APO NEWS
Information to Make a Difference in Productivity

APO-Cornell University cooperating on Asian agribusiness executive course

Under a three-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) to develop agribusiness executive management workshops, the APO and Cornell University held a pilot workshop, 21–25 July, in Bangkok with 20 agribusiness executives and academics from 13 countries participating, along with officials of the Thailand Productivity Institute (FTPI) and members of its Agriculture Advisory Committee from the government, NGOs, and private sector. Also attending were the Director of the Agriculture Department of the APO Secretariat Joselito C. Bernardo, Director of the Cornell International Institute for Food, Agriculture and Development (CIIFAD) Dr. Ralph D. Christy, Dr. Rosa Rolle of the UN FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAORAP), and resource persons from the USA, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The workshop series will be held annually for the three years to develop managers of agribusiness in the Asian region.

Experts and participants in the workshop on Advanced Agribusiness Management. Photo courtesy of FTPI.

CIIIFAD Director Dr. Christy, who is also a professor of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell University, pointed out that, "Cornell has a rich pool of experts among its alumni in Asia who could contribute resources, experience, and expertise to the course." Through its network of NPOs, the APO will identify candidates for future workshops in the series and assist Cornell University in identifying agribusinesses for case studies.

The MOU stemmed from the recognition that opportunities in agribusiness in Asia are expanding rapidly with economic growth. At the same time, factors such as shifting consumer trends, changing government regulatory requirements and policies, stiff competition, and climate change pose new challenges to agribusiness managers. To enhance their competitiveness, agribusinesses must explore innovative strategies, business models, and organizational structures to increase efficiency and productivity. The APO-Cornell workshops will expose participants to the best practices taught in business schools and acquaint them with productivity tools tailored to agriculture. Case studies will be used extensively to illustrate strategic decision making and leadership.

In the pilot workshop, the case analysis technique, current and emerging challenges in agribusiness, strategic management innovations, and leadership roles in Asian agribusiness were introduced. "This workshop exceeded my expectations, provided new tools for business evaluation, and new perspectives on trends and emerging business opportunities. I am very glad for the opportunity to attend this course and receive a certificate bearing the APO and Cornell logos," stated Nalaka Kaushalya Mohotti, Head of the Strategic Business Development Unit, Hayleys Agricultural Holding Limited, Sri Lanka.

During the panel discussions, participants recommended that the APO and FAORAP also cooperate in other areas in areas of common interest to agribusiness development in the region. Dr. Rosa Rolle of FAORAP responded that, "The APO and FAO have been cooperating in several projects and we will continue to explore strengthening such cooperation in specific areas of common interest, which could result in greater synergy."

The intensive five-day workshop also provided participants opportunities for networking with peers and observing best management practices and state-of-the-art facilities of C.P. Intertrade Co., Ltd., in Ayuthaya, one of the leading rice trade-related companies worldwide.

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Outcome document

From the workshop on Incubation Centers from the Asia-Pacific: Forging Partnerships for the Development of Entrepreneurs and Promotion of Entrepreneurship (14–18 July 2014, Taipei, ROC)

Preamble

A workshop on Incubation Centers from the Asia-Pacific: Forging Partnerships for the Development of Entrepreneurs and Promotion of Entrepreneurship was organized by the APO, 14–18 July, in Taipei, ROC, in collaboration with the China Productivity Center (CPC). The workshop was attended by 20 incubation professionals, entrepreneurs, and academics from 15 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The workshop discussed incubation- and entrepreneurship-related policies and programs, the present status of incubators, challenges faced by incubators, barriers to their sustainability, measuring the success of incubators, and other issues. After intensive discussions and careful examination of various aspects over five days, the workshop made the following recommendations.

