



**REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT  
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

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**REPORT**

**40<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE NATIONAL RCA REPRESENTATIVES**

**27–30 March 2018**

**Busan, Republic of Korea**

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## Acronyms

AIPS	Agency-Wide Information System for Programme Support
AOB	Any Other Business
BoG	Board of Governors
DIR-TCAP	Director for Asia and the Pacific Division
DIR-RCARO	Director of RCA Regional Office
FNCA	Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia
GCM	General Conference Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
GOR	Guidelines and Operating Rules
GP	Government Party to the RCA Agreement
NR(s)	National RCA Representative(s)
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NRM	National RCA Representatives Regional Meeting
LC	Lead Country
LCC	Lead Country Coordinator
PCMF	TC Programme Cycle Management Framework
PMO(s)	Programme Management Officer
PPAR	Project Progress Assessment Report
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCA PAC	RCA Programme Advisory Committee
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RCARO SAC	RCARO Standing Advisory Committee
RCA-FP	RCA Focal Person
RRU	Regional Resource Unit
RTC	Regional Training Course
TC	Technical Cooperation Programme
TCAP	Division for Asia and the Pacific
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
TO(s)	Technical Officers
WG(s)	Working Group(s)

## **Introduction**

The 40<sup>th</sup> National RCA Representatives Meeting (NRM) was held at the Paradise Hotel in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 27 to 30 March 2018.

The Meeting was attended by 43 participants from 21 RCA Government Parties; Australia (AUL), Bangladesh (BGD), Cambodia (KAM), China (CPR), Fiji (FIJ), Indonesia (INS), Japan (JPN), the Republic of Korea (ROK), Laos (LAO), Malaysia (MAL), Mongolia (MON), Myanmar (MYA), Nepal (NEP), New Zealand (NZE), Pakistan (PAK), Palau (PLW), the Philippines (PHI), Singapore (SIN), Sri Lanka (SRL), Thailand (THA) and Viet Nam (VIE). Four representatives of the RCA Regional Office (RCARO) as well as the Chair and three members of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee (RCA PAC) attended the Meeting.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was represented by Ms Najat Mokhtar, Director, Division for Asia and the Pacific (DIR-TCAP) and Mr Sinh Van Hoang, RCA Focal Person (RCA-FP).

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

## **Opening Ceremony**

### **Statement by the Representative of the Host Country**

Mr You Young Min, the Minister of the Ministry of Science and ICT of Republic of Korea, warmly welcomed the participants to Korea for the 40<sup>th</sup> RCA NRM. Mr You highlighted the significance of the RCA in enhancing the sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region and also noted the RCA has become a role-model to other regional agreements with its strong ownership by the RCA GPs. He noted the role of RCARO in facilitating the RCA activities, which is supported by the Korean Government. He also mentioned that **ROK** shares its knowledge and experience in the application of nuclear science and technology in service of sustainable socio-economic development. Mr You concluded by emphasising **ROK**'s commitment to be a faithful partner of the RCA.

Mr You's full address is provided in **Annex 2**.

### **Statement by the Representative of the IAEA**

Ms Najat Mokhtar, Director, Division for Asia and the Pacific (DIR-TCAP), IAEA, delivered the opening statement on behalf of the IAEA. She thanked the Government of Korea and the Korea Nuclear International Cooperation Foundation for hosting the Meeting. She commended the RCA for the high implementation rate of the RCA Programme in 2017 and the systematic development of the RCA Programme for 2020-2021. She also thanked RCARO for their active contribution to the preparations for the 40<sup>th</sup> NRM and arrangements for promotion of the RCA at the 30 May – 1 June 2017 International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme: Sixty Years and Beyond – Contributing to Development and the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on Environment (5-8 September 2017, Thailand). At the same time, she noted the challenge of securing additional funds for future projects and looked forward to the recommendations of the Working Group on the RCA MTS 2018-2023 Coordination. She wished the participants a fruitful Meeting and pleasant stay in **ROK**.

Ms Najat Mokhtar's full address is given in **Annex 3**.

## **1. Welcome Remarks of the Current RCA Chair**

Mr Imtiaz Kamal, Member (Planning), Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission of Bangladesh and NR of BGD, delivered welcoming remarks on behalf of Mr. Jafar Sadique, the outgoing RCA Chair. He expressed his appreciation for the excellent cooperation of the NRs, RCARO and the IAEA. He thanked ROK for hosting the NRM and noted that he would assist the incoming RCA Chair, supporting his leadership in the implementation of the activities of the RCA.

### **Designation of the new RCA Chairperson and Rapporteurs**

On behalf of Mr Jafar Sadique, Mr Imtiaz Kamal called for nominations for the new RCA Chair and then nominated the NR of the host country, Mr KIM Young Eun, to be the new RCA Chair. Mr KIM was unanimously elected.

The RCA Chair called for nominations for rapporteurs of the Meeting. AUL, PHI and RCARO indicated their willingness to fulfil this role. Participants supported the proposal and AUL, PHI, and RCARO agreed to be rapporteurs for the meeting.

**Mr KIM Young Eun, NR of ROK was unanimously elected as the new RCA Chair.**

**AUL, PHI and RCARO were appointed as Rapporteurs for the Meeting.**

### **Remarks of the New RCA Chair**

The incoming RCA Chair, Mr KIM Young Eun, thanked the NRs, IAEA and RCARO for their continuous support. He mentioned he will faithfully execute the duties of the RCA Chair and he looked forward to a successful meeting with the support of all participants.

