

## — Aloha state center of excellent environmental industries —

**H**awaii, the “Aloha state,” consists of eight pristine islands. It is among the 10 least polluting of the 50 states in terms of discharging toxins into the environment and also uses the least amount of energy per capita in the USA. The state has a deserved reputation as a center of excellence for environmental services such as bioremediation, toxic waste cleanup, wastewater treatment technologies, and integrated watershed management. Therefore the APO, with support from the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT), State of Hawaii, organized a study mission to Hawaii, 11–15 February, to expose participants to a range of best practices in environmental management, especially in wastewater treatment and waste management.

The ultimate goal of the mission was to enable participants to develop and use smart solutions for environmental challenges in their home nations, thereby conserving the environment and contributing to a better quality of life. Seventeen participants from the private sector, NGOs, academia, industrial associations, and environmental research institutions joined the mission along with two APO experts. During the mission, participants took countless photographs of state-of-the-art environmental technologies and facilities at four sites. At the Honolulu wastewater treatment plant and water reclamation facility, delegates observed one of the world’s largest water treatment plants busily processing wastewater back into potable form. The second visit was to HPower, a local company that daily converts 2000 tons of waste into 4 megawatts of environmentally sound electricity. The third visit was to Houna Technologies, a US industry leader in the design and manufacture of high-technology medical waste treatment and energy recovery systems. The last visit examined groundwater remediation systems installed by Environment Inc., an environmental consulting firm, to address the offsite migration of residual subsurface petroleum.

Additionally, the DBEDT initiated a business-matching session with local environmental business companies. The session allowed participants to discuss spe-



*A local expert explaining water reclamation*

cific environmental problems and possible solutions with seven local companies. The results were immediate. Managing Director Matthew Tan, SIF Technologies Pte Ltd Singapore, informed the APO that his company was in the process of signing an MOU for collaboration with one company and that two joint projects with two other companies were underway. Panel discussions, group exercises, and country paper presentations were also part of the mission. “I believe that the experience and knowledge gained from the mission will be a great asset in my business, with a lot of ideas on environmental preservation for a better quality of life and future,” said Korean participant Eul Taek Jung. The mission allowed delegates and Hawaii-based companies to understand each other’s requirements for the evolution of future solutions. 