

Environmental labels and declarations

A training course on Environmental Labels and Declarations (ISO 14021, 14024, and 14025) was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 27 April–1 May, as a follow-up to an e-learning course on the topic in October 2013. The objectives were to understand the basic concept, philosophy, and principles of environmental labels and declarations; learn the basic characteristics of ISO 14021 (Type 2), ISO 14024 (Type 1), and ISO 14025 (Type 3); and to formulate plans for promoting eco-labeling and declaration schemes.

The course mainly focused on the criteria for and verification process of eco-products and covered not only Type 1 eco-labeling but also Types 2 and 3. Seventeen international and two local participants attended. The APO assigned four international resource persons from the ROC, Japan, the Philippines, and Thailand and one local expert from the Government of Bangladesh supported the program, which consisted of lectures, a site visit, group discussions, and an exam.

The opening ceremony was attended by approximately 70 local participants including the Secretary, assistant secretaries, and directors general of the Ministry of Industries, heads of local associations, CEOs of private companies, and local media. Secretary of the Ministry of Industries and APO Director for Bangladesh Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah delivered opening remarks on behalf of the Minister of Industries Amir Hossain Amu. The program was widely covered in the national media.

A visit to Bengal Plastic Industries Limited provided a useful example of a local private firm in compliance with environmental laws and regulations in both its headquarters and factory operations. Two group discussions were conducted after the site visit. The first reviewed Bengal Plastic Industries' achievements and discussed how better compliance with environmental standards could be accomplished. The second group discussion focused on action plans by participants. Some of those plans, such as the one drafted by Sri Lankan participants, went beyond the scope of eco-labeling by connecting the contents with a business excellence initiative in that country.



A demonstration of plastic hanger production at Bengal Plastic Industries Limited.

In the next stage of eco-labeling activities, raising awareness, strengthening networks, and training pools of experts will be key activities as most countries are still at the beginning of their labeling initiatives. Assigning experts through TES would be an effective follow-up for their national projects. The APO will monitor participants' progress in initiating eco-labeling schemes and identify the main challenges for which NPOs and the Secretariat could provide further assistance. 