



APO *news*

APO/ASEAN Foundation energy efficiency and renewable energy project for Mekong subregion SMEs

On 30 January the APO and ASEAN Foundation agreed to implement a project relating to energy efficiency and renewable energy for SMEs in the greater Mekong subregion of ASEAN, focusing on reusing biomass waste in industrial boilers for energy recovery, with a duration of one year. The project covers Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.



The mission at Thai Boiler K Co., Ltd.

SMEs in all these countries play a vital role in the economy. Traditionally, SMEs are low-tech manufacturing enterprises. In the context of energy management, most SMEs are not sufficiently knowledgeable of the efficient operation and management of equipment such as pumps, motors, and industrial boilers. SMEs rely on industrial boilers for the supply of steam for production processes. Such boilers generally use nonrenewable fuel such as coal, diesel, fuel oil, etc. This represents a heavy cost to small manufacturers, particularly when oil prices on international markets are skyrocketing. At the same time, due to inefficient use of boilers SMEs face pollution problems. There is thus ample opportunity for improving energy efficiency in SMEs, which could result in monetary benefits while simultaneously reducing resource waste and environmental impact. Moreover, there are tremendous opportunities for using biomass waste (agro-waste such as rice husk, rice straw, etc.), which is an excellent source of energy. Reutilizing such waste solves two problems in one effort.

The APO has long promoted Green Productivity to address the need for environmental protection and energy efficiency. Similarly, the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation 2005–2009 emphasizes energy efficiency and conservation and new and renewable sources of energy as priority areas for regional cooperation. Therefore the APO and ASEAN decided to undertake this joint endeavor to train and build the capacity of NPOs and other stakeholders in energy efficiency and renewable energy for SMEs through regional workshops, training courses, and e-learning and to disseminate knowledge on those issues widely in the region through publications and a Web site.

The project will be in three phases. From 17 to 21 July, a one-week regional workshop will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, with five participants from each of the five Mekong countries, focusing on capacity building related to energy efficiency and biomass boilers. This regional workshop will be followed by a national awareness building seminar in each country. National seminars, conducted in local languages, will involve 50 participants representing all stakeholders. The final phase of the project will be the

(Continued on page 5)

Volume 36 Number 5
May 2006

"Whenever you see a legend, you can be sure, if you go to the very bottom of things, that you will find history."

Vallet de Viriville

I N S I D E

- 2.... p-Watch—Europe
- 3.... p-TIPS
- 4.... New APO publication
- 4.... Common Sense Talk
- 5.... Workshop on GP and greenhouse gas emission reduction
- 6.... Knowledge management benchmarking
- 6.... New APO officers
- 7.... p-Experts
- 7.... APO-NPO Update
- 7.... Program calendar
- 8.... South African Deputy President visits Secretariat
- 8.... Secretary-General visits Jakarta
- 8.... APO Governing Body to convene in Seoul

Published monthly by
Asian Productivity Organization
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F
1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 102-0093, Japan
Tel: (81-3) 5226-3920
Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950
e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org
Web site: www.apo-tokyo.org



Printed on Recycled Paper

development of a Web-based e-learning portal as part of the continuing capacity-building exercise to ensure wide dissemination and long-lasting impact beyond the project duration.

To kick off the project, the APO dispatched two fact-finding teams, 26–31 March, to the five countries. They met with representatives of government agencies, SMEs, NGOs, boiler manufacturers, and NPOs. The meetings were organized and coordinated by NPOs except in non-APO member Myanmar, where it was coordinated by the embassy of Myanmar in Japan. The teams also visited SMEs and boiler manufacturers to obtain firsthand impressions of the potential for the use of biomass-based boilers.

The fact-finding teams confirmed that: 1) The demand for small boilers utilizing biomass is strong in the five target countries. 2) Recent rises in energy prices have made biomass fuel more attractive. 3) The technology to manufacture small boilers at reasonable prices is available. 4) The promotion of small biomass boiler use is appropriate and would be supported by SMEs. The mission then recommended a feasibility study by NPOs on the capacity of existing machine manufacturers to produce biomass-based boilers, promotion of supporting industries that provide SMEs with engineering, retrofitting, and/or boiler maintenance of boilers, and energy audits of SMEs. 