO/NPO update

New APO Director for Fiji

Mr. Taito Waqa, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Productivity, was appointed as the new APO Director for Fiji, w.e.f. 7 April 2005, in place of Mr. Brian Singh.

New APO Liaison Officer for Fiji

Mr. Sainivalati Kuruduadua, Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Productivity, was appointed as the new APO Liaison Officer for Fiji, w.e.f. 7 April 2005.

New APO Alternate Director for Republic of Korea

Mr. Dong Geun Lee, Director-General, Industrial Policy Bureau, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy, was appointed as the new APO Alternate Director for the Republic of Korea, w.e.f. 10 January 2005, in place of Mr. Young-Hwan Yoo.

Publicizing the multiplier effects of APO projects

Many participants in APO projects subsequently organize national seminars, workshops, demonstration projects, etc., to share the knowledge and skills gained with a wide audience in their home countries, generating multiplier effects. The *APO News* would like to publicize those activities to recognize the organizers' efforts and encourage the replication of such activities in other member countries.

If you have utilized knowledge gained from an APO project to organize a similar activity at home, please send a brief account of approximately 300 words to your NPO, accompanied by two or three photographs for illustration of the activity, for possible publication after editing in the *APO News*, on a space-available basis. Please include the title of the original APO project you attended in the submission letter to your NPO.

Program calendar

Republic of China

Workshop on Green Productivity for Hazardous Waste Management, 17–20 October 2005.

Indonesia

Study Meeting on Strengthening Knowledge Assets: Corporate Strategies in a Non-IT Environment, 23–26 August 2005.

Islamic Republic of Iran

Seminar on Marketing and Food Safety: Challenges in Postharvest Management of Agricultural/Horticultural Products, 23–28 July 2005.

Japan

Training Course on Strategic Management Consultancy for Productivity Improvement, 5–16 September 2005.

Mongolia

Workshop on Enhancing NPOs' Core Competence: Productivity Showcases and Demonstration Companies, 30 August–2 September 2005.

Thailand

Study Meeting on the Application of Knowledge Management in SMEs, 22–26 August 2005.

Kindly contact your NPO for details of the above activities, including eligibility for participation. If you need the address of your NPO, it is available from the APO Web site at www.apo-tokyo.org.



Afghan delegates visit APO Secretariat

At the request of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Afghanistan Office, the APO Secretariat received a study mission of Afghan ex-mujahideen commanders on 13 April 2005. The study mission was organized by the UNDP as a part of its Afghanistan New Beginning Programme and the objective was to “facilitate the Afghan ex-commanders’ entry from military to civilian life” by giving them “exposure to foreign cultures and industrial development with the aim of bringing about positive changes in commanders’ mindset and way of life.”

The APO Secretariat welcomed nine former brigadier generals and lieutenant generals and two UNDP Program Officers. Secretary-General Takenaka greeted them and the Directors of the Agriculture and Industry Departments briefed them on the role of the productivity movement in the reconstruction of the Japanese economy after the Second World War. At the end of the briefing, the commanders expressed their gratitude to the APO Secretariat and expressed interest in Afghanistan becoming a



(L-R) Tsubota, Takenaka, and Inoue at the head table with the Afghan delegation

member of the APO in the near future. The UNDP officers also expressed their appreciation to the APO Secretariat for hosting the visit. ☺

Filipino JICA training course delegates visit APO Secretariat



N.G. Kularatne, Director, Information and Public Relations Department, briefing the delegates on APO activities

Participants in the Japan International Cooperation Agency-sponsored Country-focused Training Course in the Promotion of Cleaner Production for the Philippines, implemented by the Kitakyushu International Techno-cooperative Association, visited the APO Secretariat on 14 March 2005. During the call, the delegation, comprised of seven individuals from government agencies, the private sector, and academia, greeted Secretary-General Takenaka. Officers from the APO Secretariat made presentations on APO activities in general and the Green Productivity (GP) Program in particular. The delegates found the APO’s experiences in GP promotion in the region educational and relevant to their activities in the Philippines.

APO Governing Body to meet in Tokyo

The 47th Session of the APO Governing Body will be held in Tokyo, Japan, from 14 to 16 June 2005. The Governing Body is the supreme organ of the APO, comprising directors from each member country designated by their respective governments. The Governing Body meets once yearly to receive the APO Secretary-General’s annual report and the auditor’s financial report. It also decides on policies, strategies, and directions; endorses the two-year rolling plan; sets guidelines for the ensuing calendar year’s program; discusses membership matters; and approves programs and financial estimates. Some 50 delegates including directors, advisers, and observers are expected to attend this year’s meeting.

The APO regional awards and national awards are conferred on individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the cause of enhancing productivity in the region and in member countries, respectively, once every five years. Following those presented in 2000, the Governing Body will present the APO Regional Awards 2005 at the meeting.

A special presentation will be made by Mr. Yuzaburo Mogi, Chairman and CEO, Kikkoman Corporation. The delegates will also have an opportunity to tour small and medium-sized enterprises/manufacturing factories in Ota-ku, Tokyo, where Mr. Nobuaki Yamada, Executive Director, Ota City, will brief the delegates on their operations.