

Meeting week was highly successful, too, with a large number of Japanese companies (mainly large-scale corporations, including a number of listed companies) participating in the hopes of discovering high-potential technologies and services from around the world. A total of 34 meetings were held, and some have progressed to ongoing talks.

The GIF Osaka team continues to help match promising start-ups with potential business partners, so if you are interested in setting up a meeting with the start-ups featured at GIF Osaka 2021, do not hesitate to contact us.

Email: gif@osaka.cci.or.jp

Phone: +81-6-6944-6400

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2. JCCI OSAKA OFFICE TO HANDLE RCEP CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN

Starting on January 4, the Osaka Office of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry will begin handling requests for certificates of Class 1 Certificates of Origin, which are to be issued by the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry for the purposes of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the “mega-EPA” set to come into force in 2022.

RCEP is made up of countries such as Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Laos, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the Republic of Korea.

RCEP is particularly significant for businesses in Osaka and the greater Kansai region because it is Japan’s first economic partnership with the nation’s main trading partners - the two countries that businesses in this region trade with more than other areas of Japan: China and the Republic of Korea. (In pre-Covid 2019, China accounted for an 24% of exports from Kansai, compared with 19% of Japan’s total exports.)

Osaka’s SMEs have close ties with East Asian markets, and hopes are high that RCEP will add further momentum to trade between the two. RCEP presents new opportunities for businesses that do not have

existing overseas sales channels, and we at OCCI are eager to help members take full advantage of the agreement. To that end, we will offer seminars cover the basics of RCEP and advice on how to harness its potential.

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3. SDGS & ESG BUSINESS PLATFORM: NOW INCLUDING ESG AND CARBON NEUTRAL SUPPORT

Starting on November 24, OCCI’s SDGs & ESG Business Platform now offers additional support for businesses eager to incorporate ESG into their management practices and cut carbon dioxide emissions.

New services include:

- (1) A seminar on how to gauge greenhouse gas emissions
- (2) Assistance with measuring greenhouse gas emissions
- (3) Third-party testing and certification of greenhouse gas emissions and non-financial data
- (4) Help with filling out the CDP climate change and supply chain questionnaire.

Some services are made available at a reduced cost burden to member companies by providing them as “shared consulting services” in the form of seminars. Whereas private-sector consulting firms provide mainly one-on-one support (at commensurate prices), in this way OCCI offers a unique cost advantage.

Launched in August 2021, the SDGs & ESG Business Platform offers member companies a variety of support, including the seminars and consulting services described above.

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4. EU-BASED FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY BUYERS! SIGN UP NOW FOR THE JAPANESE FOOD AND BEVERAGE DAYS 2022, AN ONLINE TRADE EVENT MATCHING EU BUYERS WITH LOCAL SUPPLIERS

The OCCI's Made in Japan Fair is a popular event that arranges meetings between local businesses and specially invited overseas buyers. It is an ideal opportunity for the overseas buyers to discover the best of Japan and for local businesses to open up international sales channels. The 2022 fair will be held online.

Scheduled for February 15-18, the 2022 Made in Japan Fair will focus on food and beverages, matching buyers from Europe and local suppliers via a dedicated platform. Help will be on hand to ensure all parties can fully harness the tax advantages of Japan's economic partnership agreements with the EU and the UK, and hopefully boost Japanese exports to the region. Applications for buyer registration are open, and we are eager to hear from businesses interested in sourcing high-quality Japanese food and beverages.

To help prepare for the fair, we are holding a seminar for EU companies on February 1. This is an ideal opportunity to learn from experts about the ins and outs of international trade in Japanese food products and dealing with Japanese businesses, and to ask any questions you might have about doing business with Japan.

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5. KAIMASSE 2021: OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM VENDORS AND BUYERS

This year's Kaimasse, the 25th edition of our trade show where buyers discover the next hit products and vendors forge new sales channels, was a roaring success. Held at the Osaka Prefectural Gymnasium on November 11, Kaimasse 2021 was attended by 729 vendors from 479 companies nationwide, who made pitches to buyers representing department stores, supermarkets, and distributors at 45 booths, and resulted in a whopping 3,489 meetings.