Delegates full of cheer after developing a set of concrete recommendations to promote entrepreneurship in the Asia-Pacific region.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

1. Initiate sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems by encouraging and promoting incubation activities within the country. Such activities will then improve socioeconomic development, enhance technology adoption, and build knowledge-based enterprises.
2. Establish a special entity to manage and promote incubation activities within the country. Such special entities will help the government to promote, establish, and oversee the incubation ecosystem effectively and efficiently.
3. Plan activities and programs to create awareness of incubation systems among stakeholders and to promote the incubation concept.
4. Formalize partnerships with regional and international networks to build the capacity of incubation professionals, policymakers, and organizations including business entities involved in promoting incubation centers.
5. Conduct seminars, conferences, workshops, and training programs in each country to build the capacity of organizations, incubation professionals, and policymakers.
6. Encourage stakeholders involved in creating entrepreneurial ecosystems to participate in international events related to incubation.
7. Encourage knowledge-sharing study missions to other regions to understand the good practices of incubation centers.
8. Develop fellowship and educational programs with other national and international incubation centers to provide hands-on experience and training to incubation professionals.
9. Simplify the procedures and systems for starting new companies or ventures, which will lead to the creation of a start-up ecosystem with more companies becoming operational in a shorter gestation period.
10. Offer fiscal incentives such as tax cuts/rebates and incentives for the services provided by incubators.
11. Offer fiscal incentives to corporations, industries, and service providers that support incubation centers.
12. Offer fiscal incentives to incubating enterprises and those that have passed the incubation phase.
13. Support incubating enterprises by assisting them to participate in trade fairs or exhibitions where they can promote their commercializable products and services while establishing networks and linkages with similar enterprises.
14. Encourage and promote public-private partnerships in the incubation ecosystem.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE APO

15. Create a network of participants in APO projects on entrepreneurship and incubation.
16. Build relationships with international organizations in the Asia-Pacific involved in promoting incubation ecosystems in the region.
17. Identify opportunities to serve member countries by building the capacity of incubation centers through relations with other international organizations, such as the Asia Pacific Incubation Network, Asian Association of Business Incubations, etc.
18. Leverage web-based platforms for collecting and sharing incubator-related information among member countries.
19. Consider providing a separate pavilion for incubators and incubating enterprises in exhibitions organized or supported by the APO at regional and national levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATIONS

20. Take the lead in establishing national-level incubator associations/networks and encourage industries to adopt the promotion of incubation activities as part of their corporate social responsibility.

Myanmar delegates investigate agricultural innovations in Japan

Innovations in food production systems and postharvest operations are crucial to increasing the productivity and quality of agricultural products. With an aging, diminishing labor force and declining land area for agricultural production, the only way to increase output is the introduction of innovations including advanced production technologies and farm machinery, along with appropriate support infrastructure, R&D, and extension systems. However, many developing countries lack access to production technologies, training, and infrastructure support.

Myanmar's economy relies heavily on agriculture, which provides employment to over half of the workforce and is linked to activities that provide livelihoods to about two-thirds of the population. Farmers have limited access to technology and information on value addition or the food value chain, however. Improving agricultural productivity and value addition are critical to reducing poverty and raising the competitiveness of the country's agricultural and food exports.

With a special cash grant from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the APO organized an observational study mission from Myanmar on agricultural innovations in Japan, 19–26 August. The mission provided opportunities for 20 participants from Myanmar to study innovations in farming systems and postharvest operations in Japan and a platform to network with organizations and institutions that could facilitate future cooperation and exchanges of knowledge.

A demonstration of an innovative irrigation system at the National Institute for Rural Engineering.

Experts from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Kyoto University; Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology; and National Agriculture and Food Research Organization (NARO) led discussions on technologies to improve agricultural productivity, referring to innovations in rice production and agricultural mechanization. Dr. Satoshi Yoshinaga of NARO commented, "The sharing of knowledge and technology with the delegates can be applied to help increase the efficiency and productivity of rice in Myanmar and also reduce the labor cost for rice production."

