



**REGIONAL COOPERATIVE
AGREEMENT**

**INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY
AGENCY**



REPORT OF
THE 43rd RCA GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETING

**Meeting Room M-5
IAEA Headquarters
Vienna, Austria**

**19 September 2014
09.00 – 17:45**

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ACRONYMS

DDG-TC	Deputy Director General, Technical Cooperation Department
DDG-NA	Deputy Director General, Nuclear Sciences and Applications Department
DIR-TCAP	Director for Asia and the Pacific Division
DIR-TCPC	Director of Programme Support and Coordination
DIR-RCARO	Director of RCA Regional Office
GCM	General Conference Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
NR(s)	National RCA Representative(s)
NRM	National RCA Representatives Regional Meeting
LCC	Lead Country Coordinator
PMO(s)	Programme Management Officer
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RCARO SAC	RCARO Standing Advisory Committee
RCA-FP	RCA Focal Person
SH-TCAP1	Head of Section 1 of Asia and the Pacific Division
TC	Technical Cooperation Programme
TO(s)	Technical Officers
TCAP	Division for Asia and the Pacific

Introduction

The 43rd RCA General Conference Meeting (GCM) was held at the IAEA Headquarters, Vienna, Austria, on 19 September 2014. Thirty four participants from 16 RCA Government Parties; Australia (AUL), Bangladesh (BGD), China (CPR), India (IND), Indonesia (INS), Japan (JPN), Republic of Korea (ROK), Malaysia (MAL), Myanmar (MYA), New Zealand (NZE), Pakistan (PAK), the Philippines (PHI), Singapore (SIN), Sri Lanka (SRL), Thailand (THA) and Vietnam (VIE), and four representatives of the RCA Regional Office (RCARO) attended the Meeting.

Mr. Ali Boussaha (DIR-TCAP), Mr. Oscar Acuña (SH-TCAP1) and Mr. Sinh Van Hoang (RCA-FP) represented the IAEA. The Agency's Technical Officers, Programme Management Officers of TCAP1 and support staff also attended selected sessions of the Meeting.

The list of participants is given in Annex 1.

Opening

a. Opening of the Meeting by the RCA Chair

The opening session of the meeting was attended by Mr. Kwaku Aning, (DDG-TC) and Mr. Aldo Malavasi (DDG-NA). Dr. Chris Daughney, the RCA Chair welcomed the participants and invitees. He announced and welcomed Fiji (FIJ) as a new member of RCA. He stated that the objectives of the meeting were to discuss the development issues of RCA since the 35th RCA National Representatives Meeting in New Zealand in April 2014. The Chair extended his gratitude to the IAEA for attaching high importance to the RCA, and acknowledged especially the support for effective implementation of the RCA projects and management of the RCA. He thanked the DDG-TC and DDG-NA, RCA stakeholders and IAEA colleagues for their attendance at the meeting. In closing, the Chair encouraged active participation by all the delegates and declared the meeting open.

b. Introductory remarks by DDG-TC and DDG-NA

The Chair invited Mr. Kwaku Aning (DDG-TC) to deliver his message.

Mr. Kwaku Aning welcomed all the participants to Vienna. He congratulated FIJ for submitting an Instrument of Acceptance of the 5th Extension Agreement of the RCA and noted that the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Brunei Darussalam are in the process of completing their Instrument of Acceptance to submit to the IAEA Director General.

Mr. Aning summarised the current RCA programme and made specific mention of the progress made in Project RAS7021, 'Marine Benchmark Study on the Possible Impact of the Fukushima Radioactive Releases in the Asia-Pacific Region', and Project RAS6065, 'Strengthening the Application of Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy to Improve Cancer Treatment'. He also indicated that the decision to extend Project RAS0068, 'Enhancing the Management of the Regional Agreement and Programme Management', is a testament to the dedication of GPs to the advancement of the operations of the RCA

Programme, and he acknowledged the extrabudgetary contributions from ROK, CPR and AUL in support of this project.