## **2. Adoption of the Agenda – RCANRM(40)/1**

The Meeting adopted the agenda as proposed (**Annex 4**) with the following items to be discussed under Any Other Business:

**The Meeting adopted the agenda with the following items to be discussed under Any Other Business:**

- **Review of the updated 2014 RCA GOR (including discussions on Regional Resource Unit (RRU), TCDC and HRD strategies)**
- **RCARO Managed Projects issue raised by Japan**

### **3. Reports on Follow up Actions of the 46th GCM – RCANRM(40)/2**

At the invitation of the Chair, the RCA-FP provided a summary of the major follow-up actions arising from the 46<sup>th</sup> GCM (Annex 5). The RCA-FP thanked the National RCA Representatives, the Working Group on RCA Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2018-2023 Coordination, the RCA Programme Advisory Committee (RCA PAC) and RCARO for their strong collaboration and support.

The RCA-FP reported that most follow-up actions of the 46<sup>th</sup> GCM had been implemented, with the exception of:

- *Lodgement of RCA Project Participation Form* – it was agreed by the NRs that the form should be submitted by prospective GPs by 31 December of the year prior to project implementation, at which time project approval would have been granted.

Further discussion ensued on how GPs were approved to participate in projects. AUL suggested that it is the decision of the GP/NR as to whether or not their GP participates in a project and that all projects are open to participation by all the GPs – it is not the IAEA's role to vet participation.

The RCA-FP remarked that it makes no sense for certain GPs to participate in some projects e.g. GPs without a coastline participating in marine-related projects.

The Chair RCA- PAC suggested that whilst each GP has the right to be part of a project, funding support for participation in project activities/ events is not guaranteed and should be scrutinised. In that case, the IAEA/Technical Officer and other parties should have input as to what participation can be funded and what cannot be funded.

The RCA-FP confirmed that all GPs can join a project, but that joining specific activities within a project is vetted by technical experts to ensure participants have the appropriate qualifications and experience to contribute to/ benefit from the activity/event. The Chair RCA PAC added that RTCs require a minimum level of qualifications for participation, and this cannot be circumvented.

JPN asked the RCA-FP who decides whether a participant is funded by the IAEA. The RCA FP advised that the IAEA reviews received nominations and decides which nominees are selected and funded according to the IAEA regulations. AUL reminded the Meeting that whilst participation of non-recipient GPs on RTCs is allowed, it is only on a self-funded basis.

- *Merging of WGs* – To be presented and discussed under Agenda Item 9.
- *GOR* – To be discussed under AOB with a view to finalising the document.
- *RCA Fund* - To be presented and discussed under Agenda Item 9.
- *Quadripartite Forum* – The RCA Chair will participate at this year's forum. The Forum will be further discussed under Agenda Item 13.
- *Implementation of the RCARO Managed Projects* – JPN's commentary on RCARO-managed projects to be discussed under AOB.

**The Meeting took note of the report delivered by the RCA-FP and acknowledged the strong support of the Agency, RCA GPs and RCARO in implementing the follow-up actions from the 46th GCM.**

**The Meeting agreed that fully completed Project Participation Forms are to be submitted to the Agency by the end of December of the year prior to the project implementation.**

#### **4. RCA Annual Report for 2017 – RCANRM(40)/3**

The Chair invited the RCA-FP to provide a summary of a few key points of the Draft RCA Annual Report 2017 (**Annex 6**). The participants thanked the RCA-FP and RCARO for the efforts made in preparing the draft RCA Annual Report for 2017. The Chair requested the NRs to review and provide comments and recommendations on the draft report to him and the RCA-FP by 30 April 2018, which would be compiled in the final version of the report. The RCA-FP will recirculate the final report to NRs by 15 May.

The Chair RCA PAC congratulated the RCA-FP on the quality of the report, commenting that it was a much more readable document than in previous years under the older format. He also noted that there remained some missing information e.g. in-kind contributions from eight GPs. These gaps needed to be addressed in the final version of the report.

**AUL** pointed out that home-based assignments are not allowed in the current template for reporting in-kind contribution and asked if the template could be modified to accommodate those activities.

The Chair RCA PAC described how the current template had been based on a historical UNDP template where home-based assignments were not considered, and agreed that the addition of home-based assignments should be considered along with other issues when RCA PAC undertakes its scheduled comprehensive review of in-kind contributions.

**NZE** suggested that a summary chart or figure of in-kind contributions should be placed in the body of the Annual Report. He noted that government colleagues do not always read annexes to reports and to have a summary plot or figure in the text of the report would provide visibility of the worth of in-kind contributions.

**KAM** would like the Annual Report to be available in hard copy. It is not always easy to download an electronic copy in KAM, and it would be useful to be able to hand out a hard copy to government officials. The RCA-FP advised that the Annual Report is made available as an on-line document for reasons of efficiency, effectiveness and cost.

