

# APO NEWS

Information to Make a Difference in Productivity



## New Year message from APO Secretary-General Mari Amano

**A**s we usher in 2014, I would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy, and productive New Year.

The year 2013 witnessed novel initiatives in APO activities. In March, the 8th Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) was successfully held with the participation of about 100 companies and organizations and the support of the Government of Singapore. The 2013 APO *Productivity Databook* offered new features including the computation of total factor productivity for Pakistan and Sri Lanka. We can also look forward to accessing productivity statistics through smartphone apps.

In June, APO Liaison Officers convened for a Strategic Planning Meeting to discuss program planning and implementation. In October, NPO heads attended more interactive group workshop sessions to discuss the APO's strategic directions during the Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs. On the Green Productivity (GP) front, the Center of Excellence (COE) on GP was launched simultaneously with the International Forum on Green Productivity to deliberate on current environmental issues and emerging trends. We expect to intensify GP activities based on the recommendations of a need assessment survey under the COE on GP.

The Asian Food and Agribusiness Conference was launched in Taipei with the theme Biotechnology and Global Competitiveness. This annual event for government and industry leaders will continue to contribute to advances in agriculture, agribusiness, and the food industry in the Asia-Pacific.


Broad-based engagement with the media to spread the message on productivity enhancement occurred during the Multicountry Observational Study Mission on Best Practices in Promoting Innovation and Productivity in Agriculture for Mass Media Practitioners. The resulting publicity is continuing, and similar projects involving the media will be carried out in 2014 as well.

The APO organized three projects funded by special cash grants from the Government of Japan. The Observational Study Mission on Photovoltaic and Solar Cell Technology and the Workshop on Labor-Management Relations with Special Focus on the Automobile Industry (*see page 3*) generated substantial media interest including newspaper and television coverage. The Special Program for Strengthening the Capacity for Food Supply Chain Management in Asian Least Developed Countries continued in 2013 to support in-country activities in Cambodia and Lao PDR, in addition to the Multicountry Observational Study Mission to Japan on Innovative Farm Management Practices to Enhance Agricultural Productivity under that program, which benefited food industries and communities in other member countries as well.

Collaborations with the International Energy Agency, Colombo Plan, Asian Development Bank, and Asian Development Bank Institute have added another sophisticated dimension to capacity building within the APO community. We are exploring new partnerships with Cornell University and other international organizations to expand our outreach and increase APO visibility.

In 2014, APO members can look forward to the 9th EPIF in the ROC, 13–16 March, with the strong support of the China Productivity Center and Bureau of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Economic Affairs. The 3rd World Conference on Green Productivity is another major anticipated event. Outreach beyond the immediate Asia-Pacific region is underway to expand the APO membership. This will be a win-win situation for all involved.

Let us continue the spirit of solidarity and unity to fulfill the APO's mission of contributing to the sustainable socioeconomic development of Asia and the Pacific through enhancing productivity.

With best wishes for a bright and productive New Year for all. 



January–February 2014  
Volume 44 Number 1  
ISSN: 1728-0834

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The APO News is published bimonthly by the APO Secretariat. The online edition is available at: [www.apo-tokyo.org](http://www.apo-tokyo.org).

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