Mr. Aning highlighted the progress made by RCA Government Parties, with assistance of the Secretariat, in preparing the RCA Programme for the 2016-17 TC cycle. He noted that the Agency had completed its evaluation of the 13 Project Concepts submitted after the 36th NRM in New Zealand, and he indicated that 11 of these Project Concepts have been recommended for further development into Project Designs.

Mr. Aning emphasized that the TC Guidelines encourage the design of bigger projects with a greater chance of significant impact. He also noted that the duration of projects could be increased, for example to four years, to increase the project impacts. Mr. Aning also noted that the RCA Government Parties are conscious of the limited TC funds, and he urged NRs to explore all possible opportunities for securing extrabudgetary funding in support of the proposed RCA Programme for the next TC cycle.

The DDG-TC's message is reproduced in Annex 2.

The Chair invited Aldo Malavasi (DDG-NA) to deliver his message.

Mr. Aldo Malavasi welcomed participants to the Meeting. He noted that the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications (NA) is built on the scientific expertise of its staff in human health, food and agriculture, water resources, the environment, and industry. He indicated that, through the Technical Cooperation programme, the Department's expertise is translated into tangible results for GPs through technical cooperation projects.

Mr. Malavasi highlighted some of the ways that the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications is working to assist GPs with the use of nuclear science and technologies to improve food security, human health, water resource management, environmental monitoring and industrial applications. The application of nuclear science and technologies in these areas is promoting sustainable socio-economic development in the region.

Mr. Malavasi explained that the Nuclear Science and Applications Laboratories in Seibersdorf, Austria are the foundation of research and development and capacity building for the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications. A project launched this year, the "Renovation of Nuclear Sciences and Applications Laboratories in Seibersdorf" or ReNuAL project, aims to ensure that these labs can continue meeting the growing and evolving needs of Member States.

The DDG-NA's message is reproduced in Annex 3.

c. Group Photo

A group photo of all meeting participants was taken.

d. Adoption of the Agenda

The Chair requested comments and suggestions on the draft provisional agenda, which had been circulated to the NRs. No new agenda items were proposed. The Chair noted that the meeting had adopted the provisional agenda with no amendments.

The Chair proposed that engagement with the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) be discussed under Agenda Item 12 “Any Other Business”. The Meeting endorsed this proposal.

The adopted Agenda is provided in Annex 4.

The meeting adopted the agenda.

One item of “any other business” regarding engagement with the Pacific Islands Forum was proposed and endorsed.

e. Appointment of Rapporteurs

The Chair called for nominations for rapporteurs of the meeting. AUL and ROK were nominated and endorsed. Both agreed to carry out this task.

Ms Catherine Kelleher (AUL) and Mr Junyung Kim (ROK) were appointed as rapporteurs of the Meeting.

I. Reports on the Follow-Up Actions of the 36th NRM – RCAGCM (43)/1

At the invitation of the Chair, the RCA-FP provided a summary of the most important follow-up actions arising from the 36th NRM. He thanked all participants, particularly the RCA Chair, for their efforts in completing all ten (10) Follow-Up Actions.

The NR AUL enquired if Action 10 “Modification of *In Touch* Platform” had been completed, stating that some of his Australian colleagues had reported that they were still experiencing difficulties accessing the platform as a non-TC recipient country. The RCA-FP informed that the Platform has been modified to allow access by non-TC recipient MSs.

The RCA Chair, in his capacity as the NR NZE, noted his appreciation of the Agency for their very effective implementation of the follow-up actions.

The Meeting took note of the Report and complimented the Agency on the effective implementation of Follow-up Actions from the 36th NRM.

II. Implementation of regional events in 2014 and tentative arrangements of regional events for the first half of 2015 - RCAGCM(43)/2

The RCA-FP presented a summary of the implementation of regional events in 2014 as well as tentative arrangements for regional events in the first half of 2015 (Annex 5). He noted that the current RCA Programme consists of twenty four (24) projects, among

which there are nineteen (19) projects that are on-going, and five (5) projects which will start implementation from 2015. He noted that all projects are progressing well and in accordance with work plans.