**The Meeting took note of the draft RCA Annual Report 2017. The meeting agreed that any comments on the draft RCA Annual Report 2017 (RCANRM(40)/3) should be provided by NRs to the RCA-FP and the RCA Chair using track changes by 30 April 2018, with the final version of the report to be circulated by the RCA-FP to NRs by 15 May 2018.**

#### **5. Implementation of the RCA Programme**

##### **a. Review of the implementation of the RCA Programme in 2017 – RCANRM(40)/4**

At the invitation of the Chair, the RCA-FP provided an overview of the RCA Programme implementation in 2017 (Annex 7). He highlighted the successful implementation of the RCA Programme in 2017 in terms of: the high implementation rate; the quality; and the high level of submission of project reports; and thanked the GPs for their strong support.

The RCA FP presented the report of a very successful year, with some notable highlights:

- Thirteen projects were supported, one on management. All project activities had been implemented to plan.
- An implementation rate of 93%, compared to 89% last year, the best result amongst the TC regions for 2017.
- A total of €1,468,000 in in-kind contributions was registered.
- Two projects were completed in 2017 - RAS5071 project (food irradiation) and RAS6072 (IMRT). The former had some good achievements over its duration e.g. production of a promotional video, whilst the latter had demonstrated that quality control with respect to IMRT, in the participating GPs, had improved significantly.
- All PPARs had been submitted on time.

The RCA-FP reminded NRs to always adhere to the GOR in nominating participants for project activities and events. He asked NRs to share the GOR document with LCCs and NPCs so they could fully understand their roles and responsibilities, and emphasized that all nominees must have appropriate skills, qualifications and experience. NRs should always consult with NPCs when nominating candidates for activities and they should also ensure that their NPCs submit their national reports to LCCs to ensure PPARs are complete.

The RCA-FP advised the Meeting that, as of 2018, AIPS will be fully implemented covering finance, planning, procurement, project management etc. He conceded that getting acquainted with the new AIPS needed some time, and noted that he would always be available to NRs to help resolve any issues.

CPR commended the RCA on the management of the RCA Programme and attaining such a high implementation rate, and said it would continue to strongly support the RCA Programme. MAL and PHI likewise stated their intention to contribute to the RCA as in previous years. AUL joined CPR in congratulating the RCA Secretariat on the performance of the RCA Programme in 2017.

In terms of the PPARs, AUL noted that there was little scope in the document to include much detail from the individual NPCs. The RCA-FP advised that the template was the standard one used across all the TCP, not just RCA, but would investigate if it could be possible to attach individual NPC reports to the PPAR. He would also enquire about uploading of the national reports onto the RCARO website.

THA and PAK noted that the InTouch+ platform was not always accessible to them when trying to nominate for activities and events and that some events were simply not listed. Under these circumstances, they had to resort to emailing the nomination forms.

**The Meeting took note of the report delivered by the RCA-FP. The Meeting encouraged NRs to continue to work closely with LCCs and NPCs for timely submission of the PPARs to the Agency by the agreed deadlines.**

## **b. Planned Arrangements of Regional Events in 2018 by the RCA-FP – RCANRM(40)/5**

The Chair invited the RCA-FP to present the planned regional events under RCA projects in 2018 (**Annex 8**). The RCA-FP advised that the hosting of most regional events in 2018 had already been confirmed by relevant GPs. He thanked RCA GPs for their support in this regard and hoped for continued support for the 2019 regional events, which would be discussed at the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM.

The RCA-FP asked JPN to confirm as soon as possible the hosting of a project activity in Maebashi in relation to RAS6086. He also asked all NRs to report to him promptly regarding any changes to project activities.

The Chair RCA PAC suggested that it would be beneficial if he were invited to participate in the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the WG on MTS Coordination planned in July (subject to confirmation by the WG Chair) since there were a number of important issues that needed to be resolved related to the assigned task for RCA PAC to undertake the mid-term review of the MTS as well as the on-going development of the projects to be submitted for inclusion in the 2020/20212 TC Programme.

The RCA-FP confirmed that the 2018 GCM would be held on 13-14 September, with the first day dedicated to the RCA Chairs' and SAC Meetings.

The Chair RCA PAC reminded the Meeting that, according to the TC timetable, project designs need to be uploaded onto PCMF by the date of the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM, so the timeframe would be very tight considering the NRs would be making decisions on the advancement of the projects at that GCM. The RCA-FP offered to help in the uploading of the design documents.

**The Meeting noted the planned regional events for 2018, which had been confirmed by hosting GPs. The Meeting also requested confirmation of participants in the July 2018 Meeting of the WG RCA MTS 2018-2023 Coordination.**

## **6. Review of the Progress of the RCA Projects by the National Representatives of the Project Lead Countries – RCANRM(40)/6**

Progress reports on the implementation of each RCA project were presented by the Lead Countries responsible. The presentations are **Annexes 9 to 18**. The specific projects presented and discussed were:

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>LCC</b>	<b>Annex</b>
RAS6077	<u>AUL</u>	9
RAS7028	<u>INS</u>	10
RAS5077	<u>CPR</u>	11
RAS5070	<u>INS</u>	12
RAS6072	<u>JPN</u>	13
RAS6083	<u>ROK</u>	14
RAS6085	<u>ROK</u>	15

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>LCC</b>	<b>Annex</b>
RAS7029	<u>NZE</u>	16
RAS7030	<u>PAK</u>	17
RAS5071	<u>PHI</u>	18

\* IND was not present at the Meeting so there were no presentations on RAS1020 and RAS6071.

