

SESSION-III

(February 29, 2000; 09 00 – 13 00 hrs.)

Chairman: Mr. A.K. Anand

Rapporteur: Mr. C.A. Krishnan

4.0 RCA Programme for the year 2000

4.1 Programme for 2000

RCA Co-ordinator presented an overview of the 1999-2000 programs, both thematic as well as the UNDP/RCA/IAEA project. The programme has 34 projects, of which 28 projects are active, but only 21 are operational due to funding constraints (Annexure-6). He referred MS to the Annual Report for achievements and progress of the different projects. The Meeting noted, with satisfaction, an increased implementation rate from 49% in 1997 to 65% in 1999. The budget for 2000 was estimated at \$5.19 M. The RCA Co-ordinator informed the meeting that a 20% cut has been effected in the UNDP project funding.

4.2 Joint UNDP/RCA/IAEA project

The RCA Co-ordinator reminded the Meeting that the funding of the UNDP project is assured only to the end of 2000, though the project duration is to the end of 2002. The meeting noted the proposed visits in April of an UNDP Mid-Review Team to the region. A two-person Mission would visit and evaluate the project progress in five selected countries. It was confirmed during the Meeting that these countries would be China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

In view of the importance of the review Mission findings for funding in 2001/02, it was resolved that all possible efforts should be made to ensure an effective promotion of RCA achievements.

The Meeting noted the need to:

- Prepare briefing documents for the Review Mission in advance;
- Prepare action plans and an agenda for the country visits;
- Ensure the selected countries would make a comprehensive and cohesive presentation that would –

- highlight RCA achievements particularly the societal benefits that assist in environmental management, alleviating poverty and the empowerment of women;
- identify contributions towards regional ownership, project management and the involvement of end users;
- discuss the problems encountered and the solutions found or proposed.

A Task Group comprising New Zealand, Indonesia and Bangladesh was requested to consider and report on the advanced planning for the Review Mission required from the RCA.

The Task Group considered the progress made by the Member States across the Joint UNDP sub-projects. They reported that RCA could have confidence that the five countries selected for a Review Mission visit should be able to represent RCA achievements satisfactorily.

The Task Group also provided the following list of tasks, actions responsibilities and deadlines, which was endorsed by the Meeting.

Sr	TASK	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
1	Prepare briefing document for Mission	a) Update PPER: update activities summary (Section IIF), progress on success criteria (annexes 6-10), and highlights (PPER summary)	Lead Country (L.C.) Coordinators	To RCA Office March 20
		b) Prepare document, either updated PPER or an executive summary of PPER, as appropriate	Regional expert and RCA office	To RCA office 15 April
2	LCs to brief Mission	Arrange meeting of LC Coordinators at central point at start of Mission visit to region (suggested Singapore) ¹	RCA Co-ordinator in consultation with UNDP	As soon as possible (ASAP)

¹ This was held in Malaysia, instead.

Sr	TASK	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
3	Prepare Mission programme in each country to be visited	Advisory letter to selected country, providing Mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference • Aims, operating methods • Expectations Also a checklist on important points RCA wishes to emphasize to Mission	RCA Office	ASAP
		Develop integrated programme involving NPCs + end users, plus demonstrations/visits where feasible ² .	National Representatives with assistance of RCA office + LCs	10 April

4.2.1 Lead Country Reports

At this stage, it was decided that the meeting should first review the status of various components to enable final discussions. Accordingly, the lead countries gave presentations as follows.

Joint UNDP/RCA /IAEA Project

4.2.1.1 Access to Clean Drinking Water (sub-project 1.1)

The Philippines made a detailed presentation covering the achievements and present status of this sub-project (Annexure-7). The meeting noted its appreciation of the detailed presentation. New Zealand commented that this sub-project is not under UNDP funding. India suggested that the feedback, which the Philippines agreed to provide, from the end-users should be included in the report.

Bangladesh informed the meeting about the “Arsenic Problem” existing in the region and the isotope techniques being used. He noted the involvement of the Agency in tackling this problem.

² An updated PPER was prepared.

4.2.1.2 Management of the Marine Coastal Environment and Its Pollution (sub-project 1.2)

Australia reviewed this sub-project highlighting the positive progress made under the project, the training course conducted in Australia, and the marine radioactivity database being assembled. The good progress being made with the component on the Algal Bloom problem was noted.

4.2.1.3 Air Pollution and Its trends (sub-project 1.3)

Singapore introduced the Mid-Term Review held in Singapore in Oct 99. The Review Report, including the Project Proposal for the extension, has been prepared and circulated to MSs in November 99.

Singapore emphasised the importance of the project to MSs. It stressed that it was essential that data needed to be collected over a period of time to allow detailed analyses and interpretation of the data to be carried out, to see the trends so as to evolve national models for air pollution dispersion and also that of transboundary movement of air pollution. MSs had therefore unanimously supported the extension of the project for another two years (2001/2002) at the Mid-Term Review as much still needed to be done.

