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SNAPSHOT

Addressing Failures of Lighting Market

Public-private partnership creates a process that could avoid 11 million tons of CO2 emissions in the next four years.



Through USAID assistance, a regional organization has been established setting quality standards to dramatically increase regional CFL product quality. / Photo: David Boughey, TCP, Inc..

USAID and the world's largest lighting companies have come together to establish a regional system for ensuring that energy-saving lamps meet quality standards

Nearly half of the energy-saving compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) sold in Asia were burning out faster and giving off less light than they should. Since each quality CFL can help reduce nearly 34 kilograms of carbon dioxide emissions over its life-time, ensuring the quality of CFLs is critical to addressing climate change. While CFL sales in Asia are rising sharply (\$8 billion annually), consumer dissatisfaction with poor quality CFLs is threatening to derail the huge potential for broad adoption of these energy-saving lamps.

USAID through the ECO-Asia Clean Development and Climate Program has aggressively promoted the adoption of common standards by CFL manufacturers across Asia and the establishment of a regional organization dedicated to improving the quality of these energy-saving lamps. This effort is helping to ensure Asian consumer confidence by setting quality standards to dramatically increase regional CFL product quality.

As a result of USAID's efforts, the world's largest lighting companies and associations from China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam came together to launch the Asia Lighting Council (ALC), an independent organization which promotes and advocates harmonized regional standards backed by a quality certification and labeling system. Funding for the first two years of ALC's core operations is supported by three of the world's largest lighting companies – Philips, General Electric, and Havells-Sylvania.

The objective is to increase the demand in the region for the ALC quality standards while expanding the ALC's income from membership and product certification fees to ensure its long-term sustainability.

ALC-qualified manufacturers currently account for an estimated 30% of the market share of CFLs in Asia, while continuing to grow. Full implementation of the guidelines promoted by the ALC are expected to reduce Asia's carbon dioxide emissions by an estimated 11 million metric tons over the next four years, equivalent to taking around 2 million passenger vehicles off the road for a year.