The DIR-TCAP congratulated all those who were involved in or contributed to the progress made by the RCA projects in 2017, and expressed continued support of the Agency for the RCA Programme. The RCA-FP suggested publication of the RAS6072 as a RCA Success Story.

**The Meeting took note of the reports by RCA Projects undertaken in 2017.**

## **7. Update on the RCA Programme 2018-2019 – RCANRM(40)/7**

At the request of the RCA Chair, the RCA-FP presented an update on the RCA Programme for 2018-2019 (Annex 19). He explained that eight project designs have been submitted and approved by the BOG for the RCA Programme for 2018-2019. In 2018, there will be 12 active projects including seven continued projects and five new projects.

**The Meeting noted the update on the RCA Programme for 2018-2019 presented by the RCA-FP. The Meeting noted that eight (8) projects have been approved by the BOG for 2018-2019 RCA Programme cycle.**

## **8. Report on the preparation of the RCA Programme for 2020-2021 by the RCA PAC Chair – RCANRM(40/8)**

The Chair RCA PAC delivered a presentation on the preparation of the RCA Programme for 2020-2021 (Annex 20). The RCA PAC reviewed and analysed 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> round of project concepts submitted by the GPs and provided feedback to the respective NRs for the 2020-2021 RCA Programme. The RCA PAC Chair reviewed the common problems with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> round concept proposals, taking into account requirements of the RCA MTS 2018-2023 and the TCDC component, and provided an overview of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of concepts across the thematic areas.

There were eight Recommendations to the NRM outlined in the report, with the following commentary by GPs:

On Recommendation 1, it was remarked by NZE that there is a systemic failing in dealing with TCDC, in particular in the GOR, with no good guidelines relating to TCDC strategies. It was agreed by the NRs to discuss the matter further under Any Other Business (AOB).

On Recommendation 2, AUL noted that the number of projects which could proceed was dependent on the future RCA budget, and asked for clarification from the DIR-TCAP. The DIR-TCAP advised that TC was currently looking at reducing the number of non-Agreement

projects, which could effectively make available an additional €1 million per annum for the RCA Programme.

On Recommendation 4, JPN fully supported the notion of pre-concepts for the next cycle, although it noted that there are many different approaches to the technical solutions to a regional problem and there needed to be some flexibility in assessing these. The Chair RCA PAC reminded NRs that the pre-concepts were always posted on the RCARO website, so GPs could review all of them to look for common interests, overlaps or duplications.

The DIR-TCAP suggested that NRs should also focus on a historical view of past RCA projects to avoid duplicating efforts made in previous TC cycles. This could perhaps be a task for the MTS WG. As the focus for some projects crossed over thematic areas, the RCA-FP suggested that the idea of flagship projects could be considered for the RCA Programme.

On Recommendation 5, it was agreed that prospective LCCs needed to know how to cost proposed project activities. AUL commented that there was also the broader question - as more funds become available whether to have more projects, or more activities within fewer projects.

On Recommendation 6, it was agreed that EB-funded projects be in addition to the 2-concept limit imposed on TC-funded projects. JPN recommended EB-funded projects should also meet the same criteria applied to projects funded by the IAEA.

On Recommendation 7, all three proposed steps in the Recommendation on engaging and supporting RCAPAC members were agreed by the NRs. As there is no known similar system for other committees in the IAEA, AUL suggested that the RCA could lead the way.

The RCA-FP agreed that the RCA PAC's workload was heavy, and suggested that perhaps the MTS WG could cover some tasks. As the RCA PAC Chair has been proposed to participate in the next MTS WG meeting, he could discuss with the WG any tasks that might be more appropriately handled by the MTS WG, recommendations which could then be put to the ensuing NRM for consideration.

On the NRs' rankings of the 13 project concepts put forward, it was agreed that six concepts would proceed to the design phase. After some discussion on whether the 6<sup>th</sup> ranked project concept should be included, given its relatively poor assessment by the RCA PAC, it was agreed that the 6<sup>th</sup> ranked proposal would be included, based largely on its regional need, but only with assistance from the IAEA in improving the quality of the proposal so that it could meet accepted criteria.

The Chair RCA PAC remarked that, if six projects were to be assessed by the RCA PAC at the coming project design meeting, then this next meeting would require more than one week to carry out its work. The DIR-TCAP agreed that the IAEA would cover the costs to extend the next meeting to a second week.

In addition to the six TC-funded proposals going forward for further development, ROK also agreed to fund a project on radiation emergency preparedness and response, and also a management-based project to continue the work of the current RAS0082 project.

The RCA-FP urged the NRs to submit their revised project concepts to the RCA Chair by 30 April so he could review them and upload the Regional Concept Notes onto the IAEA's PCMF before the deadline of 31 May 2018.

All NRs acknowledged their deep appreciation to ROK for sponsoring the management-based projects for a total of three cycles.

The Meeting took note of the report delivered by the Chair RCA PAC and appreciated the strong support provided by the RCA PAC members.

