



**Asian Productivity Organization (APO)**

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## Press Release

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### **Sustainable Productivity key to future economies: APO Secretary-General**



- APO to focus on sustainable productivity to assist member countries in becoming more resilient and future-proof.
- 174 companies showcasing latest environmental technologies at 11th Eco-products International Fair (EPIF 2017).

**Tokyo, 11 May 2017:** Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Secretary-General Dr. Santhi Kanoktanaporn today called upon developing countries, particularly APO members, to focus on Sustainable Productivity to meet the challenges posed by fast-changing technologies shaping the global economy and driving new business models.

“We need to join forces in raising awareness and modifying our behaviors, strategies, and business models at different levels, so we can timely respond to emerging environmental challenges and proactively manage the opportunities that lie ahead,” the Secretary-General stated at the International Environmental and Economic Forum held in parallel with the 11th Eco-products International Fair (EPIF 2017).

The EPIF 2017 is being organized by the APO, Vietnam National Productivity Institute, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Vietnam Environment Administration at the Saigon Exhibition & Convention Center in Ho Chi Minh City, 11–13 May 2017. It is supported by the Vietnamese Ministry of Science & Technology and Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment.

Dr. Kanoktanaporn added that, at the national and global levels, the key to Sustainable Productivity would depend on the ability of countries to adapt to changing technologies, market needs, and consumer behavior to review, revise, and adopt new policies. “Governments will also need to create favorable policies and business environments aimed at encouraging R&D and innovation by organizations, as well facilitate and motivate entrepreneurship,” he stressed.

The Secretary-General explained that, with the rapid changes occurring around the world in various spheres, the APO would focus on promoting Sustainable Productivity as a key element of its activities. “To assist our member countries to become resilient at a time of extreme turbulence, high uncertainty, and fast changes, the APO is committed to assisting and preparing

its member countries to become future-proof,” he declared, acknowledging that sustainable productivity growth today was a complex issue cutting across multiple domains, including government policies and concerns related to industry, agriculture, climate change, and others. “We are calling for concerted efforts in all spheres to move toward a sustainable future,” Dr. Kanaktanaporn concluded.

Welcoming dignitaries and delegates to the EPIF 2017, Vice Minister Trần Việt Thanh of the Vietnamese Ministry of Science and Technology commented that sustainable development was one of the fundamental criteria in reforming the model of economic growth as well as the most significant goal for Vietnam. “With the theme Green Technologies and Products: Actions for the Future, the EPIF 2017 is an important step toward the development of Vietnam’s economy and an important event to disseminate and raise community awareness of productivity and sustainable development through producing and consuming eco-friendly products, services, and technologies,” Vice Minister Thanh observed.

The three-day EPIF promotes awareness of sustainable development through the production and consumption of eco-friendly products, services, and technologies. The theme Green Technologies and Products: Action for the Future focuses on future-proofing productivity efforts while achieving sustainable industrial development and growth in APO member countries.

In his address at the EPIF Opening Ceremony, Green Productivity Advisory Committee Chairperson Hajime Bada, Honorary Adviser, JFE Holdings Inc., pointed out that with APO member countries continuing to experience rapid economic growth, the burden on the environment had increased due to greater energy use. “This is now a major problem and I hope that this EPIF, which is showcasing the world’s best and latest environmental technologies, will help change perceptions of the Paris Agreement so that it is viewed not as a constraint but as an opportunity for new contributions to sustainable development,” he remarked.

The EPIF is one of the largest international environmental exhibitions in Asia, and this is the second time for Vietnam to host the event. Among the 174 exhibitors, companies from Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam are introducing their latest environmentally friendly equipment, products, and services. Industry players can explore business collaborations, investment cooperation, trade promotion, and technology transfers. The fair is also a good opportunity for local counterparts to build national strategies, identify needs, and promote activities for green growth in Vietnam.

**Note to Editors:** Please refer to the Fact Sheet and the list of earlier EPIFs in the next page.

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## **FACT SHEET**

### **About the APO**

The APO was established in 1961 as a regional intergovernmental organization with the mission of contributing to the socioeconomic development of the Asia-Pacific region through productivity promotion. The current membership comprises 20 economies. The APO supports its member countries through capacity-building efforts such as training courses, workshops, seminars, and other activities to enhance productivity.

**APO Website:** <http://www.apo-tokyo.org>

### **Eco-products International Fairs**

In 2003, the APO established the Green Productivity Advisory Committee (GPAC) to receive advice and assistance from successful Japanese corporations with excellent environmental track records. In 2004, following the recommendation of the GPAC, the APO launched the EPIF to strengthen international cooperation in greening supply chains in the Asia-Pacific region and to provide enterprises opportunities to expand their eco-businesses. As part of the APO mandate, the EPIF is also designed to enable governments to explore methods for greening their policies.

The EPIF, held in a different APO member country each year, is now firmly established as the largest environmental exhibition in Asia. EPIFs have been held in Malaysia (2004), Thailand (2005 and 2016), Singapore (2006 and 2013), Vietnam (2008), the Philippines (2009), Indonesia (2010), India (2011), the Republic of China (2014), and Thailand (2016).

**EPIF (English):** <http://epif2017.com/en/home/>