



## New Year message from APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki

I take great pleasure in wishing everyone a happy, healthy, and productive New Year. It is a hopeful time as we celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of another. The APO turned 50 last year, proudly commemorating the achievements of the past five decades and overcoming various challenges that not only strengthened its position from the heart of Asia, but also underlined its resolve to promote the socioeconomic development of member economies.


At the same time, we are reminded that several APO member economies are still recovering from the aftermath of natural disasters. We have lost dear ones and livelihoods have been impacted by the terrible catastrophes. My deepest condolences go to the victims. Despite the unfortunate events, the mission of the APO must continue. The 53rd Governing Body Meeting (GBM) that was to take place in Tokyo was instead moved to Kuala Lumpur in April after the Malaysian government graciously agreed to host it. The new strategic plan approved by the GBM was discussed and developed into a program of action at the annual Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs in Vientiane last October. Other APO-related highlights included the 7th Eco-products International Fair (New Delhi), Top Management Forum (Kyoto), and International Productivity Congress (Islamabad), to name just a few.



Secretary-General Yamazaki

The debt crisis in the eurozone and USA exacerbated the slowdown of the global economy in 2011. Despite this, the silver lining for Asia is that it should be able to navigate through this crisis and be less affected, largely due to its greater reliance on regional trade and economic cooperation. The current global economic scenario emphasizes the relevance of APO-NPO collaboration and mutual cooperation that allow us to explore new frontiers of productivity and competitiveness through the implementation of projects with significant multiplier effects. e-Learning in particular will feature as one effective way to extend the reach of APO productivity projects, as shown by the overwhelming enrollment of 1,900 participants in the pilot program carried out last June.

The APO would like to extend its deepest appreciation to the Republic of China, Japan, Republic of Korea, and Thailand for giving special grants for projects in 2011, an acknowledgment and recognition of the role of the APO as the beacon of the Asia-Pacific in its quest to assist member economies become more productive and competitive by 2020. To demonstrate its commitment to that goal, the APO will continue to support members guided by the three strategic directions set in April last year at the GBM: promote the development of SMEs and communities; catalyze innovation-led productivity growth; and promote Green Productivity. Also, against the current unpredictable, volatile economic backdrop, the APO has been striving to improve its operational cost-effectiveness and deliver even better projects for its members.

The APO must seek to offer more in 2012. The special APO 50th anniversary publication will debut at an international conference in Taipei. I also look forward to further collaboration with the UN, Colombo Plan, and Asian Development Bank Institute as well as with other international organizations. Let us continue to work together to contribute to the sustainable economic development of the Asia-Pacific through productivity enhancement. Let us stay united in the circle of innovative ideas and collaboration to realize our aspirations for our nations and the region. It has indeed been a rewarding 50 years, and here is to another 50! 

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Asian Productivity Organization (APO)  
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Building  
1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku,  
Tokyo 102-0093, Japan

Tel: (81-3) 5226-3920  
Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950  
e-Mail: [apo@apo-tokyo.org](mailto:apo@apo-tokyo.org)



## Ecotourism in Asia: moving forward

**A**sia is now facing changes in global tourism trends, especially in the domains of demography (people), economy (place), culture (desire), and environment (resources). The significant increase in the retired and aging population is influencing holiday trends. That group demands holiday experiences in remote, natural, exotic environments, popularly known as “nostalgic” holidays. The urban middle class with the desire to travel in Asia is growing rapidly, particularly in Russia, India, and PR China, and they seek holiday experiences involving culture and nature. This has accelerated environmental changes in all tourism destinations in Asia, especially with respect to ecotourism destinations.

Ecotourism, by its definition, involves both cultural and natural tourism and due to its expected advantages many countries in Asia have employed ecotourism as a means for sustainable socioeconomic development in rural regions occupying the largest land area. Along the way, there have been challenges in pursuing sustainable ecotourism development, and many questions remain unanswered.