The Meeting approved the following recommendations by the RCA PAC:

- NRs to conduct briefing sessions for preparing project concepts and designs utilising the resource documents available on the RCA website, accessed in the common area on the RCA website (<http://www.rcaro.org/projectdocs>).
- Use of updated project design review and assessment template for 2020/2021 RCA Programme.
- Official letters sent by the RCA Chair to the members of RCA PAC on their appointment.
- A formal request to the RCA PAC Members employers' organisations by the RCA Chair for them to recognise and support the participation of the designated Committee Member in RCA PAC, with a copy to the relevant Vienna Mission. This request should also contain an endorsement by the NRs and IAEA Secretariat of the importance of the role of RCAPAC Members.
- RCA PAC should be requested to examine the potential impact of any future tasks being suggested to be assigned to it, so that an assessment can be made as to whether these tasks could be accommodated or should need to be recommended for implementation through other means.
- Participation of RCA PAC Chair in the next Meeting of WG MTSC and report back to the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM on its workload, including the mid-term review of the MTS 2018-2023.
- RCA PAC Action plan for 2018-2019.

The Meeting reviewed the result of the ranking of 2<sup>nd</sup> round of project concepts by the NRs. It was agreed that a total of eight (8) project concepts (top 6 project concepts to be funded by TC, 1 management project and 1 EB funded project on radiation protection) will be forwarded for development of project designs for 2020-2021 TC cycle, consistent with the regional project note (available in the PCMF).

Project Lead Countries of the 2020-2021 TC Cycle will designate LCC of the Projects.

Project Title	Lead Country
Mutation by Speed Breeding for Sustainable Enhancement of Crop Productivity and Quality in Asia and Pacific Region	<u>CPR</u>
Enhancing Regional Capability to Investigate the Cause and Fate of Groundwater Pollution for Effective Management of Ground Water Resources Using Isotopic Techniques	<u>PAK</u>
Enhancing Human Resource Capacity for Qualified Cyclotron Based Radiopharmaceuticals for Disease Control	<u>ROK</u>
Development of Online Networks for Empowering Regional Collaboration among Radiation Oncology Professionals in the Asia-Pacific Region	<u>NZE</u>
Isotopes for Sustainable Wetlands to improve livelihoods in the Asia-Pacific	<u>AUL</u>
Promote Food Irradiation Using Machines (EB or X-ray) for Food Security in the Context of Climate Change	<u>VIE</u>

<b>Enhancing Capabilities for Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Response in the Asia Pacific Region through Hazard Assessment of Facilities with Radioactive Materials</b>	<b><u>ROK</u></b>
<b>New Management Project to replace RAS/0082</b>	<b><u>ROK</u></b>

The Meeting agreed that the Lead Countries will submit their refined project concepts to the RCA Chair by the end of April 2018 for his further review and upload of the RCA regional concept notes on the IAEA PCMF before the deadline of 31 May 2018. The Agency agreed to provide support in improving project designs where necessary. The Meeting agreed that the Project Design Meeting will be extended for evaluation of the 8 project concepts.

With regards to the preparation of the 2022/2023 TC Cycle, the Meeting agreed the following:

- Provision of background information sheet on anticipated budget and implementation options for a RCA project to the GPs at the start of project development procedure.
- Limitation of no more than two (2) Concept Proposals from each GP be submitted and fully EB funded concepts will not be counted in that limit, going through the same evaluation process as the TC funded projects.
- Continuation of the pre-concept process.
- Upload and distribution of concept proposals via the RCA website, together with the RCAPAC reviews, prior to the relevant NRM.

The RCA Chair, the NR of ROK, advised that the Korean Government will continue to provide extra budgetary contribution to support the management project as the Lead Country for the 2020-2021 cycle. The Meeting highly appreciated the contribution of the Korean Government for three TC cycles consecutively for the RCA.

**9. Report on the follow-up actions on the RCA Fund including the potential funding amount required for the RCA Fund and the applicable quantum for each GP by the Chair of the Working Group on the RCA MTS 2018-2023 Coordination – RCANRM(40)/9**

The RCA Chair invited Mr Chris Daughney, NR of NZE to present the report of the Working Group on the RCA MTS 2018-2023 Coordination on behalf of the Working Group Chair (Annex 21).

The NR of NZE noted that there were six topics to report on, all of which required decisions by the NRs at this NRM.

The first topic was on the new structure and Terms of Reference of the WG on RCA MTS 2018-2023 Coordination. There was some discussion as to whether or not there was the need for prospective WG members to submit CVs to determine his/her suitability for the role. It was eventually agreed that it is not appropriate for NRs to review the qualifications of those being nominated as GP representatives on this WG and pass judgement on their suitability to be a WG member. It was therefore decided that following the nomination of WG members by NRs, the Chair of the WG MTSC, using the skill set criteria for WG candidates set out in the MTS

TOR, should identify the collective skills gaps in the WG in carrying out its function, with a view to filling those gaps by recruiting outside experts with the support of the IAEA. It was also decided that the current membership of the WG should continue until the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM, subject to invitation for any other GPs to join by notification to the WG Chair within two weeks of the conclusion of the 40<sup>th</sup> NRM. In nominating members for this WG, GPs should indicate their skills relevant to those set out in the WG criteria.

The second topic covered the potential mechanism for mobilisation of financial resources for the RCA programme. The RCA Chair was requested to discuss with the IAEA the possibility of increasing the proportion of TCAP funding to the RCA programme. The DIR-TCAP advised the Meeting that it was proposed to decrease money to non-Agreement projects by about €1million, money that could then be funnelled into the RCA. This extra funding would create greater assurance for all six technical projects proposed for the 2020-21 TC cycle to proceed. The DIR-TCAP urged GPs to look closely at synergies between national and regional projects with a view to achieving greater efficiency in the expenditure of project funds.