Reaction from vendors was positive indeed, with many reporting that they were confident of reaching deals, received feedback that will inform new product development and selling methods, and were satisfied that they spread the word about their original products.

The buyers, too, were happy with the event, with many saying there were many products they could imagine good sale in the store, and noting a prevalence of products that were in keeping with today's requirements, such as contributing to SDGs.

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6. OCCI TAX SYSTEM COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PRESENTS REQUESTS TO DIET MEMBERS

On November 16, 2021, Teiichi Nishimura, chairman of the OCCI Tax System Committee and chairman of Sakura Color Products, met with lower house members Yasutoshi Nishimura (LDP) and Shigeki Sato (Komeito), and upper house member Fusae Ota (LDP) , urging them to reflect OCCI's 2022 Requests Regarding Revisions to National Taxation into the government's framework for revisions to Japan's tax system, which was due to be wrapped up in December.

Teiichi Nishimura highlighted the need for revisions that provided the intensive support needed for the nation to overcome the effects of Covid-19, including: policies conducive to recovery of local economies, such as extension and expansion of current policy regarding taxation of entertainment expenses; and support for business innovation aimed at achieving growth in the post-Covid economy through policies that helped businesses strengthen their financial foundation, such as allowing carry-over of losses and refund carry-backs.

In response, Yasutoshi Nishimura said that despite increasing vaccinations and declining case numbers, the country was still cautiously feeling its way toward reopening the economy, and that the LDP tax commission would discuss the necessary support. Mr. Sato was understanding of the small business community's struggles, including business ownership succession and keeping up with digital record keeping, and voiced his eagerness to help generate a nationwide wave of momentum in the run-up to World Expo 2025 in Osaka.

In light of the need for support to counter lingering effects of Covid-19, Ms. Ota promised to ensure strong statement of the OCCI's requests to the tax commission.

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7. VIP REPORTS (DEC)

-H. E. Mr. Santiago Pardo, Ambassador of Colombia to Japan

Courtesy Visit by the Colombian Ambassador

Santiago Pardo, Ambassador of Colombia to Japan, made a courtesy visit to OCCI Chairman Hiroshi Ozaki on December 9. In addition to expressing his gratitude to OCCI Vice-Chairman Junzo Tateno for his efforts to further Japan-Colombia relations in his capacity as Colombia’s honorary consul-general in Osaka, the ambassador spoke of his country’s advantages as a business partner and hope for greater investment from Osaka companies, noting the country’s swift recovery from Covid-19, its stable political situation, and in particular its position as a major hub in the Central and South American startup ecosystem.

Mr. Ozaki remarked that Japan and Colombia were, in fact, “next-door neighbors” across the Pacific, and that the famous bright, easy-going nature of Osaka people had a distinct Latin flavor to it. In light of this familiarity, Mr. Ozaki hoped that the two nations would continue to deepen their ties. In particular, he was hopeful that Colombian businesses would sign up to future editions of Global Innovation Forum Osaka, OCCI’s international startup event.

The meeting was followed by the Colombian Business Seminar, which was held online. Mr. Pardo spoke at the seminar, providing an overview of the Colombian economy and its startup ecosystem, as well as popular exports such as farm produce, and there were numerous insightful questions from the audience, which showed a high level of expectation regarding business and investment opportunities.

-Mr.Marco Prencipe, Consul General of Italy in Osaka

-Mr.CHO Seong Ryoul, Consul General of the Republic of Korea in Osaka

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INFORMATION FOR COVID-19

Japanese Government

<https://japan.kantei.go.jp/>

Osaka Prefecture Government

<https://covid19-osaka.info/en/>

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[O-BIC as one-stop service center for creating a foothold in Osaka]

<http://o-bic.net/>

[Information about scheduled events (in Japanese only)]

<https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/event/index.php>



Chief Editor :Takayoshi Negoro(Mr.), Director of International

Division, OCCI

Mailed by : Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, International Division

Address : 2-8 Hommachi-bashi, Chuo-ku, Osaka, Japan 540-0029

Tel : +81-(0)6-6944-6400

Fax : +81-(0)6-6944-6293

Contact Persons : Kentaro NAGAO (Mr.), Risa TAKESHIMA (Ms.)

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