### **Ecotourism: a marketing ploy?**

To show that they are “superior” nature lovers, Asians have long traveled to natural areas under the guise of what the travel agencies label “ecotourism.” This behavior became more popular when green marketing strategies were used by the tourism business sector to promote “ecology” and “nature-loving behavior” as a newly branded tourism product. Actually, however, this is a time-honored activity. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization has recently reported that ecotourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of tourism worldwide, at a pace of more than 20% per year, or two- to three-fold faster than the overall tourism industry. The benefits of ecotourism to local businesses are considerably greater than those of mass tourism, providing an incentive to local communities to care for their environment.

There is a significant difference between ecotourism and nature-based tourism, although this escapes most tourists. Visiting natural destinations



is nature-based tourism, while learning and participating in environmentally friendly activities owned and operated by locals in a natural setting that is carefully managed by all stakeholders is ecotourism. Therefore, the ecotourism concept includes participation of all, careful site management, small scale, environmentally friendly activity, and learning among visitors and the visited based on the capacity of the hosts, not the guests. The paradigm of ecotourism management differs greatly from that of mainstream tourism. Simply put, mainstream tourism is driven by tourist demand and therefore demand based, but ecotourism is supply based.

### **Thorny or rosy path to sustainable ecotourism in Asia: how to go forward**

“Knowing how” and “how to” are always problematic after determining the “why.” It is the same in ecotourism management. It is a common belief that ecotourism is a panacea to mitigate negative tourism impacts. However, a number of ecotourism destinations in Asia encountered numerous challenges as they did not have sufficient knowledge, a functional model, and proper planning to develop and manage ecotourism to promote the well-being of both local people and the environment. As a result, some have even had negative impacts. Learning from past failures and successes in Asia, the following steps can contribute to sustainable ecotourism development.

*Step 1:* To start employing ecotourism as a tool for local development, people empowerment

should first be undertaken by creating a community learning environment, constructing community networks, and strengthening collaborative efforts among local stakeholders. Self-reliant communities must be developed at the very beginning of the project.

*Step 2:* The decision-making process should be the responsibility of the local people as it gives them the autonomy to shape the community as they see fit. Hence, the role of the tourism developer should be “igniting,” not “initiating.”

*Step 3:* Ecotourism committees should be formed, made functional, and accepted by people in the community so that their needs are served. Additionally, the background and status of committee members should be similar to avoid power domination. If the members come from different backgrounds, benefit sharing must be well managed, fair, and transparent.

*Step 4:* Build collaborative networks because success in ecotourism development requires knowledge from both internal and external stakeholders. Transfer and exchange of tourism knowledge among stakeholders are necessary for successful ecotourism development.

*Step 5:* The community must conduct ecotourism product analysis, survey needs and wants of locals as well as potential visitors, and carefully select tourism products with little/no negative impact. It is not necessary to sell ecoproducts to attract visitors who are willing to learn about community life.

*Step 6:* Destination benchmarking helps with the positioning of ecodestinations so that they do not compete with other nearby sites, but instead link them along a travel route.

*Step 7:* Ecotourism products, market positioning, and branding should be designed in accordance with community strengths, identity, and selective target markets.

*Step 8:* A strategic ecotourism development plan needs to be drafted, employing a participatory ap-

proach. The strategic plan should be for five years, while each year is directed by an action plan. Both plans create a balance between hosts and guests.

*Step 9:* The strategic ecotourism development plan and yearly action plan must be implemented with the agreement of stakeholders to create a sense of ownership.

*Step 10:* Follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation are necessary to ensure that plans are on the right track, fit the changing situation, and result in the best outcomes. If the plans go awry, they need to be immediately amended by the committee.