With regards to the notion of the establishment of an RCA Fund similar to the AFRA model, the WG on MTS recommended against it. Rather, it was proposed that the NRs should endorse a collective target of €400,000 per annum, with contributions offered on a voluntary basis and no minimum imposed. GPs further endorsed the current mechanism by which EB funds could be allocated, whereby GPs could specify the project for which the EBF would be used.

CPR advised that they would continue to contribute to the EBF in accord with their current modality.

The WG on MTS was charged with drafting a Letter of Declaration to encourage GPs to provide EBF. The drafted letter would be distributed to all NRs for comment, to be further discussed at the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM.

The third topic dealt with the strategy for implementation of recommendations for Human Resource Development. It was agreed that the Chair of the WG of MTS should send emails to prospective project LCCs for the 2020-21 cycle on new HRD strategies so that they could incorporate these strategies into their project designs. The RCA PAC was also asked to evaluate the degree and appropriateness of incorporation of the HRD strategies into the designs and report their findings to the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM. The Chair of the WG on the MTS was asked to provide feedback on the HRD strategies to the newly established WG on the updating of the 2014 GOR for their reference in refining that document.

The fourth topic was on the framework for assessing impacts of the RCA projects in socio-economic development and environmental protection. The DIR-TCAP noted that this was an important topic for TC as a whole. The WG on MTS was asked to liaise with the IAEA and with the NR MAL to glean their respective experiences on this subject.

The fifth and sixth topics, on the Review and Refinement of the RCA MTS Performance Indicators and Annual Work Plan for 2018/19, and on Future Meetings of the WG on MTS, were presented by the NR NZE. The ensuing recommendations related to these topics were endorsed by the Meeting. The first recommendation was that NRs should endorse the updating of the Performance Indicators into the RCA MTS 2018-2023, to match the decision taken by the 39<sup>th</sup> NRM, and the second recommendation was that NRs should endorse the WG to hold two meetings per year, one roughly two months before the NRM, and the other roughly two months before the GCM.

**The Meeting took note of the report of the WG on the RCA MTS 2018-2023 Coordination.**

**The Meeting endorsed the new structure and TOR of the WG, and requested it to continue its work until the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM, subject to invitation for any other GPs to join by notification to the WG Chair within two weeks of the conclusion of the 40<sup>th</sup> NRM. In nominating members of the WG, GPs should indicate their relevant skills.**

**The Meeting agreed that the Chair of the WG MTSC, using the criteria for WG candidates as set out in the MTS TOR, should identify the collective skills gaps in the WG in carrying out its function. Those gaps could then be filled by recruiting outside experts with the support of the IAEA.**

**With regards to the TC budget constraints, the Meeting requested the RCA Chair, supported by the Chair of the WG MTSC, to discuss with DIR-TCAP the possibility of increasing the TC Fund for the RCA Programme and report back to the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM.**

**The Meeting agreed that the existing modality for raising extra budgetary contributions by the GPs be used, instead of establishing an RCA Fund similar to the AFRA model.**

**The Meeting endorsed the goal of annually raising €400,000 EBF for the RCA Programme with every GP making a voluntary contribution of an amount of their choice. The GPs can specify to which project the EBF is going to be used.**

**Regarding the approaches to formalise the EBF by the GPs, WG MTSC will draft a declaration letter and present it to the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM for consideration of NRs.**

**With regards to the HRD strategies approved at the 46<sup>th</sup> GCM, the Meeting agreed with the following:**

- Chair of WG MTSC to provide feedback on the HRD strategies to the newly established WG on the GOR.**
- WG MTSC to email the HRD strategies to the LCCs of the on-going RCA projects and 2020-2021 RCA projects designs for incorporation of the strategies.**
- RCA PAC to evaluate the degree and appropriateness of incorporation of the HRD strategies into the Project Designs for 2020-2021 cycle and report back to 47<sup>th</sup> GCM.**

**The Meeting endorsed the WG to undertake feasibility study on RCA Programme impact evaluation using the OECD-DAC methodology.**

**The Meeting agreed with the work plan of the WG to update performance indicators in the RCA MTS 2018-2023 and holding of two meetings each year, one in the lead up to the NRM and one in the lead up to the GCM. The 4<sup>th</sup> WG Meeting will be held in July 2018.**

## **10. Report of the Director of the RCARO – RCANRM(40)/10**

At the invitation of the RCA Chair, Mr Hai Joo Moon, Director, RCARO, delivered the report of the DIR-RCARO (**Annex 22**). He reviewed the RCARO Work Performance 2017 and its Work Plan for 2018.

AUL, INS, MAL, PHI and ROK complimented the RCARO for carrying out various activities for the RCA GPs and wished for continued support in 2018. The DIR-TCAP expressed appreciation for the support from the RCARO in carrying out the IAEA's secretariat functions in the preparation of the 40th NRM.

**The Meeting took note of the report delivered by the RCARO and appreciated the strong support provided by RCARO to the RCA Programme.**

## **11. Report of the Chair of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee – RCANRM(40)/11**

The Chair of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) presented the report of the 26th meeting of the RCARO SAC (**Annex 23**). The Chair reported recommendations of the RCARO SAC on the RCARO Work Performance of 2017 and Work Plan for 2018.