4.2.1.4 Clean and Energy-Efficient Production Processes (sub-project 1.4)

Japan presented the status report. The RCA Co-ordinator commented that this sub-project is not funded by UNDP and that Japan is funding the Agro-waste component. India suggested that the contribution made by India be included by the Lead Country Report presented by Japan. New Zealand noted that activities in this subproject were considered at the AGM on the thematic programme on industry held in Mumbai on 6-10 December 1999.

4.2.1.5 Electronic Networking & Outreach (sub-project 2.1)

Malaysia briefed the meeting about the present status and also about the proposed PCM at MINT, Malaysia during April 17-21, 2000. The Meeting also noted the TC-PRIDE demonstration made at Trombay during session-II and the proposed presentation by India under session-IV. The committee noted with satisfaction that the Lead Country was well prepared for this exercise.

5.0 Thematic Programmes

The RCA and LCs presented the highlights of the accomplishments of projects under the different thematic programme areas.

5.1 Health³: The RCA coordinator briefed the meeting about the status of health-related projects, such as the ff:

- Distance Learning in Nuclear Medicine (RAS/6/029)
- Tissue Banking (RAS/7/008)
- Distance Learning in Radiation Oncology (RAS/6/033)

The Meeting noted the need for enhancing Public Awareness Programmes about the well tested benefits of nuclear technologies in the health sector. Full funding was requested for the project on Distance Learning & Radiation Oncology for the development of all other modules.

5.2 Agriculture: The Meeting noted some of the achievements on this thematic area, such as:

- Harmonization and regulations on food irradiation have been agreed in the region and could be discussed under TCDC and Tripartite agreement
- Phytosanitary procedures using irradiation are being developed in the region and have been adopted in three MSs.
- The multi-location trials of 35 radiation induced varieties in rice in different countries are well on the way.

5.3 Industry: India briefed the Meeting about the achievements made in natural polymers, chitin/chitosan for industrial applications, as well as biomedical and agricultural applications. Indonesia emphasized the need to bring out the success stories under industry to enable MSs to convince governments about its potential in view of the economic benefits of this sub-project.

5.4 Energy and Research Reactors: The Lead Country, Korea, informed the Meeting about

- The Project Co-ordination Meeting
- The next proposed activities
- Postponement of two events under LILW from non-power sources due to lack of funding

³ The project on Nuclear Medical Applications is continuing to 2002 (RAS/6/028).

- Research Reactor operation and utilization
- WASP and FINPLAN

There were detailed discussions on the above as well as the need for nuclear energy in the region as highlighted by Indonesia and the Chairman. Indonesia spoke on the need for small and medium sized reactors in the range of 100-200 MWe to take care of the electrical needs of large number of scattered islands.

The Chairman informed the Meeting about the proposed international meeting to be organized by IAEA in Egypt in 2001 on this subject of small and medium scale reactors.

The Meeting noted with concern the recent incident in Thailand and noted that the Thailand delegate could brief the meeting later. Regarding low and intermediate level waste (LILW), Bangladesh emphasized that this problem is the concern of all MSs who import or use radio-isotopes and not just those who produce radioisotopes. The Meeting noted the importance of research reactor and isotope production along with all aspects of LILW and safety. These issues are interlinked and hence should be seen in toto. It is not possible to neglect any of the sectors but only balance them.

5.5 Radiation Protection: Australia briefed the Meeting on (See Section 6.2) the positive developments being made in this sector. The delegate from Korea announced that US\$ 100,000 has been given by ROK under RAS/9/024⁴. Korea was thanked for its contribution.

5.6 General: The RCA Co-ordinator informed the Meeting that five PFMs and one workshop were organized under RAS/0/025, including the workshop on Dam Safety in Indonesia.

The role of RCA, the RCA Co-ordinator, and MSs vis-à-vis FNCA⁵ was discussed. It was noted that Dr Aleta could attend the FNCA meeting as an observer of the Agency Secretariat and at this point in time, the interests of the RCA region and its MSs can be taken into account by the nine RCA MSs who are also members of the FNCA. The RCA desires harmonization of efforts, non-duplication of activities in the limited-fund scenario and ultimate sustainable development of the entire region through positive approach towards problem solving.

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⁴ RAS/9/024 continuing for part of RAS/9/018 in Radiation Protection, but funding is provided by Korea.

⁵ FNCA: Forum for Nuclear Co-operation in Asia. This is a Japanese initiated and funded project.

(February 29, 2000; 14 00 – 18 00 hrs.)

Chairman: Dr.(Mrs.)A.M. Samuel

Rapporteur: Mr. C.A. Krishnan

6.0 Preparation for the 2001/2002 Project Cycle

The Meeting took note of the results of the various Advisory Group Meetings and Project Formulation Meetings.

6.1 AGM on Industry: India presented the results of the AGM held in Mumbai 6-10 December 1999 and details of project proposals. Japan also presented details on one specific project within the proposal on upgrading natural polymers using radiation processing. The presentations highlighted the comprehensive strategy adopted by the meeting to identify the industrial sectors, identify and classify their problems, isotope methodology suitable for these problem and the final evolution of four projects under this sector.