Productivity improvement via ecotourism cannot be achieved overnight. It

requires time and patience. However, if the guidelines above are followed, results will be seen within a reasonable time. Keep in mind that Rome was not built in a day, and sustainable ecotourism sites cannot be either. 🌀

*Dr. Therdchai (Ted) Choibamroong holds a PhD in Tourism Planning and Management from the University of Queensland, Australia, and Master's (Social Science) in Tourism Policy and Management from the University of Birmingham, UK. He was previously the Director of the Thailand Tourism Development Research Institute and responsible for tourism research grants for 10 years as well as Project Director of the ASEAN Tourism Stakeholder Network. He has served as an APO resource person on tourism for more than five years, and at present is Executive Director of the Center of Integrated Tourism Management Studies, National Institute of Development Administration, Thailand.*

## Strategic management consultancy: focus on assisting SMEs

**T**he APO, in collaboration with the Japan Productivity Center (JPC), has been organizing training courses on management consultancy-related topics since 1964 as one of its core topics. Strengthening and promoting the development of SMEs is an APO strategic direction, as SMEs play a crucial role in the economies of all countries. However, most SMEs do not have the in-house capacity to develop and exercise strategic management to improve their immediate and long-term competitiveness. They therefore need external consultants to provide guidance and assistance in this area.

Most NPOs continue to be in the forefront of providing productivity consultancy services to enterprises of all sizes within the region, and increasing their ability to assist in putting strategic management in place in SMEs is crucial. Areas in which NPOs must be adept include helping SMEs to formulate improvement plans; identifying operational deficiencies and prioritizing opportunities for improvement; and developing and guiding the implementation of practical, cost-effective management solutions to enhance the productivity and profitability and ultimately sustain the growth of SMEs.

The APO and JPC held a training course on Strategic Management Consultancy for SMEs in Japan, 17–28 October 2011. Eighteen participants from 17 member countries, who represented NPOs, SMEs, and the government/public sector, attended the two-week course. They were introduced to the overall framework of management consultancy in Japan; observed overall management function and analysis in SMEs; acquired integrated analytical consulting techniques in the major functional areas of production, marketing, and human resources development; and made site visits to observe best practices of strategic management in the SME sector. All participants presented strategic plans for a consultancy client in the first week of the course, which were gradually refined based on new insights gained



*Site visit at Mirai Industry Co., Ltd.*

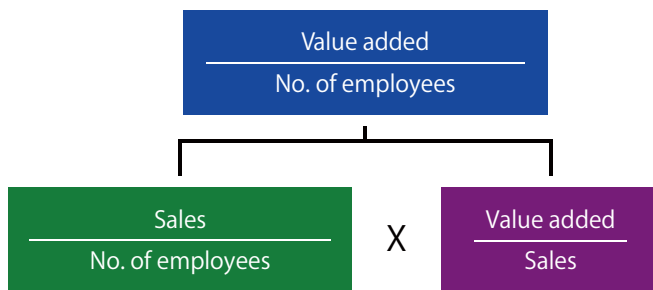
and presented during the final days. Six experts from the JPC and Thailand facilitated the training activities.

Participants visited Meidoh Co. Ltd., a winner of the 1998 Total Productive Maintenance Prize and 2010 Deming prize, in Aichi prefecture to learn about total quality management and marketing. The Ogaki Plant of Mirai Industry Co. Ltd., which produces electric wiring materials in Gifu prefecture, demonstrated its unique corporate management system for employee motivation. The Nagoya Plant of Asahi Breweries Ltd., Aichi prefecture, allowed participants to examine its customer-focused marketing strategies combined with environmental conservation efforts. Sankyo Kogyo Co., a manufacturer of nuts and bolts in Nagoya, explained its lean production system and how each employee understands customer expectations. 🌀



## Productivity goal setting for a new year: a tool for SMEs—Kelvin Chan Keng Chuen

**W**hat productivity measures should you use for goal setting? Productivity is about the creation of value for your customers versus the efficiency in utilization of your resources. Many in both industry and government agencies use the labor productivity ratio as a primary indicator to assess enterprise performance. This ratio is obtained by dividing the value added generated by the number of employees in the enterprise (Figure). Value added can be computed using 1) the subtraction method in which brought-in materials and services are subtracted from sales or 2) the addition method in which manpower costs, interest, tax, depreciation, profit, and in some countries rental are added to obtain the value added of the enterprise.



