



REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY



REPORT OF
THE 50th RCA GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETING

16-17 September 2021

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ACRONYMS

ANPC	Alternate National Project Coordinator
CRP	Cooperative Research Project
DDG-TC	Deputy Director General, Technical Cooperation Department
DIR-TCAP	Director for Asia and the Pacific Division
DIR-RCARO	Director of RCA Regional Office
EBT	Extra Budgetary
FNCA	Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia
GCM	General Conference Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
GP	Government Party to the RCA Agreement
IAEA BOG	IAEA Board of Governors
LCC	Lead Country Coordinator
MTSC	Mid-Term Strategy Coordination
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPT	National Project Team
NR	National RCA Representative(s)
NRM	National RCA Representatives Regional Meeting
PCMF	TC Programme Cycle Management Framework
PPAR	Project Progress Assessment Report
QF	Quadripartite Forum
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCA GOR	RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules
RCA PAC	RCA Programme Advisory Committee
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RCARO SAC	RCARO Standing Advisory Committee
RCA-FP	RCA Focal Person
RRC	Research Review Committee
STF	Special Task Force
TACC	Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee
TC	Technical Cooperation Programme
TCPC	Division of Programme Support and Coordination
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
WG	Working Group

Introduction

The 50th RCA General Conference Meeting was held online on 16-17 September 2021, via video conferencing.

The Meeting was attended by 20 RCA Government Parties: Australia (AUL), China (CPR), Cambodia (KAM), India (IND), Indonesia (INS), Japan (JPN), Korea (ROK), Laos (LAO), Malaysia (MAL), Mongolia (MON), Myanmar (MYA), Nepal (NEP), New Zealand (NZE), Palau (PLW), Pakistan (PAK), Philippines (PHI), Singapore (SIN), Sri Lanka (SRL), Thailand (THA) and Vietnam (VIE). Representatives from the RCA Regional Office (RCARO) also joined the Meeting.

Mr Hua Liu (DDG-TC), Ms Jane Gerardo-Abaya (DIR-TCAP), Mr Gashaw Gebeyehu Wolde (SH-TCAP1), Ms Marina Binti Mishar (SH-TCAP2) and Mr Sinh Van Hoang (RCA-FP) represented the IAEA.

The list of participants is given in **Annex 1**.

Opening

a. Opening of the 50th RCA GCM by the RCA Chair (Thailand)

Ms. Suchin Udomsomporn, Deputy Secretary General of Office of Atoms for Peace (OAP), the RCA Chair and NR of THA, officially opened the Meeting. Her speech is provided in **Annex 2**.

b. Welcome Remarks by the DDG-TC, IAEA

Mr Hua Liu, Deputy Director General and Head of Department of Technical Cooperation, IAEA, delivered his statement. His speech is provided in **Annex 3**.

1. Adoption of the Agenda – RCAGCM(50)/1

The Meeting adopted the provisional agenda with no amendment (**Annex 4**).

The Meeting adopted the agenda with no amendment.

THA, VIE and RCARO were appointed as Rapporteurs for the Meeting.

2. Report on the Follow-up Actions of the 43rd NRM by the RCA FP – RCAGCM(50)/2

The RCA-FP presented on follow-up actions of the 43rd NRM by the RCA FP (**Annex 5**).

The Meeting took note of the report submitted by the RCA-FP in implementing the follow-up actions from the 43rd RCA NRM.

3. Report on the Implementation of Regional Events in 2021 by the RCA FP – RCAGCM(50)/3

The RCA-FP provided the report on the implementation of regional events in 2021 (Annex 6).

The Meeting took note of the report on the implementation of regional events in 2021. The Meeting agreed that the regional events have been effectively implemented within the timeline under the pandemic conditions.

4. Report on the Use of Funds for Procurement under RCA Projects by the RCA FP – RCAGCM(50)/4

The RCA-FP provided the report on the use of funds for procurement under RCA projects (Annex 7).

