

## FGD on nanoclay seeks local users, buyers

Bicutan, Taguig City – One of DOST-ITDI's mandates is technology transfer in which a particular technology is adopted through a licensing or technology transfer agreement.



Once the technology is transferred to the adopter, production starts, and market introduction proceeds. Here the need to identify a specific market/ users and widen product marketability arises which prompted ITDI to conduct a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) for its developed nanoclay, now being produced by OptiWhite, Inc.

This FGD is one way to gauge the relevance, suitability, and market acceptance of the nanoclay by directly engaging with the target users/buyers from the industry and taking into consideration the specific requirement and identified aspects for improvement, and making it happen.

With this in mind, ITDI's Technological Services Division with its Business Development Section (TSD-BDS) organized and facilitated the conduct of FGD on nanoclay last May 29, 2023.

The meeting formally started with an opening message from Dr. Zorayda V. Ang, Deputy Director for Administrative and Technical Services as she welcomed, thanked, and encouraged the group's active participation to achieve the purpose of the FGD.



This was followed by a message from Director Annabelle V. Briones who expressed optimistically that the nanoclay, as an additive, will be useful for the industry. Also, she reassured that the activity will further assist OptiWhite in its production and marketing goals.

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Nanotechnology experts namely, Ms. Josefina R. Celorico, Chief of the Material Science Division, and Dr. Marissa Paglicawan, Supervising Science Research Specialist/Career Scientist 1 gave the overview of the activity and introduction of DOST-ITDI developed Nanoclay Technology, and cited the benefits of converting additive materials to nano-size. Nanomaterials may enable weight reduction, increase stability, and improve the functionality of the products.

Likewise, ITDI's sole nanoclay technology adopter, OptiWhite, Inc. representative Manny Tanglao shared their business profile and concerns about nanoclay<sup>®</sup> production, particularly to gain users/buyers.

After the presentations Jose Ramon Cuevas, Senior Science Specialist, TSD, facilitated the sharing of insights. Some concerns raised included the biocompatibility of the nanoclay additive for knee implants and the possibility of reducing the production cost for prosthetics.

Also raised was the effectiveness of adding nanoclay to rubber products in order to eliminate the distinctive smell of natural rubber and prevent rubber spoilage since the industry uses 30% natural rubber and 30% synthetic rubber.

As the interaction progressed, two participants from the plastic manufacturing sector agreed to use nanoclay as an additive to the plastic products they manufacture and test its suitability as offered by OptiWhite.



Concluding the activity was a closing remark from Dr. Christine Marie C. Montesa, ITDI Deputy Director for Research and Development, encouraging participants' collaboration to validate the suitability of the nanoclay to their respective products. She was assertive that the collective insights drawn will be used overall. (\\DDGotis, TSD-ICOW; Photos: RRDelaCruz, TSD)

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