NRs were requested to review the list of planned regional events for the first half of 2015 and advise the RCA-FP of their ability to host the events or of any necessary amendments. The RCA Chair proposed a two week deadline for all information to be provided to the RCA-FP. This suggestion was endorsed by the meeting.

AUL advised that “RAS6065 Regional Training Course on Clinical Applications of SBRT in Prostate and Spinal Cancers” had been confirmed for 20-24 July 2015 in Sydney.

The Meeting noted the forward work programme and requested NRs to advise the RCA-FP of their confirmation to host the events to which they have been assigned or to advise of any changes within two weeks of the completion of the GCM.

III. Proposed RCA Programme for 2016-2017 TC programme - RCAGCM(43)/3

The RCA Chair thanked the RCA-FP for preparing the background documentation and explained that the purpose of the agenda item was to decide which and how many project concepts for the 2016-17 cycle would move forward into the project design phase.

The RCA Chair noted that fourteen (14) project concepts had been submitted to the Agency for review, including eleven (11) Category A projects and one (1) Category B project. He also noted that an additional two pilot project concepts were submitted by ROK to be led by RCARO. He further noted that only one of these will move forward into the design phase and that they would be considered under a subsequent agenda item.

On the invitation of the RCA Chair, the RCA-FP presented the background documentation (Annex 6). The RCA-FP noted that all Category A project proposals, with the exception of “RAS2014005 Clinical Implementation of Image-guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) and Adaptive Radiation Therapy (ART)”, had been recommended by the Agency for further development. He noted that RAS2014005 had not been recommended because its objectives are very similar to those of the existing project RAS6027. He also noted that the number of projects at any one time should not exceed fifteen (15) and that the remaining available budget for the 2016-17 cycle was around €1,400,000. He also reminded the meeting of the DDG-TC’s opening remarks referencing the TC Guidelines that encourage bigger and longer projects with the aim of increasing project impacts.

At the suggestion of the RCA Chair, the meeting first considered the Category B project concept that would extend project RAS0068 into the 2016-17 cycle. The RCA Chair suggested that it should go forward into the design phase. This suggestion was endorsed by PHI and ROK. PAK requested clarification around the timeline for the project and the Chair stated that it would be going forward to the 2016-17 cycle. Following the clarification, PAK endorsed the proposal. The meeting agreed that the proposal should go forward, to be led by ROK.

Turning to the Category A project proposals, the RCA Chair stated that the available budget of ca. €1.4 million was probably only enough to support four (4) or five (5) projects. He asked the meeting to recall the ranking exercise undertaken following the 36th NRM, where GPs were invited to rank the eleven (11) project concepts according to regional need, national need and feedback provided by the RCAPAC on the project concepts. The Chair presented a chart depicting the results of the ranking exercise (Annex 7) and made the suggestion that the top five ranked projects go forward to the project design phase with the intent of being included in the 2016-17 cycle.

The RCA Chair noted that there must be a good balance of projects across the thematic areas. He recalled that the 36th NRM had noted that the number of environmental projects continuing into the 2016-17 cycle was low. He presented a chart (Annex 7) depicting the impact on the thematic distribution of projects should the top five (5) projects go forward, and noted that the thematic balance would largely be restored.

The RCA Chair also noted that should all five (5) projects go forward, a small amount of extrabudgetary funding may be required, approximately €200,000.

AUL supported the RCA Chair's proposal, noting that a ranking exercise had been undertaken after the 36th NRM and that it should serve a purpose. AUL also noted that one of the projects proposed to move forward was a follow on project from "RAS7021 Marine benchmark study on the possible impact of the Fukushima radioactive releases in the Asia Pacific region" which had previously secured significant extrabudgetary funding. PHI also supported the proposal, but questioned how many projects there would be in the industrial thematic area. AUL noted that "RAS1020 Building Capacity for Applications of Advanced Non-Destructive Evaluation Technologies for Enhancing Industrial Productivity", which has an industrial theme, would run through to the end of 2017 and that RSA1014, "Supporting Radiation Processing for the Development of Advanced Grafted Materials for Industrial Applications and Environmental Preservation" although classified as an environmentally themed project in the chart presented by the RCA Chair, also has an industrial focus. SIN also supported the RCA Chair's proposal. The Meeting then endorsed the RCA Chair's proposal and requested the relevant NRs to advise their respective LCCs to begin preparation of the Project Designs.