The Meeting took note of the report on the use of funds for procurement and appreciated the IAEA for proactive action on responding to the unprecedented circumstances resulting from the COVID-19. The Meeting noted that the procurement has been implemented in line with the objectives of each project, according to the TC guidance.

The Meeting agreed that there should be an assessment of the impact of the procurement at an appropriate time and requested the LCCs to report on the use of the equipment in the project progress reports to collect the data for this purpose.

5. Update on Conducting Social and Economic Impact Assessment of RCA Projects in Support of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA by the RCA FP – RCAGCM(50)/5

The RCA-FP provided an update on conducting social and economic impact assessment of RCA projects in support of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA (Annex 8).

The Meeting took note of the update on conducting social and economic impact assessment of RCA projects in support of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA delivered by RCA-FP. The Meeting highly appreciated the valuable work being done by the IAEA, NRs and experts and encouraged to continue the good work.

The Meeting noted that due to the unexpected difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the reports on the two project areas (NDT and radiotherapy) will be finalized in Nov., 2021.

The Meeting requested the IAEA to provide the information on the methodologies used for the socio-economic impact assessment.

6. Report on the Activities of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) by RCA PAC Chair – RCAGCM(50)/6

The RCA PAC Chair provided the report on the activities of RCA PAC ([Annex 9](#)) and the report on evaluation of pre-concepts for the 2024-2025 TC Cycle ([Annex 10](#)).

The Meeting took note of the report of RCA PAC and appreciated the contribution made by the RCA PAC.

The Meeting agreed to endorse the proposed recommendations as below:

- **PAC member who assisted in the development of a project to be designated to assist the LCC in its implementation, in monitoring progress and in evaluating the achievement of the outcomes after the project is completed.**
- **NPCs to follow the IAEA e-learning course on TC projects.**
- **PAC to take action to ensure that NPCs receive details of their projects (Project Description, LFM and the budget) and an extract of their responsibilities given in the GOR, at the beginning of each project cycle.**
- **The designated PAC member to be invited to attend the First, Mid-Term and Final Meeting of the relevant project.**
- **NPCs to submit six-monthly progress reports according to the format given in the GOR and PAC to review them and provide a feedback to the LCCs.**
- **PAC to review the annual PPARs prepared by the LCCs and provide feedbacks.**
- **PAC to review the LCC reports to be submitted to the RCA NRMs and to take action to ensure their submission until the outcomes of the project are achieved.**
- **PAC to assist the LCCs in preparing the final project evaluation report according to a standard format.**

The Meeting recommended the PAC and WG MTSC to have close consultations on the revision of the PPF and decide on an integrated format to be used for the next project cycle as an endorsed format.

In regards to the evaluation of the pre-concepts for the 2024/2025 TC Cycle, the Meeting took note of the results of the evaluations undertaken by the RCA PAC. On the basis of the PAC Chair's recommendations, the Meeting agreed that fifteen (15) pre-concepts be proceeded to the concept stage and recommended seven (7) pre-concepts on similar topics to be merged to three (3) project concepts.

The Meeting noted that the GOR stipulates that one GP can submit no more than two (2) Concept Proposals. In this regard, the Meeting recommended those GPs with more than two pre-concepts decide which ones to proceed forward.

The Meeting requested the LCs to designate the LCCs to draft the Concept Proposals and provide the comments of the PAC on the pre-concepts to the appointed LCCs.

7. Report of the WG on the RCA 2018-2023 MTS Coordination by the Chair of the WG – RCAGCM(50)/7

The Chair of the WG on the RCA 2018-2023 MTS Coordination gave a presentation on the report of the WG ([Annex 11](#)).

The Meeting took note of the report presented by the Chair of the WG MTSC.