**The Meeting endorsed the report of the 26<sup>th</sup> RCARO SAC meeting, presented by the RCARO SAC Chair.**

## **12. Presentation on FNCA's activities by the FNCA Representative – RCANRM(40)/12**

The FNCA Advisor of Japan, Dr Hideki Namba, presented FNCA's activities at the Meeting (**Annex 24**). DIR-TCAP noted that there were FNCA projects in similar areas to the RCA and enquired about the means to further strengthen the cooperation between the RCA and FNCA. PHI and AUL noted that there were complementary projects in technology and capacity building between the RCA and FNCA.

Dr Namba remarked that, whilst FNCA projects are prepared under a regional framework based on activities of each participating country that has a national programme dedicated to the project, there is much interaction between the participating countries on their respective findings.

PHI noted that FNCA and RCA projects are complementary in terms of HRD, with little overlap or duplication. Training provided by FNCA was in specific areas not covered under RCA projects.

AUL observed that, until recently, RCA had not been active for more than a decade in the research space, whereas FNCA projects are largely research-based. Given that there was now potential for RCA projects to include more of a research component, potential overlap/duplication of efforts between FNCA and RCA should be more closely examined in the future.

**The Meeting took note of the presentation on FNCA activities. The Meeting encouraged the GPs to seek means to further strengthen the cooperation between the FNCA and RCA**

### **13. Report on the meeting of the Quadripartite Forum by the former RCA – Chair RCANRM(40)/13**

The Chair invited Mr Imtiaz Kamal, on behalf of Mr Jafar Sadique, to make a presentation on the report on the Quadripartite Forum Meeting held in September 2017 at the IAEA, Vienna (**Annex 25**), which was attended by the then RCA Chair, Mr Jafar Sadique. He explained that the meeting explored possibilities for further developing an effective framework for inter-regional collaboration between the four regional cooperative agreements - AFRA, ARASIA, ARCAL and RCA.

The Chair RCA PAC noted that the present form of the Quadripartite Forum is a positive initiative and potentially should have a good effect on the way the RCA works and produces high quality results. It was suggested that a first step could be to concentrate on documentation practices and be prepared to share these with other Agreements.

However, this could also bring into question who should take responsibility for vetting and providing material to share with the other Agreements. Each region had different needs, so care needed to be taken on how information would be presented between Agreements at the Quadripartite Forum Meetings - for example, the similarities and differences between the RRU/RDCs that exist within the respective Agreements. Consideration also needed to be given to the mechanism by which information would be shared between the Agreements. Information provided to the Quadripartite Forum Meeting should adequately address the issues under discussion.

Another issue noted by the Chair RCA PAC was that the RCA Chair, as the sole GP representative at such meetings, might not be best placed to share information, since he/she was often only involved in the RCA since being elected some six months earlier as Chair at the NRM, and consequently had little or no history of the RCA and its Programmes to draw on in any discussions. In such instances, it would appear essential that adequate briefing notes should be provided to assist and support the Chair. He sought guidance from the Meeting as to who would take responsibility for providing the briefing materials and when this should be done.

It was suggested that to ensure effective interaction between the Agreements Chairs, RCARO and the Chair RCA PAC should join the RCA Chair at the next Quadripartite Forum Meeting, pooling their experiences and knowledge on the RCA.

MAL noted that the proposed outcomes of the Quadripartite Forum Meeting were to encourage members to promote sharing of their experiences but considered there needed to be a stronger push than simply just encouraging such actions.

The RCA-FP noted that he had already invited the Chair of AFRA to share the African experience on financial mobilisation.

The RCA-FP also urged GPs to consider potential mechanisms to send participants to activities between regional projects as a way of making regional programmes more effective and efficient.

MON referred to last year's NRM, where it was suggested that Chairs from other Agreements could be invited to join the RCA NRM to share experiences. AUL remarked on the practicality

and expense of sending a Chair to the NRM of another Agreement, for effectively a very short period of time. Instead, it was suggested that perhaps the very good RCARO website could be used to share information. However, the RCA-FP advised that whilst one of the other Agreements (ARCAL) also has a website akin to RCARO's, it was only in Spanish.

**The Meeting took note of the report on the meeting of the Quadripartite Forum presented by the former RCA Chair. The Meeting recommended that the RCA PAC Chair and RCARO join the RCA Chair to participate at the next Quadripartite Forum to make information exchange as effective as possible.**

#### **14. Report on Situation of Acceptance of the 2017 RCA Agreement by the RCA-FP - RCANRM(40)/14**

The RCA-FP delivered a report on the situation with regard to the acceptance of the 2017 RCA Agreement (**Annex 26**). He noted that fifteen (15) countries had accepted the 2017 RCA, and encouraged the remaining GPs to complete their ratification of the 2017 RCA as soon as possible. CPR, FIJ, INS, LAO, NEP, PHI and SRL informed the Meeting that they were in the process of ratification of the 2017 RCA.

The RCA-FP advised that, whilst 17 GPs had submitted their instruments of acceptance, KAM and SRL had used the incorrect template and needed to re-submit.

