

# Annual Report of the Secretary-General

**O**n the afternoon of 27 April, APO Secretary-General Mari Amano welcomed APO Directors, advisers, and observers to the 57th session of the APO Governing Body (GBM) in Bangkok and expressed gratitude to the Government of Thailand and the Thailand Productivity Institute (FTPI) for hosting this year's meeting. Before describing the 2015 and 2016 Program Plans, he summarized the APO's achievements in 2014.

“Overall, 159 projects were completed in 2014 with another 13 in progress, an increase of about 25% compared with 2013. The number of participants in projects also increased by more than 10% to about 4,600,” he reported. APO activities were covered in the media more than 1,000 times around the region and in Europe, a 12-fold increase over 2012. Raising the profile of the APO remained a priority, the Secretary General commented.

“The highly visible *Productivity Databook* project is the definitive reference on productivity statistics for the Asia-Pacific and served as a springboard for the APO to collaborate with international organizations,” Secretary-General Amano pointed out. The APO was in discussions with the OECD and UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs on potential collaborations.

In 2014, some main achievements of the COE on GP included developing the GP Excellence Award framework; demonstration projects in resource recycling, green energy, green factories, and eco-agriculture; and dispatching experts in those areas. In addition, the ROC formed a Green Productivity Advisory Committee (GPAC) based on Japan's GPAC model, bolstering efforts to promote more national GPACs through the International Green Productivity Advisory Committee (I-GPAC) initiative, resulting in a second GPAC established by Sri Lanka.

The 9th Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) themed “Go Green, Act Greener: One Future” held in Taipei in March 2014 attracted more than 17,000 visitors, including ROC President Ma, who visited the booths of over 200 exhibitors. In parallel with the EPIF, the three-day World Conference on GP attracted around 400 delegates. Secretary-General Amano told delegates that the GP Commitment Document from the conference had become an input for the UN's new Sustainable Development Goals.

Secretary-General Amano spoke of activities in new, emerg-



Secretary-General Mari Amano. Photo courtesy of FTPI.

ing areas. As examples, he gave the first APO project targeting the banking sector in India last November and first APO International Productivity Showcase and Best Practice Networking Forum on SMEs in Sri Lanka (*see page 4*). He also noted that the Technical Expert Service Program continued to be “very well-received,” as was restarting missions to non-member countries. The APO would continue to explore new topics and identify destinations outside the region for valuable learning opportunities, he pledged, as well as expanding videoconference-based e-learning courses.

The Secretary-General thanked the Government of Japan (GOJ) for continuing to provide generous cash grants that had funded “meaningful additional projects.” He also expressed gratitude to the Governments of the ROC and ROK for their generosity in offering cash grants. In continuing efforts to promote APO activities among nonmember countries, cash grant projects funded by the GOJ enabled key figures within the Myanmar government and business community to network with member countries. Cooperation with Turkey had continued, stated the Secretary-General, as had that with Cornell University in the Executive Course in Agribusiness Management conducted by the FTPI.

Secretary-General Amano outlined the major thrusts of 2015–2016 programs and new initiatives like the APO Certification System, quarterly Success Stories series on the website, and the proposed roadmap. He concluded by thanking APO Directors and NPO Heads for sharing their many ideas and advice and looking forward to their continued support. 🌐