**Figure.** Components of the labor productivity ratio.

The value-added approach encourages employees to work alongside management to create value for the enterprise. Coupled with productivity gain sharing, employees will be motivated to generate more value for the enterprise, as they will benefit from it. The labor productivity ratio is computed at the end of each financial year. Performance in productivity can then be evaluated by comparing that year with historical performance or industry benchmarks.


A relatively young SME in the service sector in Singapore started its productivity drive three years ago and established a system to assess performance in productivity. As illustrated in the Table, the historical trend of labor productivity increased by an average of 6.8% per annum. This showed that the enterprise had performed well, growth strategies adopted were sound, and, more importantly, efforts to manage the enterprise had paid off. When comparing the performance against the industrial average of S\$22,287 per employee for this sector, the SME realized that it had outperformed the industry benchmark. This was good news. To avoid complacency, the enterprise decided to set an ambitious improvement goal of 10% annually for the next few years.

**Table.** Labor productivity performance of a service-sector SME. Monetary values are in Singapore dollars (S\$1 = US\$0.77).

Year	Annual sales (a)	Brought-in materials & services (b)	Value added (c) = (a)-(b)	No. of employees (d)	Labor productivity ratio (e) = (c)/(d)	Growth of labor productivity
Year 1	\$472,300	\$234,079	\$238,221	11	\$21,656	—
Year 2	\$698,971	\$374,182	\$324,789	14	\$23,199	+7.12%
Year 3	\$874,257	\$503,642	\$370,615	15	\$24,708	+6.50%

In the quest for improvement, the enterprise found that increasing the sales per employee or the value added-to-sales ratio increased labor productivity. Management reviewed the list of services to identify strategies to increase the volume of high value-added services. Lean management activities were introduced simultaneously to reduce waste. An innovation project was initiated, resulting in the launch of two new high value-added services that further boosted sales. Once again, the improvement efforts paid off as the SME increased its productivity by 35% over the following three years. That is a great achievement by any account.

In another example, a South African SME printing company was in crisis when one of its biggest customers that contributed 30% of its annual sales turnover decided to use another vendor. The productivity measures implemented earlier allowed the enterprise to remain competitive by reorganizing its manpower requirements while implementing strategies to rebuild the business.

What is the productivity of your enterprise? Set your productivity goals to kick-start the new year. Make use of the above template and approach. Assess your historical performance and compare it with the industry benchmark. When the facts are established, productivity goal setting and selection of strategies for improvement will then be obvious to you. 



*Contributed by Director and Principal Consultant Kelvin Chan, Teian Consulting International Pte Ltd, Singapore, and resource speaker for the APO training course on the Development of Productivity Practitioners: Basic Program.*



For easy reference to productivity-related terms including methodologies, tools, and techniques, the APO developed the p-Glossary, available on its website ([www.apo-tokyo.org](http://www.apo-tokyo.org)).




## Information security management systems: creating awareness

**W**hile aiming to achieve global competitiveness, business drivers have recognized the need for protection of information assets from external attacks and internal abuses. In a competitive environment where information systems are business enhancers, awareness is the starting point for a stronger information security culture. To improve awareness of the importance of information security management systems (ISMS) in protecting valuable business assets while improving productivity, 21 participants attended a training course on ISMS based on the ISO 27000 series organized by the APO and the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Government of Indonesia. The training course was held in Bekasi, Indonesia, 17–21 October 2011.

Training sessions focused on the practical know-how and skills related to an ISMS utilizing the plan-do-check-act cycle, ISMS controls and requirements, and the role of each employee in effectively planning and implementing ISMS internal auditing through a role-playing exercise. All sessions were supported by two international experts from India. The participants also visited PT. Panasonic Gobel Energy Indonesia (PEGGI) to observe the best ISMS practices for high-level protection of sensitive information assets. PEGGI President Director Mitsutoshi Shigeta warmly welcomed the group and said that the company would be “happy to share good practices to promote ISMS, a key to successful business operations, with friends from the Asia-Pacific region.”



