



## APEC, DOH hold trade in health services seminar

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, through the Department of Health, recently conducted a seminar on trade in health services in Mactan, Cebu. The three-day event held at Shangri-La's Mactan Resort and Spa, was attended by delegates from seven APEC member economies—Brunei Darussalam, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. It served the following objectives: (1) to exchange information on recent developments and issues in health service trade among APEC members; (2) to exchange experiences on policies, practices and processes in addressing issues that have an impact on health service trade and liberalization and; (3) to identify immediate and future cooperation among APEC member economies.

The seminar featured presentations and discussions on topics such as: GATS-related experiences and progress, specifically with regard to trade in health services; borderless medical travel; linkages across modes and across sectors; developments in the investment climate; and developments, modalities and impacts on professional practice liberalization. Two workshops were conducted—the first one was to identify the opportunities and barriers to health services trade, and the second was to propose short and long term cooperation mechanisms in trade in health services among APEC members. Atty. Anthony A. Abad of TA Trade Advisory Services, on the third day of the seminar, delivered a presentation on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the progress so far in and concerns specific to trade in health services. Atty. Abad is an expert in international trade agreements and international economic law.

## Consultation held on Philippine Grid Emission Factor

The Philippine Designated National Authority (DNA) for the Clean Development Mechanism (also called CDM Secretariat), under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), had a consultation meeting on 23 February 2010 regarding the update on the Philippine grid emission factor. The updated information is essential for the validation and verification of certified emission reduction (CER) calculations by Designated Operational Entities, with CERs being the tradable currency of the CDM.

The consultation, held at the DENR Compound in Quezon City, was attended by CDM project developers including CaFIS, Inc., represented by its Managing Director Mr. Alan Silayan and CDM Technical Advisor Ms. Sari Simon. There was no final grid emission factor declared yet, however. Information is still currently being gathered, with the Department of Energy doing the consolidation and calculations, in coordination with the Philippine DNA and funded by Japan's Institute for Global Environment Studies (IGES). The last official version was published as "CDM Baseline Construction for the Electricity Grids in the Philippines" in 2006 by the Ministry of Japan through IGES and klima Climate Change Center, under the supervision of current CaFIS Chairman Fr. Roberto C. Yap.

Mr. Kazuhisa Koakutsu from the CDM Programme, Climate Change Area Market Mechanism Project of IGES served as speaker for the consultation meeting. IGES also sponsored the event, which was organized by the DNA, headed by Ms. Joyceline Goco.

## Mini-hydro project undergoes site validation

A site validation visit to Solano, Nueva Vizcaya was conducted on 9-10 March 2010 for Smith Bell Mini-hydro Corp.'s 1.8 MW hydro power project located in the area. Known as the Commonal-Uddiawan Mini-hydro Power Project, the venture is undergoing validation as part of its Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) registration process.

A team from SGS led by assessors Mr. Abhishek Mahawar and Ms. Lisa Magtagnob audited the site during the visit. Smith Bell was represented by its President, Mr. Knud Hedeager, and Executive Secretary, Ms. Nolielyn Velasco. Attending from CaFIS, Inc., the project's CDM consultant, was the company's Operations and Quality Manager, Mr. Leslie Gopalan, and CDM Technical Advisor, Ms. Jewella Vinson.

Representatives from Filipinas Renewable Energy Corp. (FRENDSCO) and United Hydro Power Builders (UHPB), the civil works contractor, were also present.



Photo (L-R): Jewella Vinson (CaFIS), Lisa Magtagnob (SGS) and Abhishek Mahawar (SGS)

## UPDATE

## NEWS BITS

### Erasmus Mundus sponsors youth leadership seminar

The Philippine chapter of the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association gave a leadership seminar at the Mandarin Oriental, Makati last 3 March 2010, which it co-organized with the Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines. Student leaders and professionals from the public and private sectors and civil society organizations participated in the event with its highly relevant theme of "Empowering the Youth in Promoting Human Rights and Good Governance," especially in view of the upcoming national elections.

Among the presenters were Atty. Carlos Medina, Jr. of the Legal Network for Truthful Elections, Ms. Navia Barmaliou of the EU Delegation and Dr. Temario Rivera of the Center for People Empowerment in Governance. TA Trade Advisory Services' associate Atty. Jill Marie Lopez, who serves as country representative for the students and alumni association, delivered the welcome remarks and moderated the question and answer segment of the seminar.

Erasmus Mundus is a worldwide higher education program sponsored by the European Commission that provides scholarships and gives financial aid to academic institutions. Atty. Lopez received her European Masters in Law and Economics as an Erasmus Mundus scholar.

### EU Trade Commissioner visits Asia, FTA talks underway

Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht of the European Union made a successful first visit to Vietnam, Singapore and India early this month, resulting in notable advances in bilateral trade talks with the said countries. De Gucht's objective was to pursue new export opportunities for the EU in these emerging Asian markets.

The commissioner's stop in Vietnam produced an agreement from the country to launch an FTA with the EU. Singapore similarly agreed to begin bilateral trade negotiations, while the visit to India gave new momentum to ongoing FTA talks that is now targeted for conclusion before October this year.

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