The Meeting also endorsed a suggestion from the RCA Chair that Lead Countries may take other project concepts forward into the project design phase, with the understanding that they would only proceed should extrabudgetary funding be secured.

The Meeting then turned its attention to the length of projects, noting earlier comments by the DDG-TC and the IAEA TC guidelines which recommend fewer and longer projects. The RCA Chair invited comments on a proposal to move to four (4) year projects. AUL supported the suggestion in principle, but noted the need to think about the potential loss of flexibility. The RCA Chair suggested that the meeting wasn't ready to take a decision on this matter and proposed that the RCAPAC be requested to prepare a background paper on the advantages and disadvantages of moving all projects to a four (4) year duration. AUL, IND and PHI supported this suggestion and it was subsequently endorsed by the meeting.

The Meeting took note of the preparations for the Proposed RCA Programme for the 2016-2017 TC cycle and the comments contained in the Agency's Feedback Note.

The Meeting agreed that the Category B concept "Enhancing the Management of the RCA Programme" should be developed into a Project Design, to be led by ROK.

The Meeting agreed that the five top-ranked project concepts should be developed into Project Designs with the intent of including them in the 2016-17 RCA Programme, consistent with the available budget. The five top-ranked project concepts to be advanced to the Project Design phase are:

Title	Area	LC	Total TC Euros (k)*	Duration (y)
Enhancing stereotactic body radiation therapy for frequent cancers in the RCA Region	Health	ROK	590	3
Isotopic techniques in the assessment of groundwater resources for sustainable management	Environment	PAK	684	4
Impact of air particulate matter in the RCA region: quantification of key sources and the relationship between major components, light scattering and visibility for managers to better understand and control key components	Environment	NZE	320	2
Advancing technologies for monitoring and analysis of the potential impact of radioactive releases from nuclear power plants (NPPs) in Asia-Pacific marine ecosystems following the Fukushima Dai-ichi accident	Environment	AUL	500	4
Application of mutation techniques for breeding green super crop to continually increase food productivity	Agriculture	CPR	750	4

**These are the amounts taken from the Project Concept documents*

The Meeting requested the relevant NRs to advise their respective LCCs to begin preparations of Project Designs for the five above-listed projects, taking into account the comments contained in the Agency's Feedback Note and the possible

need to raise Extra Budgetary contributions if all five project concepts are to be fully delivered.

The Meeting agreed that LCCs may develop Project Designs for any other project concepts (in addition to those five listed above) that have been recommended for advancement by the Agency, noting that their incorporation into the 2016-17 RCA Programme will be contingent upon Extra Budgetary funding being obtained.

The Meeting requested the RCA PAC to prepare a background paper considering the advantages and disadvantages of a four year project cycle, to be tabled for consideration by the NRs at the 37th NRM.

IV. RCA PAC report - RCAGCM(43)/4

The RCAPAC report is included as Annex 8. The RCA Chair delivered a presentation based on the RCAPAC report on behalf of the temporary Chair of RCAPAC, Dr. John Easey, who was unable to attend the meeting. The RCA Chair's presentation is included as Annex 9.

The RCA Chair noted that there were five (5) key recommendations from the RCAPAC report that the meeting was being asked to take decisions on.

Recommendation 1: that the RCAPAC operational procedures be modified to clarify arrangements for the appointment of a temporary Chair and a permanent Chair.

JPN suggested that temporary Chairs should be endorsed by NRs. AUL supported the suggestion and suggested that in the event that a replacement chair is needed, the RCAPAC should recommend a replacement Chair for endorsement by NRs. IND supported this suggestion and it was endorsed by the meeting.

Recommendation 2: that Dr. John Easey be endorsed as the permanent Chair of RCA PAC.