The Meeting agreed to approve the following recommendations by the WG MTSC:

- the WG to further discuss updating some of the Target Criteria (TC) of some Performance Indicators (PIs) while sticking to the current PIs for the Final Review.
- the online questionnaires to be fully utilized to collect necessary data for the MTS Final Review.
- the IAEA to find a solution (such as to include the condition of the nominee in the RTC prospectus) to ensure that the nominee of the RTC is a National Project Team member.
- the NRs to inform all LCCs to submit updated PPF when the National Project Team Members are modified
- the MTSC WG to consider a possible way to improve the efficiency for utilizing RRUs.
- the IAEA and NRs to instruct the LCCs to use the most updated meeting report templates contained within the GOR
- the IAEA to prepare a video/e-learning material on the outcome monitoring and make sure to provide a session on outcome monitoring at the first Project Coordination Meetings so that all the LCCs and NPCs understand its importance and concepts, and can include sufficient information in the report.
- the RCARO to provide all the necessary formats in the GOR in Microsoft Word format in the RCARO website so that they are easily available for the NRs, LCCs and NPCs.

In addition, the Meeting endorsed the new procedure for identification of RRUs as well as the RRU qualification summary template ([Annex 12](#) and [Annex 13](#)), and approved using the template from the 2022-2023 TC Project Cycle.

In relation to the Intellectual Property rights (IPR), the Meeting recommended the NRs review the suggested inputs to the GOR given by the IAEA OLA ([Annex 14](#)), and give their comments to the Chair of the MTSC WG by the end of September 2021.

For addressing the special needs of the new GPs, the Meeting:

- endorsed MTSC WG developing a paper with a plan for consideration how to address the special needs of the new GPs.
- recommended the NRs incorporate in the Project Designs, as appropriate, a portion of activities to cater for the needs of the new GPs.
- endorsed accepting additional project proposals that especially target the needs of new GPs at the Project Design Phase of the 2024-2025 TC Cycle.
- endorsed giving more weightage to those project designs that address the needs

of the new GPs when prioritizing the project designs.

In regards to the issue on archiving the RCA online training materials, the Meeting agreed the necessity to prepare a common platform as a repository of the RCA online training materials and endorsed utilizing the RCA e-Learning Campus to be a common platform. The Meeting recommended that IPR issues be reviewed and cleared by the IAEA and RCARO for the RCA online training materials to be uploaded on the RCA e-Learning Campus.

The Meeting endorsed the updated Annual Work Plan 2021 of the WG MTSC (Annex 15) and holding the next meeting. The Meeting requested that the next meeting of WG MTSC further discuss on who will take the lead in conducting the final review of the RCA MTS 2018-2023.

8. Report of the WG to draft RCA 2024-2029 MTS by Chair of the WG – RCAGCM(50)/8

The Chair of the WG to draft RCA 2024-2029 MTS gave a presentation on the report of the WG (Annex 16).

The Meeting took note of the report presented by the Chair of the WG to draft RCA 2024-2029 MTS.

The Meeting endorsed the structure of the 2024-2029 MTS and the list of responsible officers drafting particular sections as given in Annex 17.

The Meeting also endorsed the revised Work Plan for the WG to draft the RCA 2024-2029 MTS (Annex 18).

The Meeting requested the WG to consider the Regional Programme Framework (RPF) when drafting the “Section C: Strategic Directions and Priorities” of the 2024-2029 MTS to avoid the possible duplication of the work done by the RCA PAC.

9. Report on the Activities of the RCARO – RCAGCM(50)/9

The Director of the RCARO provided the report on the activities of the RCARO (Annex 19).

The Meeting took note of the report delivered by the RCARO and appreciated the significant contribution provided by the RCARO to the RCA.

10. Report of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) on the Activities of the RCARO – RCAGCM(50)/10

The Chair of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) presented the report of the 33rd Meeting of the RCARO SAC (Annex 20).

The Meeting took note of the report of the 33rd Meeting of RCARO SAC presented by the RCARO SAC Chair and endorsed its recommendations as attached in Annex 20.

The Meeting approved the below recommendations by the RCARO SAC:

- **theme proposal on closing the gap in radiotherapy access (INS) to be implemented as the new RCA Research Project.**
- **new master's degree course with KINGS (KEPCO International Nuclear Graduate School) to be launched.**

11. Report of the Special Task Force on the preparation of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA by the RCA Chair – RCAGCM(50)/11

The RCA Chair delivered a presentation on the preparation of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA (Annex 21);

- a. **Update on the action plan for the 50th Anniversary of the RCA**
- b. **Discussion on the preparation of the Ministerial Conference**

The Meeting took note of the report of the Special Task Force on the preparation of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA.