The mission included visits to several research institutes under NARO, tractor manufacturer Kubota Corporation, food-processing machinery manufacturer Satake Corporation, fertilizer provider Katakura Chikkarin, and rice mill and storage facilities operated by agricultural cooperatives. Myanmar delegate Dr. Myo Kywe thought that, "This project will help in further collaborations and cooperation between Myanmar and the companies visited to help elevate agricultural productivity in my country."

Cold chain systems for perishable agrifood

Food loss and waste are global concerns due to their socioeconomic and environmental implications. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that one-third of all food produced or about 1.3 billion tons is wasted annually, causing major economic losses and contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. The lack of good harvest and postharvest handling practices and of good infrastructure for transportation, storage, cooling, processing, and marketing are major causes of food loss in developing countries in Asia. These were among the issues discussed by a group of 22 participants from 12 APO members during the workshop on Development of Cold Chain Systems for Perishable Agrifood Products hosted by the National Productivity Council (NPC) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation (MoAC) in New Delhi, 24–28 March.

Additional Secretary Dinesh K. Jain and Joint Secretary Sanjeev Chopra of the MoAC, along with NPC Director General and APO Alternate Director for India Harbhajan Singh, graced the opening session of the workshop. In his welcome remarks, Singh expressed his appreciation to the APO for organizing the workshop in India and for paying attention to "an important concern which has serious implications for many developing countries."

Additional Secretary Jain noted that India had achieved phenomenal success in horticulture with record production of 269 million metric tons. However, perishables continue to have high levels of waste. The National Centre for Cold-chain Development was established to address that issue and promote cold chains across user segments.

Opening session: (L–R) Additional Secretary Dinesh K. Jain, NPC Director General Harbhajan Singh, and APO Agriculture Department Director J. Bernardo.

Participant from India Tage Tatung, Managing Director of the Horticultural Produce Marketing & Processing Board in Aruchnachal Pradesh, expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to attend the workshop and learn about current technologies and best practices in cold chains in advanced countries. APO Secretariat Agriculture Department Director J. Bernardo emphasized that, "Inclusion of the cold chain aspect within the value chain of perishable products is becoming indispensable, regardless of whether products are destined for domestic or overseas markets."

The participants recommended that the APO continue to disseminate information and support capacity development in cold chain management considering its implications for productivity. They also suggested organizing observational study missions to countries with good cold chain systems in place since they are needed to support increases in production of highly perishable and valuable fruit and vegetable products. Such support could sustain productivity gains and increase small farmers' income, especially in remote areas.

Future centers can build innovative organizations

Future centers are spaces for problem solving and solution seeking. They are used to create new knowledge and plan how to apply it in practice, bringing government into closer contact with citizens, connecting end-users with industry, enhancing cooperation within a region, and supporting collaborative innovation on multistakeholder issues. Their core business is developing innovative solutions to challenging business, organizational, or societal problems, in particular solutions where the active, intelligent cooperation of diverse people is important.

How can a space be designed to foster creativity and cooperation? The simple answer is: by paying attention to the design and interaction of the physical, emotional, technological, and social environment; the working methods used there; and the facilitator who animates the session. In normal meetings and workshops there are tables and chairs, boards for writing, and projectors for presentations. People have their usual places to sit and their usual ways of speaking, listening, and reacting, easily leading to predictable thinking and results. In future center sessions, patterns are purposely broken. Surprising environments and unexpected activities create possibilities for thinking differently and doing things in new, better, often surprising ways. The facilitator guides and creates an environment where mutual respect, understanding, and trust among collaborating partners are possible.

