



PROJECT NOTIFICATION

Reference No.: 198

Date of Issue	21 August 2023
Project Code	23-CL-30-GS-OSM-A
Title	Study Mission on Overseas Business Development Assistance to SMEs for Innovative Products and Services
Timing	6 December 2023–8 December 2023
Hosting Country(ies)	APO Secretariat
Venue City(ies)	Tokyo
Modality	Face-to-face
Implementing Organization(s)	APO Secretariat
Participating Country(ies)	All Member Countries
Overseas Participants	20
Local Participants	Not Applicable
Closing Date	6 October 2023
Remarks	Not Applicable

Objectives	Learn about the latest Japanese sustainable products and services through visits to an exhibition and SMEs; enhance ecobusiness cooperation in the region through sharing the latest status of the circular economy, sustainable business models, and Green Productivity (GP) initiatives of selected APO members; and encourage business matching, networking, and a follow-up meeting.
Rationale	With the support of a special cash grant from the Government of Japan, this project aims to provide the opportunity to share and learn the latest status of the circular economy and sustainable business models that will contribute to revitalization of SMEs in the region through international cooperation with special attention to sustainability. This is in line with the APO Vision 2025, which emphasizes GP, innovation, and SME development.
Background	<p>According to the Asia and Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), SMEs accounted for more than 97% of all businesses in the Asia-Pacific region, employing over half of the workforce in 2022. Many SMEs have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, although they are gradually recovering from the economic losses. Japan is facing a population decline and shrinking domestic market in addition to damage caused by the pandemic, requiring its SMEs to seek new international business opportunities.</p> <p>Sustainability is increasingly important in the Asia-Pacific region for many reasons, including environmental concerns, social responsibility, and economic benefits. Sustainable business models are needed to create a comparative advantage. With a culture of innovation and history of enforcing environmental laws, Japan has a strong focus on sustainability and is a leading producer of sustainable goods and services. Japanese SMEs play an important role in developing sustainable green products.</p>
Topics	Introduction of Japanese goods and services for sustainable businesses; The circular economy and GP; The status of ecobusiness in APO members; and Visits to the Eco-Pro 2023 exhibition in Tokyo and Japanese SMEs for business-matching and networking opportunities.
Outcome	Introduction of Japanese SMEs' sustainable products and services; Japanese SME owners and participants understand the GP status of selected APO member economies; and Japanese SME owners and representatives from other APO members are introduced for potential international business collaborations.
Qualifications	Heads of chambers of commerce or heads of associated economic organizations; heads of trade and investment bodies; government officials overseeing the SMEs' trade and investment or environmental businesses; or corporate legal staff specializing in international SME business expansion.

Please refer to the implementation procedures circulated with this document for further details.



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