PAK and SRI supported the appointment of Dr. Easey as the permanent Chair of the RCA PAC. ROK enquired if there was a specified duration for the term of the permanent chair and expressed a view that one was needed. AUL stated that this was a legitimate concern and asked if perhaps Dr. Frank Bruhn (former RCAPAC Chair), who was attending the meeting in his capacity as IAEA Section Head of Quality Assurance TC, knew if the RCAPAC ToR provides any relevant guidance. Following review of the RCAPAC ToR, the RCA Chair suggested amendments to the Terms of Reference to address these concerns (Annex 9). The Meeting endorsed the appointment of Dr. Easey, subject to agreed amendments to the ToRs.

CPR nominated Dr. Dongxin Feng as a new member of the RCAPAC, to replace Dr. Bruhn. ROK, AUL and PHI supported the nomination, and the meeting endorsed Dr. Feng as a new member of the RCAPAC effective immediately.

Recommendation 3: that background documents should be distributed to LCCs to assist with preparation of Project Designs, and that these background documents should be hosted permanently on the RCARO website, where they can be accessed by all LCCs.

AUL and IND supported this suggestion. The Director of RCARO also indicated to the meeting that it would be RCARO's pleasure to host the resource documentation on its website. The meeting endorsed both recommendations.

Recommendation 4: that the draft action plan and timeline for preparation of Project Designs be adopted.

ROK expressed concern that the role of the RCAPAC had expanded and suggested that the RCAPAC should only review project designs on the request of LCCs. Additionally, ROK stated that the RCAPAC should review Project Concepts but not Project Designs. ROK emphasized its concern of RCAPAC's involvement in the design of the Category B project due to the fact that RCAPAC activities are funded by this project.

AUL noted that the RCAPAC had been established to ensure that all project proposals went through the same review process and, importantly, to ensure that project designs were reviewed by representatives from the region as well as the Agency. The RCA Chair noted that the role of the RCAPAC was to provide advice to the group, not individual member states, and that it was up to individual NRs and LLCs as to whether the advice is acted upon.

PAK noted the dates of the 37th NRM (Islamabad) were incorrect in the background documentation. The 37th NRM will be held 16-19 March 2015.

The Meeting endorsed the draft plan and timetable for preparation of Project Designs for the 2016-2017 TC cycle, noting amendments raised by PAK regarding the dates of the NRM.

Recommendation 5: that a Project Design Meeting be held to assist LCCs with project designs, and that a Project Design Review Meeting be held one day before the NRM.

IND suggested that the Project Design Review Meeting should be held well in advance of the NRM. AUL noted that this may be hard, logistically, and result in the need for extra travel. PAK indicated that it would be happy to host the Project Design Review Meeting the day prior to the 37th NRM. IND accepted this suggestion. PHI enquired if participation by the RCAPAC would be funded under RSA0068. The RCA-FP indicated it would be.

The Meeting agreed that a Project Design Meeting should be implemented by the Agency from 17-21 Nov, and a 1-day Project Design Review Meeting should be implemented one day before the NRM.

The Meeting noted the report given by the RCA Chair on behalf of the RCA PAC.

The Meeting endorsed the proposed amendments to the RCA PAC Terms of

Reference to clarify the arrangements for appointment of a temporary Chair and the designated Chair, with amendments made by JPN and AUL.

The Meeting endorsed Dr John Easey as the designated Chair of the RCA PAC, with the alteration of the RCA PAC Terms of Reference to specify duration of tenure of its members.

The Meeting endorsed appointment of Dr Dongxin Feng as a member of the RCA PAC, effective immediately.

The Meeting agreed that the listed resource documents should be made available to aid with the development of project designs as recommended by the RCA PAC.

The Meeting endorsed the draft plan and timetable for preparation of Project Designs for the 2016-2017 TC cycle, noting amendments raised by PAK regarding the dates of the NRM.

The Meeting agreed that a Project Design Meeting should be implemented by the Agency from 17-21 Nov, and a 1-day Project Design Review Meeting should be implemented one day before the NRM.