Above everything else, future centers are people spaces (Figure 1). People are central to the solution-seeking process. This is why centers design spaces to create people-friendly atmospheres that are both comfortable for session participants and relevant to the tasks at hand: the living room; the library; the garage for building things; the garden; the sports hall; the kitchen; the café; and many others, depending on the culture of the country and the issues to be addressed. The environments are triggers that support activities in different phases of an innovation process: understanding the context of a problem; cocreating promising ideas; building prototypes to test them; overcoming obstacles; enhancing flexibility; and enabling teamwork. The arrangements of furniture in these workspaces, such as different configurations of chairs and tables for specific activities, subtly encourage active participation, goal-oriented behavior, focused reflection, social interaction, or individual creativity as a session requires. Pictures on the walls of the people, situations, and locations of the problems that a future center session wants to address help remind people that their work inside the workspace has an effect on the world outside.

Figure 1. LEF future center, the Netherlands. Photo courtesy of H. Kune.

These spaces that are different from the places participants usually work in contribute to breaking patterns of thinking and behaving, allowing new ideas and perspectives on issues to emerge. Since everyone is asked to work in an unexpected environment, everyone is equal; sometimes simply being invited to write crazy ideas on the walls, or talking to each other in unusual spaces is enough. As one participant explained: "The center's unconventional approaches allowed us to break free of convention, and hierarchy became a thing of the past." In addition, people enjoy working in spaces like these, and this element of fun and enjoying the work while tackling serious issues is essential to the success of future centers in facilitating the innovation process.

How do the centers work?

Since the mid-1990s, organizations in Europe have been working with varieties of future centers in sectors as diverse as transportation, taxation, insurance, banking, energy, education, employment, agriculture, spatial planning, water and coastal management, smart systems, and stimulating an entrepreneurial economy. In the last five years, new kinds of centers have been developing in Asia, especially in Japan.

The future center work process revolves around three things: the issue addressed; the people who participate; and the center itself. Typically, a diverse group of stakeholders is brought together to deal with a specific challenge. Depending on the challenge, various methodologies and techniques can be used. The role of the facilitator in guiding groups through activities in different stages of the innovation process and different spaces in the center is of great importance.

Regardless of which methods are applied, a future center process adheres to a number of operating principles (Figure 2), including the following:

- Sustainable focus: The center supports its users in addressing significant issues with long-term perspectives in order to arrive at

systemic, sustainable solutions that can be realized in the short and middle term. For example, one future center addressed the challenge of revolutionizing the design of the future kindergarten to provide children with a better educational environment. Ten future images, based on different perspectives (e.g., democratic education, science, physiological development, parental perspectives) were developed. Each of the kindergarten teachers who participated in the process adopted one of the future images and realized it in one space of his/her kindergarten.

- Meeting people on equal terms: Each participant has an equal voice, which is independent of his/her hierarchical, political, or professional position. A government organization in the Netherlands wanted to cocreate a new sustainable model for procurement in cooperation with the construction sector. The commitment from all parties to create and implement something new was needed. Their future center used the physical metaphor of a boat to emphasize the importance of cooperation among the many stakeholders from different organizations. By putting participants in a physical boat in one of their workspaces, the session reinforced the concept that all parties in the project were "in the same boat" and the importance of working on equal terms in this complex project; people could either row together toward a shared goal, or go around in circles, or even sink the boat. The sessions helped participants redefine their own tasks and contributions to the project and talk openly about their expectations of others.

- Concrete results: The focus of sessions is producing concrete results that adequately address problems and issues. Prototyping is a work process actively used to make ideas and intentions tangible and to test and improve them with actual stakeholders in the real world. One future center program on flood control and innovative water management in the Dutch river delta asked project participants to take their plans and promising ideas out of the center and into the community to test them in conversations with stakeholders in the area that would be effected such as residents, civil servants, business leaders, and decision makers. A lot was learned about what people really required, what they thought was unacceptable (and why), and the possible unintended consequences of seemingly good ideas. In the end, it made the decisions about policy a lot more realistic and resonate with the needs of the community.

