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CEBU BUSINESS

DTI, GTZ back SME "green operations"

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CEBU, Philippines - The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI-7), together with the German Technical Cooperation-Small and Medium Enterprise Development for Sustainable Employment Program (GTZ-Smedsep), announced their earnest support to "green" operations of small and medium enterprises (SMes,) especially exporters.

DTI-7 regional director Asteria Caberte said following the completion of the Sector-Export-Marketing-Plan (SEMP) of the PhilExport-Cebu, which is also supported by GTZ, greening the entire value chain of the identified priority sectors, is one of the focused areas that will be seriously addressed.

The SEMP developed by foreign and local experts in export industry, with the support of CBI-Netherlands, GTZ and DTI, provides an intensive marketing plan for the identified priority sectors like seaweed, health and wellness, fashion accessories, furniture, and gifts-toys-housewares.

It also serves as a "blue-print" for exporters in different sectors. Players can now establish their own research and development (R&D) team to focus on the market intelligence, and development of products for the right market.

According to Caberte, players in these identified sectors will be able to employ legitimate "green" operations, with the support of the participating international development agencies, specifically that the European Union Commission has recently announced the release of the P65 million grants to help SME exporters employ internationally-accepted "green" operation system.



Caberte recognized that growing "green market" worldwide is a potential and an emerging market for Cebu exporters.

She said this issue should be dealt with seriously by players, with support from the government, as well as non-governmental institutions, as the application of a legitimate "green" operation system, is something new for most micro and SME exporters.

In a study conducted by Laurianne Camus, it revealed that 71 percent of the European population is concerned about the environment. Only 12 percent of European

adults (approximately 30 million consumers) can be defined as green shoppers.

This means that they are thinking about the environment while shopping offline or online.

In the United States, on the other hand, researchers' labeled this market segment as LOHAS or Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability. It is a market segment focused on health and fitness, the environment, personal development, sustainable living, and social justice.

This is estimated as a US\$200 billion market involving 41 million consumers, and growing.

According to Caberte, this early, Cebu should be prepared all "green" operational system especially among exporters.

Although, some big export companies are already employing environment-friendly operations, Caberte said some micro and SME exporters still have to embrace a holistic approach in adopting green technology and operation.

Because of this, SME exporters specifically need the help and sincere support from different organizations like GTZ, EU Commission, Netherlands-CBI, among others.— Edda M. Dagooc

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