*Training course experts and participants.*

All participants had a working understanding of ISMS, and many had completed the 2010 APO e-learning course on the topic. Sri Lankan participant Dhanushka L. Amadoru, who led IT-related matters at Sri Lanka Telecom Services Ltd., said that attending this training course was the first key step to the successful implementation of an ISMS and “definitely better than only attending the e-learning course.” He added that the training course gave an opportunity to gain practical ISMS skills and knowledge together with hands-on experience in planning, implementing, and reviewing activities related to ISMS internal auditing. All participants prepared action plans to promote and/or improve the ISMS in their organizations. 

## Developing reliable, safe, green food supply chains

**T**he food supply chain refers to the entire process of providing food and agricultural products from primary production through food manufacturing, distribution, and retail sales to the final consumers. In response to the increasing social demand for more environmentally friendly production systems, food supply chains are required to achieve better environmental performance. Thus, agriculture, food processors, and the distribution and retail industry are now working intensively to decrease environmental burdens associated with their economic activities.


To contribute to achieving that goal, the APO multicountry observational study mission on Developing Reliable, Safe, Green Food Supply Chains was



*Comparing barley varieties as ingredients for different final products at Kirin Beer Park in Toride.*

held in Japan, 7–12 November 2011, to study the current status of greening food supply chains in Japan. Sixteen individuals from 14 APO member countries attended, comprising officers of ministries of agriculture or industry, representatives of

food-processing companies, and academic societies. The five main topics covered by the resource persons were: 1) Green Supply Chains, by Professor Saito, University of Chiba Graduate School of Horticulture, focusing on recycling models operated by farms, food processors, and retailers where food waste is recycled into organic fertilizer; 2) Promotion of Food Recycling Systems, by Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Officer Noriyuki Okawa, who detailed government regulations to promote food waste recycling systems; 3) New Environmental Policy of Cooperatives, by Manager Toshikazu Oosawa, Japanese Consumers' Cooperation Union; 4) Life Cycle Assessment and Carbon Footprints, by Director Takehisa Kabeya, Japan Environmental Management Association for Industry; and 5) Material Flow Cost Accounting (MFCA), by Managing Director Hiroshi Tachikawa, Propharm Co., Ltd., who explained how MFCA related to greening supply chains.

The mission also included field visits where participants observed examples of food waste being reduced, recycled, and reused. At Saitama Recycling Management Center where numerous types of recycling units operate, participants observed how food packaging waste is converted into fuel. Food waste from restaurant kitchens at the Palace Hotel is efficiently recycled into organic fertilizer by compact facilities in the hotel and transported to farmers who supply the hotel with produce, thus forming a recycling chain. The Toride Beer Park of Kirin Breweries adopts various environmentally friendly practices such as reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and recycling of materials such as bottles, cases, and organic residue from the brewing process. 


# Biotechnology business models for Asian agribusiness SMEs

The agricultural biotechnology industry is relatively new, but its potential impact on agriculture and food security is significant. Often the source of agricultural biotechnology innovations is SMEs, although multinational companies involved in commercial seed production, animal vaccines, biopesticides, and genetically modified organisms have gained the most economic benefit. There is a need to expand the benefits of biotechnology among agribusiness SMEs, but this will require the adoption of appropriate biotechnology-based business models as there is no standard model for success.

Asian SMEs confront limited funding, high regulatory costs, legal hurdles in the regulatory process, nonconductive policy environment, and low capacity to absorb risk. Nevertheless, the Republic of China (ROC) successfully created conducive economic and policy environments to capitalize on technology created through active R&D. To learn firsthand from the most promising biotechnology-based agribusiness SMEs in the ROC, the APO in collaboration with the China Productivity Center organized a multicountry observational study mission on the Development of Biotechnology Business Models for SMEs in Agribusiness, held in Taipei, Pingtung, and Taichung, 7–11 November 2011. Twenty-two participants from 11 member countries and five resource persons from Singapore and the ROC attended.