After two decades of experience, we understand that a future center is as much a mindset as it is a physical working space. Both are necessary for success. The space should send clear signals that creativity and innovation are desired. Both new purpose-built spaces and older existing buildings can be designed for this. Spaces can be located in one central place, or else temporary and dynamic, moving to where people work and live, and problems actually occur. In all instances, it is important to designate the space as dedicated to innovation and design it accordingly.

In a vast variety of shapes and forms, and under diverse names in different sectors, future centers are proving to be powerful instruments for supporting entrepreneurial discovery, developing knowledge economies, and creating sustainable changes in society. Whether the focus is on small steps or great leaps, developing an innovation dialogue in the organization and the community is essential. In this way, future centers contribute to open innovation, open government, and enhancing the creative power and problem-solving capacity of industry and society. The future is a moving target, and at a time when change is everywhere and standing still is equivalent to slipping backward, it is important to move with it.

Figure 2. Operating principles of future centers. Illustration by A. Dvir in *OpenFutures—An Operating System for Future Centers* (R. Dvir, editor, Brussels: OpenFutures, 2008).

Hank Kune actively engages in projects on innovation, organizational renewal, and learning, with a special emphasis on hands-on problem solving in complex social, societal, and administrative situations. Recent work has focused on systemic innovation in public policy making, developing innovation-enabling environments to support societal innovation, and transnational collaboration. He has worked on initiatives with diverse organizations in Europe, Africa, and Asia. He is an active member of the New Club of Paris, a global network organization working as agenda developer for knowledge societies, and Founding Partner of the Future Center Alliance.

MFCA: Interview with experts

The APO always seeks multiplier effects from its projects so that as many as possible can benefit from them. Secretariat Industry Department Senior Program Officer K.D. Bhardwaj, who is in charge of MFCA projects, interviewed General Manager, Sustainable Development, Yoshikuni Furukawa of Nitto Denko Corp, who is Secretary to the ISO TC207 WG8 (MFCA), and Managing Director Hiroshi Tachikawa of Propharm Japan Co. Ltd., who is MFCA Technical Expert for Japan and Assistant Secretary to the group, via e-mail on behalf of the APO. The following is an edited version of their e-conversation.

How long have you been associated with the APO?

Furukawa: We became aware of the APO approximately 10 years ago. Since then, as we led the ISO publication on material flow cost accounting (MFCA) in 2011, we began to work with the APO more closely. As technical experts, we provided training in various projects and recently successfully completed an MFCA-related demonstration project in India.

What type of services have you provided to the APO?

Tachikawa: We provided various MFCA-related services. The key activities include the MFCA-related demonstration project, an e-learning course, and MFCA-related training course in the ROC, all since March 2011.

Furukawa: As the first company to apply MFCA successfully in Japan, Nitto Denko Corporation also welcomed delegates from the ROC to demonstrate to them practical knowledge of MFCA several times. One of the visits took place in September 2013.

What is MFCA and how did it start? Why is MFCA important? Why should the APO promote it?

Tachikawa: MFCA traces the flows and stocks of materials within an organization and quantifies them in physical units (e.g., kilograms) and the costs associated with those material flows. This information assists organizations in achieving enhanced productivity, cost reductions, and fewer environmental impacts at the same time. MFCA is applicable to any organization that uses materials and energy, regardless of its products, services, size, structure, location, and existing management and accounting systems. Basically, MFCA is a sustainable management tool to encourage the implementation of Green Productivity (GP).

Furukawa: The concept of MFCA was originally developed in Germany but the approach has been rapidly disseminated in Japan since 2000. Nitto Denko Corporation was actually the first company in the world to implement MFCA.

Tachikawa: MFCA is important because it contributes to both organizational internal impacts and external impacts (e.g., contribution to the external environment). We understand that one of the strategic directions of the APO is GP, and effectiveness of MFCA perfectly matches with the goal of GP (enhancement of competitiveness and simultaneous contribution to the environment).

Bhardwaj: Based on the APO's experience, let me add that the implementation of MFCA requires sharing of process-related information such as raw material used, their exact costs, etc. in detail, which most industries are wary of. This is one major bottleneck for speedy implementation of MFCA.

