

**ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership
Biofuels and the Automotive Industry Seminar
Bangkok, Thailand**

Government and industry representatives met in Bangkok on October 24th to participate in the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership Biofuels and the Automotive Industry Seminar, an event jointly organized by the ASEAN Consultative Committee on Standards and Quality (ACCSQ), the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Thailand Industrial Standards Institute (TISI). The workshop is a central component of the ASEAN - U.S. Enhanced Partnership Standards, Conformity Assessment, and Regulatory Cooperation initiative 2007 Work Plan.

Panels and individual presentations covered an array of themes, including biofuels development and use in the United States and major global markets, biofuels and their impact on motor vehicle and engine technology, the development of standards and regulatory regimes for alternative fuels, and projections for the future of biofuels development and use. Much of the discussion focused on activity in ASEAN markets, with detailed presentations on developments in Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Over 100 seminar participants helped shape the event's conclusions on biofuels and the automotive industry in ASEAN, namely that ASEAN has the potential to be a major world biofuels producer, that efforts to promote biofuels should allow for existing or easily altered motor vehicle technology in the region, that biofuels standards should be performance-based and flexible enough to promote market growth, and that governments have multiple constructive roles in promoting the use of biofuels.

Expectations are high that ASEAN will become a leading international player in the biofuels sector, particularly given the region's significant production of biofuels crops. Participants noted that information exchange and a cooperative approach to regulations development among ASEAN member countries would enhance the region's competitiveness in biofuels.

Senior officials from ASEAN energy and transportation ministries, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency participated in and spoke at the workshop. Participants also heard from experts from De La Salle University in the Philippines, as well as industry representatives from the Ford Motor Company, General Motors, ASTM International, Hart Energy Consulting, and the Carotino Corporation.

The ASEAN event was informally coordinated with the meetings of both the APEC New and Renewable Energy Technologies Expert Group and the APEC Biofuels Task Force in the same location. The result was a high quality dialogue that benefited from an assemblage of specialists and perspectives from around the Pacific Basin.

Presentations from the Biofuels and the Automotive Industry Seminar are available online at: <http://www.buyusa.gov/thailand/th/bioauto.html>. Follow-up activities are expected to feature prominently in the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership 2008 Work Plan.