The topics covered were: overview of the agribiotechnology industry in the Asia-Pacific; new biotechnology product development; risk management by agribiotechnology-based SMEs; business models for the development of agribiotechnology SMEs in the ROC;

policy, regulatory, and institutional settings to stimulate biotechnology-based agribusiness SMEs; and successful examples of agribiotechnology business and their key success factors. The participants also presented case studies on agribiotechnology businesses from their countries.

To learn firsthand how different business models have been adopted by promising biotechnology-based agribusiness SMEs in the host country, participants visited Grape King Inc.; Pingtung Agricultural Biotechnology Park; KPC Products, Inc.; GeneReach Biotechnology Corp.; and the Animal Technology Institute Taiwan. They also formulated recommendations and action plans for capacity building of agribiotechnology SMEs in the Asia-Pacific region, of which the most critical will be changing mindset of policymakers and planners, as well as public perception of the safety of the agribiotechnology products. 



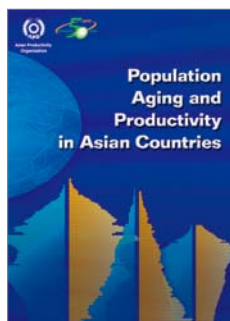
*Dr. Jium-Nan Chu, R&D Assistant Manager of Advanced Green Biotechnology Inc., demonstrating the effectiveness of biofertilizers in experimental greenhouse bok choy.*



## New APO publication

### **Population Aging and Productivity in Asian Countries**

ISBN: 978-92-833-2420-1 (print edition)  
ISBN: 978-92-833-2421-8 (e-edition)



The Research on Aging Society project was initiated by the APO in September 2009 to investigate demographic trends in aging societies within its membership. The team of researchers from the Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and the USA evaluated how increasing life expectancy combined with historically low fertility replacement rates affected the productivity of participating countries. The focus was on labor supply and demand factors, improved access for and to older workers, retirement policies, gender differences, and types of work performed by older and younger generations. The research culminated in the publication of *Population Aging and Productivity in Asian Countries*, now available in both print and e-book editions.

As reflected by the countries selected for participation in the Research on Aging Society, this phenomenon is most evident in the developed countries of

East Asia and the West. Societal aging will have far-reaching effects on future labor markets, social security, welfare, and education, in addition to overall productivity. However, there are major variations in the speed and pattern of the aging process among countries which necessitate different coping mechanisms and policy measures to sustain or improve productivity gains. In addition, developing economies are experiencing sectoral population aging, with agriculture the primary example, as educated younger workers increasingly migrate from rural to urban areas and from blue-collar to white-collar jobs.

This volume contains an introduction, chapters analyzing different aspects of population aging in the five participating countries supplemented with figures and tables, and a conclusion integrating the research results. The concluding chapter also specifies policy measures and initiatives needed to support the potential for sustained economic growth in an aging society: reforming wage and compensation systems; reforming retirement policies; subsidizing the wages of older workers; increasing the labor force participation rate of women; and improving skills and productivity.

*Population Aging and Productivity in Asian Countries* will be of interest to government policymakers; those involved in planning for future human resources, healthcare, and skill requirements; researchers in various socioeconomic fields; and groups or individuals working to enhance human and economic capital.