Do you think that the APO has been doing well in promoting MFCA?

Furukawa: Yes. For example, I have seen the widespread media coverage given to the MFCA-related activities carried out by the APO.

Tachikawa: Yes, I agree. One of the key examples is India after our successful completion of the MFCA project there in March this year. Currently, India is promoting MFCA on a broad scale as one of the key tools for the enhancement of productivity using the cluster approach.

Which APO member countries have already adopted MFCA?

Tachikawa: Malaysia and India are currently disseminating MFCA at the local level. We also provide technical support for those countries as necessary. In addition, other APO member countries including Vietnam, Thailand, and the Philippines are applying MFCA.

How does MFCA help promote GP?

Furukawa: As we indicated, MFCA is a key tool to achieve the goals of GP. Specifically, MFCA can show you how much cost savings you make from your efforts. This goes beyond simply talking about "Let's be environmentally friendly." Therefore, you can actually feel and see the effects related to MFCA efforts.

What type of benefits APO member countries derived by implementation of MFCA?

Tachikawa: In the first place, internal benefits, in terms of cost reduction, can be seen fairly soon when implementing MFCA. From my experience, I have seen a total of at least US$2 million in cost reductions in SMEs in APO member countries. MFCA does not necessarily require large investments; a lot of it consists of small kaizen activities, such as changing peoples' behavior and establishment of more consistent standard operational procedures to reduce material losses.

What is the future of MFCA standards?

Furukawa: MFCA was internationally standardized in 2011, under the title "Environmental management—Material flow cost accounting—General framework." Now, active discussion is underway on the second international standard "Environmental management—Material flow cost accounting—Guidance for practical implementation in a supply chain (tentative title)." Both of us are dedicated to leading the development of this international standard.

Tachikawa: It is our hope that we can always provide up-to-date information and guidance on the technical MFCA approach to the APO through our leading of the international discussion.

(Continued on page 8)

APO/NPO update

Japan
New APO Alternate Director
Name: Koichi Mizushima
Designation: Deputy Director-General, International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Effective date: 4 July 2014

Nepal
New NPO Head
Name: Rajendra Ratna Bajracharya
Designation: Officiating General Manager, National Productivity and Economic Development Centre
Effective date: 1 April 2014

Pakistan
New NPO Head
Name: Sher Ayub Khan
Designation: CEO, National Productivity Organization
Effective date: 17 July 2014

Sri Lanka
New APO Director
Name: Upali Marasinghe
Designation: Secretary, Ministry of Productivity Promotion
Effective date: 27 June 2014

Photo news

Secretary-General Amano visiting Indonesia Minister of Agriculture Dr. Suswono on 1 July.

APO expert Dr. Sakae Shibusawa, Professor, Department of Environmental and Agricultural Engineering, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (front row, 4th L) and Secretary-General Amano (front row, 5th L) with delegates in the observational study mission from Myanmar on Agricultural Innovation in Japan to Increase Productivity, 19–26 August, Tokyo.

Announcement: WSM

55th WSM to convene in Sri Lanka

The 55th Workshop Meeting of Heads of National Productivity Organizations (WSM), the APO's annual program planning exercise, will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 21–23 October 2014.

The agenda for the meeting will include the adoption of the impact evaluation of 2012–2013 projects, evaluation of 2013 projects, reconfirmation of the APO Program Plan for the 2015–2016 biennium, and reports on and proposals for project activities.

Announcement: APO 3rd World Conference on GP

Calling for 72 international delegates from all APO members to participate in:

Event: APO 3rd World Conference on Green Productivity
Dates: 4–6 November 2014
Venue: ROC (Taipei)
Project details and financial support: http://www.apo-tokyo.org/wedo/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2014/01/13-IN-80-GE-CON-A-3rd-World-Conference.pdf

Please contact your National Productivity Organization (NPO) for further details. NPO contact details are available at: http://www.apo-tokyo.org/about/directories/.

