



A·P·O news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

APO inaugurates GP Advisory Committee

The Asian Productivity Organization formally constituted its Green Productivity (GP) Advisory Committee with 37 members representing major Japanese companies at an inaugural meeting held in Tokyo, 26 August 2003. In attendance as observers were officials from embassies of APO member countries, including Fijian Ambassador Ratu Tevita Moedoru; Japanese Ministries (Foreign Affairs; Economy, Trade and Industry; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; and Environment); Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development (JPC-SED); Japan Business Federation; Musashi Institute of Technology; and TDK Corporation. The meeting was chaired by Professor Ryoichi Yamamoto of the Institute of Industrial Science, University of Tokyo.



GP Advisory Committee meeting in progress

In his opening remarks at the meeting, APO Secretary-General Takashi Tajima said that a key challenge facing the world economy is sustainable development. As the Asia-Pacific region is expected to be the manufacturing center of the world, it is important that “made-in-Asia” products should have a reputation for being environmentally friendly, he added. “This will enhance their competitiveness and contribute to sustainable development.” Mr. Tajima further said that Japanese companies have world-class environmental technologies and they should endeavor to transfer them to Asia-Pacific countries through their subsidiaries operating in these countries and the APO GP network. This will ultimately benefit Japanese companies as they rely on Asian countries for supplies of parts and components. He therefore called on members of the GP Advisory Committee to support APO projects on greening supply chains in the region.

APO Senior Environment Program Officer Takuki Murayama elaborated on the APO projects relating to greening supply chains that have been scheduled for the rest of this year. On 30 September–3 October, a workshop on “Greening Supply Chains” will be held in Manila, the Philippines. This will be followed by a symposium on “Eco-design” in the Republic of China, 20–24 October. From 11–13 December, the APO with the Green Purchasing Network of Japan (GPN), JPC-SED, and others will jointly organize “The International Forum on Green Purchase and Sustainable Consumption,” in Tokyo. Within the forum, the APO will help to facilitate a symposium and workshop on “Green Purchasing.” In the meantime, APO member countries have been invited to take part in the GP demonstration project on “Green Supply Chains.”

At the meeting, the APO Secretariat submitted a list of areas for the support and assistance of the GP Advisory Committee. These include promoting the utilization of clean development mechanisms; developing eco-business models;

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“Half the time men think they are talking business, they are wasting time.”

Edgar Watson Howe

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compiling reference materials on environment-friendly technologies and services of Japanese companies for use by APO member countries; making their staff available to serve as experts on environmental management and technology in other APO member countries; implementing demonstration projects; dispatching study missions from Japan to study the state of eco-business in other APO member countries; organizing exhibitions on eco-business; and exploring the feasibility of an APO-initiated Green Supplier Label.

Some Advisory Committee members suggested the following additional areas as meriting special attention: establishing common standards for greening the supply chain; creating a recycling mindset in society; determining safety levels of perishable products, like vegetables; developing a

mechanism for the exchange of information on new regulations and others; ensuring a stable energy supply; and promoting awareness of the needs of other APO member countries in eco-business.

Earlier this year, the APO commissioned the GPN Japan to undertake a survey on “Green Purchase and Procurement” in four countries: Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Japan, and Malaysia. GPN Secretary-General Hiroyuki Sato presented the interim report of the survey to the meeting. A complementary survey covering an additional four countries—Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand—is currently being undertaken for the APO by the JPC-SED. This study is expected to be completed by the end of September 2003. 