## APO/NPO Update

### *Fiji*

#### **New address/phone and fax numbers of NPO for Fiji**

Address: Hotel & Catering School Buildings, 2/8 Queen Elizabeth Drive, Nasese, Suva

Phone: (679) 3311-004/3313-074/9990-724

Fax: (679) 3311-756

### *Indonesia*

#### **New APO Alternate Director**

Name: Mr. Bambang Satrio Lelono

Designation: Secretary, Directorate General of Training and Productivity Development, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia

Effective date: 1 September 2011

#### **New APO Liaison Officer and NPO Head**

Name: Mrs. Nora Ekaliana

Designation: Director of Productivity and Entrepreneurship, Directorate General of Training and Productivity Development, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia

Effective date: 26 October 2011

### *Mongolia*

#### **New APO Liaison Officer**

Name: Mrs. Baigalmaa Purevdorj

Designation: Mongolia Productivity Organization

Effective date: 1 November 2011

Temporary e-mail address: pbyagal@yahoo.com

### *Nepal*

#### **New NPO Head**

Name: Mr. Pushpa Kumar Karki

Designation: General Manager, National Productivity and Economic Development Centre

Effective date: 20 October 2011

## Two interns assigned to the Secretariat

The National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) in Tokyo has sent two of its MA in International Development Studies scholars for internships at the APO Secretariat. Both are on scholarships from the Japan International Cooperation Agency and have been in Japan since mid-2010. They reported to the Secretariat on 3 October.

Kemei Jackson Kiprono graduated from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, with a BSc in Statistics in 2005. He has worked in the Macroeconomics Directorate of the Kenya's Ministry of Planning, National Development, and Vision 2030 program since 2006. Jackson is specializing in development economics and econometrics at GRIPS. He is assigned to the Agriculture Department as well as Research and Planning Department of the Secretariat. The experience gained will be put to good use in his future career since, as an economist, he may work in related sectors as the Kenyan Ministry of Planning, National Development, and Vision 2030 deploys economists to all government line ministries/agencies. In his free time, Jackson enjoys swimming, watching soccer, traveling, and reading.




Angga E. Wirastomo of Indonesia is also concentrating on development economics while at GRIPS. His previous Bachelor of Arts from Bina Nusantara University was in Visual Communication Design, and his professional experience includes several years in the mass media, advertising, and educational poster design before joining the Fiscal Policy Office, Ministry of Finance, in Jakarta. His initial task at the Secretariat was devising the examination questions for a new e-learning course on integrated management systems, and he will later move to the Information and Public Relations team to contribute his media expertise. When not studying and working, Angga likes to "hang out with friends and colleagues, as well as look for football/soccer shirts to add to my collection." His goal while at the Secretariat is to gain as much experience as possible in an international organization.




## New officer at the Secretariat

On 2 November, Martini Abdul Aziz started her duties at the APO Secretariat as the new Information and Public Relations officer. The Malaysian national has extensive professional experience in training, education, consultancy, and media facilitation/fact-checking at well-known organizations including Malayan Banking Bhd. (Maybank), Malaysia Airlines Engineering Training Centre, University of Malaya, and others. Her most recent previous post was as head of Maybank's Leadership Skills program, where she oversaw the development of leaders from among some 40,000 employees in 15 countries. Martini received a Bachelor's in Education and a Master's degree in English Literature from the University of Malaya. Citing her free-time interests as "reading, traveling, theater, and health-related pursuits," she hopes to immerse herself in all that the Japanese culture and way of life have to offer while serving as the Secretariat's Information and Publications officer.



**Asian Productivity Organization**  
**PHOTO CONTEST 2012**  
*Theme: Productivity and Sustainable Development*



The APO Photo Contest 2012 is open to all who are nationals of APO member economies.

Entries must be taken only in APO members from January 2011. The contest starts on 10 October 2011. The deadline for submission of entries is 29 February 2012. Winners will be announced on 31 May 2012.

See website for details: <http://www.apo-tokyo.org/wp/news/apo-2012-photo-contest.html>.





## MPC organizes triple event

**T**he Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC) organized the Annual Productivity and Innovation Conference and Exposition (APIC 2011) entitled Productivity in the Era of Innovation, 19–20 October 2011, in Kuala Lumpur. The APIC 2011 integrated three major MPC events, the Innovative and Creative Circle (ICC) Convention, Quality Environment (QE) Convention, and Productivity Conference, and attracted over 2,200 business leaders, entrepreneurs, academics, and employees.