NPO focus

Creating a Better Green Future for Asia

The Advisory and Promotion Committee (APC) of the Center of Excellence on Green Productivity (COE on GP) held its annual meeting in Taipei on 8 August, presided over by China Productivity Center (CPC) Chairperson and APO Director for the ROC Sheng Hsiung Hsu. The meeting focused on three agenda items: Green Technical Services to Targeted Member Countries; APO COE on GP Green Excellence Awards; and the 3rd World Conference on Green Productivity. Over 50 government officials, industrial leaders, and representatives of academic and research institutions attended.

The APC was established under the COE on GP in June 2013 to help enterprises follow sustainable operational principles, speed up the development of a green economy in the Asia-Pacific, and organize events involving Asian countries to create a better green future. The committee is comprised of 54 executives of the ROC's benchmark enterprises and leading organizations who provide strategic guidance. It convenes regularly to examine whether the COE on GP is meeting the demands of industries, government policies, and international standards.

The COE on GP, jointly supervised by the ROC's Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Council of Agriculture, and Environmental Protection Administration, has set up an intensive schedule for the following months. As explained first at the APC meeting, the COE on GP had conducted five "pioneer trips" to Indonesia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. It will soon organize five technical service teams with experts specializing in the ROC's four areas of comparative advantage, resource recycling (for Cambodia, India, and Vietnam), green energy (Lao PDR and the Philippines), green factories (Indonesia), and ecoagriculture (Thailand) to provide onsite advice.

Dr. Liang-tong Chen, IDB Deputy Section Chief, MOEA, delivering opening remarks. Photo courtesy of the CPC.

To firm up the GP Excellence Award framework, APC expert Dr. Allen Hu explained the objectiveness, criteria, applications, and potential impacts of the awards to the meeting, which will be presented to the Expert Panel Meeting on the Development of the Green Productivity Excellence Awards Framework, 1–3 October in Taipei. The CPC then reported the arrangements for the 3rd World Conference on Green Productivity scheduled for 4–6 November in Taipei and invited all present to attend.

Finally, the committee proposed working with Japan's Green Productivity Advisory Committee and inviting bankers to become benchmark models. Domestic bankers will join the APC's 2014 annual meeting to broaden its macroeconomic views and foster consensus among industries. Such joint efforts will assist the operations of the COE on GP and create green business opportunities.

MFCA: Interview with experts

(Continued from page 6)

Bhardwaj: Once understood, industries will realize that MFCA is a powerful tool to save costs and want to apply it in all areas of business. However, unlike other ISO systems, there is no third-party certification for implementation of MFCA based on ISO 14051. To enhance MFCA acceptance in future, the ISO should consider certification.

How has the Japanese Ministry of the Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) has been supporting this initiative?

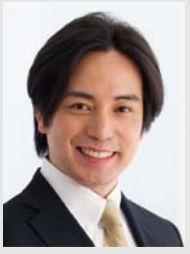
Furukawa and Tachikawa: METI has been supporting our MFCA-related ISO initiative since its beginning for local and international dissemination. The historical/present MFCA-related supporting activities include funding, technical advice for international development, and raising awareness of MFCA among the mass media.

Tachikawa: Also, this international standardization activity is led by Japan with the involvement of various stakeholders from industry, government, and academia. In particular, Professor Katsuhiko Kokubu is the convener to the group and Professor Michiyasu Nakajima is the technical expert.

Do you have suggestions for the APO and NPOs in their attempts to promote MFCA?

Furukawa and Tachikawa: From our experience, we feel that it is important to demonstrate that MFCA can work for every member country. While each has different industrial and cultural contexts, the assignment of experts is an effective way to commence MFCA applications. At the same time, it is important to establish mid- to long-term schemes to promote MFCA in each country.

Furukawa



Tachikawa