

Eco-Products International Fair 2004

On 2–4 September this year, the APO collaborated with the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM), and the National Productivity Corporation (NPC) of Malaysia to organize the Eco-Products International Fair in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the first in Southeast Asia and outside Japan. The theme of the fair was “Living in harmony with the environment—towards sustainable production and consumption.” The guest of honor and keynote speaker at the opening ceremony was the Malaysian Minister for International Trade and Industry, Dato’ Seri Rafidah Aziz. Running parallel to the fair were three other events: the International Conference on Green Supply Chains, Workshop on Green Procurement, and National Seminar on Natural Farming.

Seventy-seven exhibitors from Japan (37), Republic of Korea (one), Malaysia (35), Singapore (two), Belgium (one), and Germany (one) showcased their eco-friendly products and services covering consumer goods to materials for manufacturing. Among the exhibitors were the three leading automakers, Daimler Chrysler, Honda, and Toyota, and their hybrid cars. Other renowned exhibitors included Panasonic, Ebara, Mitsubishi, Daikin, Canon, Fuji Xerox, Hitachi, Toray, JVC, Kaneka, Marubeni, Ricoh, and Sirim. The Korean National Clean Production Center also participated. The APO had a booth to promote its Green Productivity (GP) activities. The organizers of the fair sponsored an eco-product concept booth that had as its main attraction an “Eco-Wish Tree” that proved to draw crowds.

Apart from Minister Rafidah Aziz, speakers at the opening ceremony were FMM President Dato’ Mustafa Mansur, Tan Sri Dato’ Azman Hashim, APO Director for Malaysia and Chairman of NPC Malaysia, and APO Secretary-General Takashi Tajima. Minister Rafidah Aziz, in her keynote address, said that the general public had an important role in dealing with concerns facing the global environment. By choosing eco-friendly products, consumers could help promote environment-friendly practices and GP. The fair, she said, would give an insight into and showcase the variety of choices available to both industry and consumers which could satisfy the need to balance the consumption and preservation of natural resources. Dato’ Mustafa Mansur expressed the hope that the fair would create and enhance awareness of the importance of environment-friendly products in relation to greening the supply chain among the business community, government officials, and the public. Tan Sri Dato’ Azman Hashim in his address pointed out that the competitive advantage of eco-products is closely related to their level of productivity, efficiency, and market reach. All these factors should be embodied in the production process, from the design phase to when the products reach the marketplace. Secretary-General Tajima said that the industries in Asia and the Pacific, the manufacturing hub of the world, must shift their focus to produce more eco-friendly products and services to strengthen and sustain their competitiveness.

The opening day of the fair also saw the launching of the seminal APO publication *Eco-Products Directory 2004*. Professor Ryoichi Yamamoto of



(L-R) Mr. Morishita, Dato’ Mustafa Mansur, Minister Rafidah Aziz, Mr. Tajima, and Tan Sri Dato’ Azman Hashim

the University of Tokyo and a Vice Chairman of the APO GP Advisory Committee (GPAC) presented the first copy of the book to Minister Rafidah Aziz (see page 4 for a write-up on the directory).

The fair included a number of attractions targeting younger visitors, for example, the Eco-Quiz Rally, Recycling Awareness Poll, coloring contest, drawing contest, Dart: Mix and Match, and 3R Contest. A special feature was the “Organizers’ Stage” where nine exhibitors made presentations on their products.

The International Conference on Green Supply Chains, held on 2 September, was attended by about 250 participants, including 28 sponsored by the APO. The conference was inaugurated by Datin Paduka Dr. Tan Yee Kew, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia. The keynote address on the “Role of Eco Products for Sustainable Development” was provided by APO GPAC Chairman Yoichi Morishita, who is also the Chairman of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. Ltd. Among the other prominent speakers were Mr. Yoshihide Suga, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan, who spoke on “Compatibility between Environment and Economy: Japanese Industrial Policy,” and Dr. Hiroyuki Fujimura, Chairman, Zero Emissions Forum of Japan and Honorary Chairman of Ebara Corporation, who expounded on “Regeneration of Regions by Biomass Industries.” Tan Sri Azman Hashim gave the closing address.

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On 3-4 September, the APO workshop on Green Procurement was held attended by 28 participants and two observers from 15 APO member countries. Resource speakers and the topics they dealt with were: Prof. Ryoichi Yamamoto on “Green Procurement and Eco-products for Green Supply Chains, Competitiveness, and Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific Region”; Prof. Hideki Nakahara, Chair, Green Purchasing Network of Japan, on “Green Procurement in Japan”; and Dr. Chaiyod Bunyagidj, Vice President, Thailand Environment Institute, on “Green Procurement in Thailand: Challenges and Opportunities.”

Another major event was the Malaysian national seminar on “Natural Farming,” launched by the Malaysian Minister for Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry, Tan Sri Dato’ Hj. Muhyiddin, attended by about 250 participants. Secretary-General Tajima also addressed the seminar. The highlight of the



Scene at the fair

program was the release of the results of the APO GP-Integrated Community Development demonstration project on natural farming in Malaysia, including a mini exhibition of products from the project. 🌱