The Meeting noted the report of the AGM. The Meeting noted the maturity level in this area and the direct involvement of end-users in the exercise. India agreed to act as the overall lead Country for the Thematic Programme on Industry. India said it would be assisted by an expert task group of National Project Coordinators that would divide the responsibilities for each of the four projects proposed within the programme.

The Meeting agreed to the concept of separate lead countries as suggested but felt that it should be similar to the task force strategy adopted by the Radiation Protection for achieving better harmonization and unification of developmental modalities. The Meeting noted the Mumbai Report.

6.2 PCM on Radiation Protection⁶: Australia gave a presentation of items under session-IIIg and IVb. The fully developed project proposal was detailed in the meeting. The Meeting noted its appreciation of this report, which could be an example for other project proposals and inputs. He briefed the Meeting about the formation of an expert task force of four members coordinating separate sub-items while the Lead Country oversees the coordination of the projects. The various recommendations were also provided.

After due discussion, the meeting noted the following:

⁶ (RAS/9/018) The PCM was held in Bali, Indonesia, 14-18 Feb 2000.

- The RCA National Representatives should be the focal and communication point for the designation of NPCs and for the nomination of candidates for various activities.
- The National Project Co-ordinators (NPC) should interact with the National Representative for facilitating dissemination of factual management information on technical as well as logistic parameters.
- The NPC should steer the national activities under the overall guidance of the RCA National Representatives who are responsible and accountable to their MS, RCA office as well as Agency.

6.3 Mid-Term Review on Air-Pollution: Singapore briefed the meeting on this project. This UNDP project is for five years and funding approved for three years as mentioned in the earlier session and recorded. It was reiterated that the project should be continued during 2001-2002, to achieve the benefits of the exercise carried out in collecting data, analysis and trending. As proposed by New Zealand and supported by other MSs, it was agreed to continue with this project, although care should be taken to avoid overlap with other international organisations. The scope should be further enhanced to include sources and dispersion of pollutants and trans-boundary problems, etc., as suggested by Indonesia.

The Philippines noted that the Asian Development Bank (ADB) was assisting the Philippines in the implementation of its Clean Air Act of 1999. The UNDP/IAEA/RCA air pollution component activities in the Philippines is recognized by ADB and is now linked with the ADB assisted national project on air pollution. Mr Razley expressed appreciation of the Philippine initiative, which could be duplicated in the other participating MSs.

6.4 PCM on Agriculture (RAS/5/035): The RCA Co-ordinator informed that the project as reported in the preliminary report, is moving satisfactorily. It was noted that an expert from India had participated in this project and India has now joined this project for active participation.

Dr. Adnan Shihab-Eldin, Director, TCPA, emphasized that the project proposals, which are going to be considered in the next sessions, should keep the "Model Project Criteria" in mind. The Model Project Criteria has been made applicable across the board by the Agency's policy making bodies and hence it is absolutely essential to formulate projects accordingly. He highlighted the essential criteria and noted that if extension is sought it may be explicitly clarified whether it is a Type 'A' case (change in scope) or Type 'B' (No change in scope but needs more efforts due to specific reasons).

6.5 Presentation of RCA Regional Home Page: The Lead Country Malaysia informed the meeting that a mission report was circulated earlier and India, the Assisting Lead Country of this project, has made a "Demo Version" for benefit of the RCA National Representatives, to approve the contents and future strategy of this important project. India presented the proposed sample version of the RCA Regional Home Page. It was informed that the Regional Home Page exists in the APDIP and MINT Servers in two parts⁷. The additional data and format being presented were off-line and not put on web pending approval from RCA management. The overall system layers and logical design aspects were explained. It was emphasized that the ultimate objective is to develop and sustain a comprehensive Management Information System (MIS) for RCA, encompassing all MSs, RCA office, Agency database and other related data centers. The probable work plans for 2000 & 2001-2002 were projected (Annexure-8). The strategies needed for quick implementation of the project, were also noted and endorsed by the Meeting.

Malaysia offered to continue to host the Regional Homepage. This offer was accepted with appreciation. Updates of National Homepages should be sent to the Malaysian Lead Country Co-ordinator for suitable inclusion in the Regional Homepage.

The Meeting also approved the format of the Homepage as presented during the Meeting by India. It was also agreed that the responsibility for the content of the Regional Homepage rests with the RCA Co-ordinator and that the responsibility for the National Homepages rests with the respective National Representatives. The Meeting also noted the importance of keeping the information in the Homepage current and the role of MSs. Up to date[#] 11 RCA national homepages (AUS, CPR, IND, INS, KOR, MAL, NZL, PAK, PHI, SRL, THA) has been established with the latest from Sri Lanka which are temporarily being hosted alongside the RCA mirror site at MINT's server.

⁷ APDIP for general public. MINT for Members' only.

[#] As on July 27, 2000.