V. Report of the Working Group on the preparation of the RCA Medium Term Strategy and Strategic Priorities 2018 - 2023 - RCAGCM(43)/5

At the invitation of the RCA Chair, Ms Dela Rosa, Chair of the WG, presented the work undertaken by the group (Annex 10). Ms Dela Rosa noted that the WG was now in phase two (2) of its work and was proposing a survey of NRs to further inform the development of the MTS.

The RCA Chair invited comments on the WG's proposal. ROK, BGD and PAK supported the concept of a survey. IND stated it would be good to have the opportunity to review the survey and suggest amendments prior to its distribution to NRs for completion. AUL supported this suggestion. The Meeting agreed that NRs would provide feedback on the proposed survey to the Chair of the WG who would amalgamate responses and then forward to the RCA Chair for distribution to NRs, thereby allowing them to see modifications to the form.

The Meeting noted the report provided by the Chair of the MTS Working Group.

The Meeting endorsed the concept of a survey of NRs to inform the development of the MTS.

The Meeting agreed that NRs will provide feedback on the proposed survey form to the Chair of the WG within two weeks of the conclusion of the GCM.

The Meeting agreed that the Chair of the WG would amalgamate the responses from the NRs and forward this to the RCA Chair, who will distribute the information to the NRs within one week of its receipt from the WG Chair.

VI. Report of the Working Group on proposed amendments of the RCA Agreement RCAGCM(43)/6

The Chair of the WG, Mr. Steven McIntosh, provided a summary of the Meeting Report from the 1st meeting of the Working Group (Annex 11). He noted that proposed amendments by AUL and ROK were discussed and that the meeting had resulted in the production of a consolidated draft revised agreement. He noted that, given the preliminary nature of discussions, the majority of proposals remain in square brackets (indicating they are still under consideration), allowing time for participants to consult with their respective capitals. He noted the only exception was with respect to proposed changes to Article XIII, where those participating in discussions had indicated in-principle support for a change from the current practice of five-year agreements to an agreement which would remain in force indefinitely, together with necessary accompanying provisions on termination and denunciation. He stressed that the guiding principle of the group was that “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”.

IND apologized for not being able to attend the first meeting, but noted that amending the Agreement needs to be done with great care to avoid unintended consequences. In this connection, IND has presented its views on the subject to the Working Group Chairman for deliberations during the Meeting. The given views of IND are included in the Annex 11 along with the Working Group Report.

CPR noted that any amendment would need to be approved by its State Council; however they were happy to continue to participate in discussions.

PHI enquired as to the timetable of the WG. The Chair of the WG explained that if endorsed by the meeting, the WG would meet again in late November or early December 2014 to hopefully complete their work, but noted that this kind of negotiation can take some time. IND and MAL supported a second meeting of the WG and it was endorsed by the meeting.

The RCA Chair noted that the venue and date of the 2nd RCA Amendment working group meeting shall be announced to members of the Working Group after the RCA Chair, the Chair of the Working Group, and the Agency discuss.

The Meeting noted the report delivered by the Chair of the Working Group on proposed amendments of the RCA Agreement.

The Meeting endorsed a second meeting of the WG, as proposed in the WG report, with an update to be delivered electronically after the WG meeting.

The Meeting requested NRs to provide any comments on the proposals contained in Attachment 1 of the WG report to the WG Chair by 15 November 2014.

VII. Discussion on reporting in-kind contributions of RCA Government Parties - RCAGCM(43)/7

The RCA Chair noted that reporting in-kind contributions is a particularly complex issue with a number of contributing factors.

1. The necessary information on in-kind contributions of GPs isn't always provided by NRs to the RCA-FP on time for inclusion in the Annual Report.

The Meeting called on all NRs to provide the necessary information to the RCA-FP by 15 January 2015.

2. The template for reporting of in-kind contributions is not always used consistently.

The RCA Chair noted that the RCA-FP had proposed another template, and that perhaps the best way forward was for the RCAPAC to review the existing template that was developed by RCAPAC and endorsed by NRs at the 42nd GCM with the intent of making amendments to address any ambiguity. AUL supported this suggestion, and the Meeting agreed that any recommendations should be provided to the RCA Chair by 1 November 2014 to ensure the template can be used for reporting 2014 contributions.