In regards to the Ministerial Conference, the Meeting agreed that the event will take place in the afternoon of the first day of the 66th IAEA General Conference, in 2022. The Meeting agreed that the programme of the Ministerial Conference should be shorter than the current agenda, and should be attractive and substantive for the Ministers to attend. The Meeting noted the significance of the strong support by the IAEA and GPs towards the preparation of the event.

In regards to the RCA exhibition and other activities, the Meeting approved the work and budget plan and the roles and responsibilities of the RCA exhibition and other activities (video, website).

The Meeting requested the NRs to review the latest version of the Ministerial Declaration (Annex 22) and provide comments to the STF Chair within three weeks of the conclusion of the 50th RCA GCM.

The Meeting appreciated ROK for its plan to contribute extra-budgetary funds (a total of USD 170,000) for the celebration of the RCA 50th Anniversary.

The Meeting requested the NRs to review the outline of the publication (Annex 23) and provide comments to the STF Chair by the end of September for the finalization.

The Meeting requested the STF to hold a meeting in either October or November to discuss the details on the Ministerial Conference and other matters (publication, RCA Awards, etc.), and report to the RCA NRs through email.

12. Update on the Proposal to Establish the RCA Scholarship Programme by the RCA FP – RCAGCM(50)/12

The RCA FP provided an update on the proposal to establish the RCA Scholarship Programme (**Annex 24**).

The Meeting took note of the proposal to establish the RCA Scholarship Programme presented by the RCA FP.

The Meeting approved the concept in principle, subject to the further detailed information being provided including the funding issues. The Meeting endorsed to establish a Committee to develop the details of the Scholarship Programme to be reported to the 44th NRM for its approval.

The Meeting requested the NRs to submit the nominations of Committee members to the RCA Chair within three weeks of the conclusion of the 50th RCA GCM.

13. Update on the Partnership between the RCA and the ADB by the RCA PAC and RCARO – RCAGCM(50)/13

The RCARO presented on the update on the partnership between the RCA and the ADB (**Annex 25**).

The Meeting took note of the progress made in establishing collaboration between the RCA and the ADB.

The Meeting approved to conduct a joint event in Energy Planning and requested the IAEA to organize one as a first step.

The Meeting approved RCA FP and RCARO to continue negotiations with the ADB to establish collaboration under the existing Framework Agreement or under a new Agreement if the need arises.

14. Update on the acceptance of the 2017 RCA – RCAGCM(50)/14

The RCA-FP provided an update on the acceptance of the 2017 RCA Agreement (**Annex 26**).

The Meeting welcomed the advice that twenty (20) of the twenty-two (22) GPs have submitted their instrument of acceptance of the 2017 RCA to the Agency. The

Meeting recommended NR of KAM to work with concerned bodies to re-submit the instrument of acceptance in the relevant form.

The Meeting looked forward to the remaining two (2) GPs (FIJ and LAO) depositing their instrument of acceptance as soon as possible.

15. Update on Holding of the 44th NRM in Viet Nam and the 45th NRM in Australia

VIE confirmed that the 44th NRM will take place in Viet Nam in 2022.

AUL confirmed that the 45th NRM will take place in Australia in 2023.

VIE confirmed that the 44th NRM will be held from 19 to 22 April 2022, either physically in Viet Nam or virtually, depending on the pandemic situation.

AUL confirmed that the 45th NRM will be held in the week of 27th March 2023, in Sydney, Australia, with exact dates to be confirmed later.

16. Any Other Business

SH-TCAP1 suggested including the discussion on the establishment of an RCA Fund in the agenda of the 44th NRM.

The Meeting agreed to discuss the following item in the next NRM:

- **Establishment of an RCA Fund**

17. Closure

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