

Results of the Workshop on Asbestos Management in Asian Countries in FY 2009

(Report)

Monday, April 19th 2010
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The Ministry of the Environment held the “Workshop on Asbestos Management in Asian Countries” in Jakarta on March 17th and 18th, 2010.
Here is a summary of the results of the Workshop.

1. Date:

Wednesday, March 17th – Thursday, March 18th, 2010.

2. Place:

Jakarta (Indonesia)

3. Hosts:

Ministry of the Environment of Japan and Ministry of the Environment of Indonesia

4. Participants:

Practitioners from 6 Asian countries (Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Philippines and Laos) and Japanese experts

5. Purposes:

Main purposes of the workshop were as follows:

- To provide information about countermeasures against asbestos in Japan
- To exchange information about the current situation of asbestos issues and future efforts in Asian countries

6. Subjects:

- Opening Remarks and Keynote Speech (Session 1)
- Efforts on Asbestos Issues in Asian countries (Session 2)
- Health Effects by Asbestos and Substitute for Asbestos (Session 3)
- Demonstration of Asbestos Measurement (Session 4)
- Field Trip (Session 5)
- Asbestos-containing Waste Management (Session 6)
- Future Measures against Asbestos in Asian Countries (Session 7)

The summary of the results are as follows.

(1) Session1: Opening Remarks and Keynote Speech

Ministry of the Environment of Indonesia made a keynote speech with an opening remark. The speaker mentioned that the use of chrysotile in compliance with legal standards is allowed in Indonesia, while stressing that the Indonesian government had been making efforts to prevent health damages caused by asbestos in line with the Bangkok Declaration on the Elimination of Asbestos and Asbestos-related Disease. The speaker then commented that there remain rooms for discussions over the use of asbestos and expressed an expectation that the workshop would help to find better approaches to asbestos management and foster the cooperation among Asian countries.

(2)Session 2: Efforts on Asbestos Issues in Asian countries

Each participating country gave a presentation on the current situation of asbestos regulations, future challenges and so on. Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines and Viet Nam spoke in an alphabetical order and the last presenter was Japan.

✧ Indonesia

- In Indonesia, an inter-agency working group has been organized and its work to formulate technical guidelines on the use of asbestos is underway.
- They recognize the importance of monitoring asbestos concentration in working environment.

✧ Laos

- In Laos, there are legal regulations on chemical substances in general but not on asbestos.
- There is no asbestos monitoring equipment, and users and workers do not understand the danger of Asbestos sufficiently.
- It would be appreciated if Japanese experts can give assistance in such fields as formulating a legal system and strategy of asbestos regulation and providing training courses on asbestos management.

✧ Malaysia

- A policy for asbestos prohibition has been proposed in light of the trends at ILO, with dialogs with industry since 2009.

✧ Philippines

- Regulations on asbestos have been introduced by the Chemical Control Order (CCO). There are, however, still gaps in the regulations and further improvements are necessary.
- There are challenges in policy implementation such as difficulties with identifying some of the regulated products and the lack of capacity of monitoring and analyzing asbestos.

✧ Viet Nam

- The government works to raise public awareness of asbestos and to address interagency challenges and socio-economic problems, etc.

(3)Session 3: Health Effects by Asbestos and Substitute for Asbestos

Indonesian and Japanese presenters provided knowledge on asbestos health damage. The Japanese presenter also introduced the current knowledge on health risks of substitutes to asbestos.

(4) Session 4: Demonstration of Asbestos Measurement

A Japanese presenter explained a method of monitoring asbestos concentration in building materials and in the air. He also conducted a demonstration using measuring equipment to monitor asbestos concentration in the air.

(5) Session 5: Field Trip

Participants visited The National Occupational Safety and Health Center that is under the control of the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration of Indonesia. The main services that the center provides are as follows

- Conduct analysis (including the asbestos analysis)
- Review programs and policies
- Provide technical services
- Develop human resources
- Disseminate information related to workers' health and safety

The center provides industry with information on the national standard of Indonesia (SNI) about monitoring asbestos concentration in the air in work environments.

(6) Session 6: Asbestos-containing Waste Management

An Indonesian presenter explained waste management based on the Basel Convention. Also a Japanese presenter explained asbestos containing waste disposal on the basis of the Wastes Disposal and Public Cleaning Act in Japan.

(7) Session 7: Future Measures against Asbestos in Asian Countries (Discussion)

Participants discussed information, knowledge, technology needed toward the future and prospective international cooperation. The participants agreed on a recognition that cooperative works are to be continued and further cooperation should focus on sharing information and knowledge and providing training courses.