The main objectives of the ICC Convention were to learn how to achieve continuous breakthrough improvements, recognize achievements in ICC activities, and inculcate the culture of knowledge sharing and lifelong learning. Companies participating in this year's ICC Convention achieved savings of nearly US\$50 million from projects implemented by 153 circles in 96 organizations. This was a 30% improvement over the 2010 figure.

The QE Convention allowed practitioners to examine performance enhancement measures through innovation, learn how to create a work culture that improves organizational performance and productivity, and recognize exemplary organizations in managing and applying 5S. Forty-seven organizations demonstrated efforts to simplify work, reduce waste, and eliminate non-value-adding activities while raising quality, efficiency, and safety.

The Productivity Conference addressed IT innovation, competitive human capital regulatory review, work-life balance, and sustainable wealth-creating enterprises. It featured 16 speakers from the public and private sectors, as well as academia, reflecting the pivotal role each must play in leading Malaysia to greater competitiveness. Former MCP Director



*Flextronics Technology (M) Sdn. Bhd. (L) and Tenaga Nasional Bhd., Kulaijaya (R) representatives accepting awards. Photo courtesy of MPC.*

General Dato' Nik Zainiah Nik Abd. Rahman, currently Adviser to the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), gave a presentation.

Upon launching the APIC 2011, MITI Deputy Minister (Trade) Y.B. Dato' Mukhriz Mahathir stated, "Improving productivity is not just about making Malaysian workers work longer or faster, or getting them to produce more in a shorter time. It is not only about companies 'doing more with less.' It is about working smarter, managing smarter, organizing better, and more importantly, inculcating a mindset that is productivity and innovation driven, about having the tenacity and perseverance to develop new and creative ideas." The two-day event ended with the presentation of the ICC and Quality Environment (5S) awards 2011 by MITI Deputy Minister (Industry) Y.B. Dato' Jacob Dungau Sagan. *Contributed by the MPC.*



## International Productivity Congress 2011

**T**he National Productivity Organization (NPO) in collaboration with the APO organized Pakistan's first International Productivity Congress (IPC) in Islamabad, 17–18 November 2011. NPO CEO Khawaja Muhammad Yousuf noted that the IPC would familiarize professionals with productivity approaches for different sectors and thus contribute to the overall economic growth of the nation. APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki and World Network of Productivity Organizations (WNPO) Vice President Mike Dillon gave addresses. Secretary-General Yamazaki appreciated the endeavors of the NPO, saying that productivity and quality-related programs would ultimately help Pakistan to become a more prosperous, productive country. Referring to the IPC as "a moment of pride that all major catalyst bodies are here to discuss tangibles that have a real impact on economic uplift," he hoped that intergovernmental relationships between APO members would continue. WNPO Vice President Dillon stressed the need to identify waste within manufacturing and service industries for higher productivity.

The chief guest on day 1 was Muhammad Basharat Raja, Advisor to the Prime Minister, who congratulated the APO and NPO on their efforts to create awareness among Pakistani entrepreneurs of the need to improve productivity to achieve global competitiveness and excellence. Federal Secretary Industries Aziz Ahmed Bilour, chair of the second session, pointed out that a productive nation could "boldly face competition and other challenges in

both the local and global environment."

Former Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan Dr. Ishrat Hussain, now Director of the IBA, Karachi, was the chief guest on day 2 and stressed building processes that disseminate information,

in the spirit of the NPO. Joint Secretary, Ministry of Industries, Shaista Sohail said that in times of uncertainty the government should use every tool at its disposal to strengthen the economy against global threats, which was where the NPO was important since it was mandated to fill gaps in industry.

The IPC 2011 concluded with the conferring of World Confederation of Productivity Science awards on five individuals including Khawaja Mohammad Yousuf of the NPO.

*Contributed by NPO Pakistan.*



*(Front row L–R) Dr. Faqir Muhammad Anjum (presenting an award), Muhammad Yousuf, SG Yamazaki. Photo courtesy of NPO Pakistan.*