3. There remains confusion as to whether or not national meetings are classified as in-kind contributions.

AUL and PHI stated that National Meetings make an important contribution and should be included as in-kind contributions. NZE also supported this proposal. The RCA-FP said that there is no issue including National Meetings as in-kind contributions and stressed the importance of a clear definition of 'in-kind contribution' being incorporated into the new template.

The Meeting noted the report delivered by the RCA-FP.

The Meeting agreed that the RCA PAC should review the current template for recording in-kind contributions of GPs, and then provide recommendations to the RCA Chair by 1 Nov for amendments to reduce ambiguity in the type or format of information to be included (e.g. including a definition of 'in-kind' contributions). The RCA Chair will circulate the amended template to NRs by 15 Nov so that the final version, incorporating input from NRs, can be used for reporting in-kind contributions for the 2014 RCA Annual Report.

The Meeting agreed that information on in-kind contributions of GPs, using the new template, should be sent by the NRs to the RCA FP by 15 January 2015 to allow inclusion in the 2014 RCA Annual Report.

The Meeting agreed that recording in-kind contributions should continue to include national-level activities which contribute to the achievement of project outcomes, as well as regional activities.

VIII. Reports by the Director of the RCA Regional Office (RCARO) and the Chairman of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee - RCAGCM(43)/8

At the invitation of the RCA Chair, the Director of RCARO presented progress made on RCARO's 2014 Work Plan. The Chairman of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee also presented the Meeting Report of the 19th RCARO Standing Advisory Committee Meeting.

AUL thanked RCARO for their assistance in getting promotional materials to the South Pacific Environmental Radioactivity Association (SPERA) Conference, and reported that there had been some interest in RCA activities.

PHI, IND, CPR and PAK also complimented RCARO on their good work. PAK noted the need to promote RCA activities at the political level as well as the scientific level. The Director RCARO noted that such promotion does not fall directly within RCARO'S mandate and that the issue should be discussed amongst NRs.

The Director of RCARO noted that RCARO has resources and capabilities, and hopes that NRs will make full use of them. He also stressed the importance of adherence to reporting requirements.

Additionally, the Meeting agreed that the pilot project entitled "On-site Problem Solving in Diagnostic and Therapeutic Applications of State-of-the-Art Radionuclide Technologies in the Region" should be developed into a project design by ROK with RCARO as the LCC.

The Meeting took note of the report provided by the Director of RCARO and complimented the RCARO on its success in promoting the RCA and the new initiatives being considered for the future.

The meeting also took note of the report delivered by the Chair of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee.

The Meeting endorsed RCARO's forward work programme as described by the Director RCARO and endorsed by SAC.

The Meeting agreed that the pilot project entitled "On-site Problem Solving in Diagnostic and Therapeutic Applications of State-of-the-Art Radionuclide Technologies in the Region" should be developed into a project design by ROK with RCARO as the LCC.

IX. Report of the Working Group on the future role of the RCARO - RCAGCM(43)/9

The RCA Chair invited comments on the Report of the WG Meeting on RCARO's Future Role (Annex 12).

AUL asked for further clarification around the supplementary projects and what they are intended to cover. The DIR RCARO noted that it was up to the WG to decide, but that they could be used to amplify certain aspect of on-going projects or work on specific issues that arise out of projects. The DIR-TCAP suggested that they could perhaps

function like the IAEA's reserve program, which is used to address emergencies that cannot wait for the next programme e.g. the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

JPN stated their appreciation for the activities undertaken by RCARO but raised a concern that four out of the five proposals lack specificity, including required resources and financial implications. The NR PHI who was representing the Chair of the WG, agreed with JPN and explained that the WG intends to meet again to further develop the details of the proposals. JPN noted that until such details are known, they would not be in a position to agree to any of the proposals. It was clearly stated by JPN that the necessary resources should be secured before proceeding to the stage of making a concrete design of the proposals. RCARO indicated that it had not yet identified mechanisms for resourcing the proposed initiatives, preferring first to have agreement from NRs on the proposed initiatives before seeking the necessary resources. JPN recommended strongly that the issue of resources should be discussed in the WG. AUL and NZE agreed that the issue of resources should be discussed by the WG.