KAM advised the meeting that the Prime Minister (PM) of KAM had already signed the instrument. KAM NR pointed out that whilst the PM was fully supportive of KAM's participation in the RCA, it would be very difficult to ask the PM to re-sign the document. KAM NR asked if it was possible to simply keep the original submitted document.

The RCA FP advised that the OLA of IAEA advised that it was not possible given the legal nature of the form. RCA FP suggested that KAM NR approach the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs instead of the PM. The RCA Chair closed the discussion by recommending that KAM NR discuss further with the IAEA.

PHI advised that as the Agreement is a new agreement, and not simply an extension of a previous agreement, it was not as straightforward as in the past to obtain parliamentary approval.

AUL praised the general rapid pace of the ratification by GPs compared with previous agreements.

The RCA-FP questioned that, if GPs had not deposited their instruments, whether they could legally participate in RCA activities. It was explained that, whilst the OLA had previously advised that states which were not party to the then current version of the RCA were legally not GPs and therefore should not participate in RCA activities, the RCA had operated for many years on the understanding that all GPs could contribute regardless of whether or not they had deposited.

**The Meeting took note of the progress made by GPs towards the acceptance of the 2017 RCA and encouraged the remaining GPs' ratification of the 2017 RCA as soon as possible.**

## **15. Arrangements for the 47th RCA GCM, the 41st and 42nd RCA NRMs**

SRL confirmed that it would host the 41st RCA NRM in 2019 in Colombo.

MAL confirmed that it would be willing to host the 42nd RCA NRM in 2020.

**The Meeting noted that the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM will be held in Vienna on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2018.**

**SRL confirmed that the 41st NRM will be held in Colombo, SRL, in late March 2019.**

**MAL confirmed its willingness to host 42<sup>nd</sup> NRM in 2020.**

## **16. Any Other Business**

The Meeting was informed of the progress made in updating the 2014 RCA GOR. The RCA-FP noted the importance of the GOR as the guidelines for RCA activities, and proposed that a Working Group consisting of experienced experts be established to complete the current revision process. The RCA PAC Chair stressed that the GOR should be maintained as a living document for the RCA. The Meeting agreed that the WG would consist of the RCA PAC Chair, together with representatives from AUL, JPN and RCARO.

The RCA PAC Chair provided an explanation about the concept of the RRU in its specific application to RCA Projects, where it acted as a valuable TCDC resource for expertise and regional infrastructure (**Annex 27**). The DIR-TCAP advised that there are about 22 Regional Designated Centres (RDCs) in the African Region using the TCDC mechanism. The RCA PAC Chair commented that the information of the RRUs has not been updated in the GOR. RCARO informed that it had plans to conduct a survey of NRs on the RRUs as set out in the work plan of the WG MTSC 2018-2023. The RCA-FP explained that the RRU concept had been introduced for designing of projects and it is necessary to review and update the information with current status in the region. The RCA PAC Chair explained that the RRUs' support for RCA projects is established as part of the project design process and the specific area of assistance is based on a self-assessment of the contribution that the RRUs could make.

JPN raised its concern on the legal matter of the RCARO Managed Projects and welcomed all the GPs to share their interpretation of the Agreement on which all the GPs could reach a consensus (**Annex 28**). The Meeting noted that the issue has been discussed at the previous NR Meetings and needs to be finalised. After extensive discussion on the matter, the Meeting reconfirmed that the RCARO Managed Projects had been approved by the 38<sup>th</sup> NRM and should continue based on that approval for the benefit of the GPs.

FIJ, MAL, MON, NEP, NZE, PHI and THA expressed their views that the RCARO Managed Projects are activities under the RCA.

The Meeting noted that the interpretation of the Agreement is up to individual GP and that under Article XI of the Agreement, any disagreement on the Agreement shall be settled through consultations between the parties. The Meeting agreed to discuss remaining JPN concerns at the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM.

**The Meeting agreed to establish a Working Group for finalisation on updating the 2014 RCA GOR to reflect NRs' comments and HRD strategies and revise TCDC component of the GOR.**

**The WG consists of the RCA PAC Chair, Mr Peter McGlenn (AUL), JPN and RCARO for a Meeting to be held at the IAEA. The Meeting noted that the RRU information will be updated in 2019 after RCARO's survey is completed.**

**The Meeting noted JPN's concern on the legal status of RCARO Managed Projects. The Meeting confirmed that the RCARO Managed Projects had been approved by the 38<sup>th</sup> NRM and should continue its implementation so decided for the benefit of the GPs. Noting the interpretation of the RCA is up to individual GPs, the remaining concerns of JPN will be discussed at the 47<sup>th</sup> GCM.**

## **17. Adoption of the Report of the 40th RCA NRM**

The Meeting reviewed, revised and endorsed the decisions by the NRs at the Meeting.

**The Meeting adopted the report of the 40<sup>th</sup> NRM held in Busan, Republic of Korea.**

## **18. Closure**

The RCA Chair provided closing remarks and expressed his appreciation to the GPs, the IAEA and the RCARO for their active participation in the Meeting.

The DIR-TCAP expressed her appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea and Korea Nuclear International Cooperation Foundation for hosting the event, and congratulated the RCA Chair for his efficient conduct of the Meeting.

The Meeting thanked the hosts for the kind hospitality and excellent arrangements for the Meeting. The Meeting also expressed its appreciation for the contribution of the rapporteurs from AUL, PHI and the RCARO.