The Meeting agreed that the WG should meet again and report back to the 37th NRM.

The Meeting took note of the WG report and thanked the working group and the RCARO for all of their efforts.

The Meeting endorsed continuation of the Working Group and gave approval to the WG to schedule a second meeting to progress the activities outlined in section 5.2 of the report. The Meeting requested the WG to deliver a report on its progress at the 37th NRM.

The Meeting also noted that it will be essential to demonstrate that adequate resources can be secured prior to considering the expansion of RCARO's role.

X. Roundtable discussions with Technical Officers (TOs) and Programme Management Officers (PMOs) on on-going RCA projects

The RCA Chair opened the session and explained it was an opportunity for free form unstructured discussion pertaining to any matters relating to the on-going RCA Programme of work.

During the session, a number of the TOs and PMOs stressed the importance of submitting project plans on time.

AUL noted that a project meeting was held in Nepal last week for RAS5055 "Improving Soil Fertility, Land Productivity and Land Degradation Mitigation". Despite some major changes in leadership and secretariat personnel, the project continues to progress well. He congratulated all involved in the project.

AUL also noted that there may be some issues regarding availability of funding to complete all activities under RAS 7021 "Marine benchmark study on the possible impact of the Fukushima radioactive releases in the Asia-Pacific Region". The RCA-FP indicated that he was aware of the issue and that it had been raised in the mid-term review

meeting. He noted that it had since been raised by the DDG TC, with Korea, with the intention of seeking additional funding.

Dr Frank Bruhn, Section Head - Quality Assurance, Technical Cooperation Department, IAEA, provided an overview of the tools available to assist GPs in the successful development, implementation and monitoring of projects.

The Meeting thanked the PMOs and TOs for their contribution to the effective operation of the RCA programme.

The meeting took note of comments made by NRs, PMOs and TOs during the roundtable discussion.

The Meeting also took note of comments provided by Dr. Frank Bruhn, Section Head - Quality Assurance, Technical Cooperation Department, IAEA, regarding the tools available to assist Government parties in the successful development, implementation and monitoring of projects.

The Meeting requested NRs to ensure project reports are submitted according to the required timeframes.

XI. Holding of the 37th RCA Meeting of National Representatives in Pakistan in 2015 and Holding of the 38th RCA Meeting of National Representatives in Mongolia in 2015

At the invitation of the RCA Chair, PAK provided an update on preparations for the 37th NRM, including that a venue has been secured. PAK assured the meeting that security measures would be in place and noted that a number of Agency staff had visited Pakistan over the last year without incident. The RCA Chair noted that he may not be able to attend as his organisation may not permit him to travel to Pakistan, but was pleased to hear through informal discussions that he may be able to participate through video conferencing. AUL and ROK noted that their respective Governments may also prevent them from travelling to Pakistan.

The RCA Chair noted that Mongolia's NR was not present to give an update on preparations for the 38th NRM and committed to making contact to get an update electronically.

The Meeting noted that the 37th NRM will be held in Islamabad, Pakistan from 16-19 March 2015.

The Meeting noted that Mongolia's NR was not present and that the RCA chair would attempt to make contact electronically and pass any update on to NRs.

Any Other Business

The Meeting noted that no response has been received from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in response to the letter sent by the RCA Chair in April 2014.

The Meeting agreed that no further action should be taken unless the PIF Secretariat initiated contact.

NRs of those GPs that have not yet ratified the 5th extension agreement were encouraged to make efforts to ratify it as soon as possible.

Closing

The RCA Chair made an announcement on the departure of Ali Boussaha (DIR-TCAP), from the IAEA after the IAEA General Conference. He thanked the DIR-TCAP for his dedicated works to the RCA. The DIR-TCAP expressed his appreciation for the very good cooperation and support extended to the RCA by GPs.

The RCA Chair thanked all participants for their active participation and valuable contributions, and declared the meeting adjourned.

The meeting ended at 17.45h.