

REPORT OF THE 8TH RCARO SAC MEETING

Tokyo, Japan
20 April 2009

Introduction

The 8th Meeting of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee was held in the Sapphire Hall, Grand Prince Hotel Akasaka, Tokyo, Japan on Monday 20 April 2009 prior to the 31st NRM. Committee members in attendance were:

- Mr Tsutomu Arai (JPN, current RCA Chair)
- Mr Vuong Huu Tan (VIE, immediate past RCA Chair)
- Ms Alumanda Dela Rosa (PHI, immediate next RCA Chair)
- Mr Gyoung-Joon Nho (ROK, host country of RCARO) and
- Mr Prinath Dias (IAEA/RCA Focal Person).

As an invitee, Dr John Easey, Chair, Committee for Selection of the Director RCARO, and as observers, Mr Mokdad Maksoudi (Section Head, TCAP1 IAEA); Mr Mun-Ki Lee (Dir-RCARO candidate); Mr Shoichi Nagayoshi, Mr Koici Oyama, Mr Satoshi Furuta (JPN); Mr Young-Sik Kim, and Ms Jae-Eun Choi (ROK); Ms Hoang Thi Nhung (VIE) also participated. Representatives of RCARO, Mr Jae-Sol Lee and Mr Jeong-Hoon Lee, served as secretariat.

1. Opening

1.1 Remarks of the Outgoing Chair, VIE

Mr Vuong Huu, past Chair, opened the Meeting and welcomed the participants and commented on the satisfactory progress made in implementing the RCARO's activities. He expressed appreciation about the concerted efforts made during the year by the RCARO to promote the RCA and establish partnerships with other organizations. He concluded by wishing the Meeting every success.

1.2 Remarks of the Incoming Chair, JPN

Mr Tsutomu Arai, current RCA Chair, welcomed the participants and noted the good progress made by the RCARO during the past year.

1.3 Appointment of Rapporteur

Mr Jeong-Hoon Lee agreed to serve as rapporteur.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

After a review of the tasks ahead for the Meeting, the draft Agenda was adopted without amendments.

The Meeting agreed to adopt the draft Agenda.

3. RCARO 2008 Work Plan Performance

The SAC noted that one of the important duties to be undertaken was the evaluation of the performance of the Dir-RCARO during the previous year. Dr John Easey suggested considering the evidence for this by referring to the tabled Agenda items (4.1 to 4.8) which were directly related to the performance of the Dir-RCARO in 2008 as well as the planning for 2009. The background papers were discussed one by one.

The Meeting evaluated the performance of the RCARO during 2008 based on the Report of the Dir-RCARO. The SAC evaluated the performance of the Dir RCARO as satisfactory.

The SAC appreciated the efforts of the RCARO to enhance partnerships with other organizations and the other activities undertaken to fulfill its mandate.

4. RCARO 2009 Work Plan

Each of the Agenda items related to the RCARO work plan for 2008 was discussed in depth.

4.1 Publication of RCA Success Stories

At the invitation of the Chair, the RCARO briefed the Meeting on this item including a short description on the background to the survey. The first set of the 5 RCA success stories and the second set of the 4 RCA success stories on 1) plant breeding, 2) marine pollution, 3) non-destructive testing, and 4) geothermal exploration were printed and disseminated to the NRs in 2007 and 2008 respectively. The 7th SAC meeting recommended the circulation of the questionnaire prepared by the RCARO to survey the effectiveness of the Success Stories. The preparation of the third batch of the RCA Success Stories would be discussed later after an evaluation on the benefits of the first and second batches of the stories. After carrying out the survey, the RCARO received 40 responses out of about 1,000 questionnaire forms from 6 MSs (INS, NZE, PAK, SIN, SRL, and THA) as of March 2009. In general, the responses showed favorable responses on the stories. Due to the poor volume of responses from the MSs, the analysis might not represent a statistically valid sample.

With regard to the future publication of a third set of RCA success stories, the Meeting commended the work done by the RCARO with the previous batches and made the following comments and recommendations:

The 3rd batch should be published with the approval of the Meetings of NRs, based on the positive result of the survey.

RCA success stories in the areas of Energy Planning; Tracer Applications; Soil and Water Quality; and Animal Production should be published.

More topics for success stories could be identified from the regional technical profile for the RCA when it is developed.

4.2 Presentation on RCA/RCARO Programmes to Targeted Audience

The Meeting was briefed on major matters in the background document. The RCARO participated in several international conferences including the 6th International Conference on Isotopes and the 16th Pacific Basin Nuclear Conference. The 6ICI held in May 2008 in Seoul, ROK, was hosted by the Korean Radioisotope Association and about 800 participants from 40 countries attended. There were around 70 exhibition booths. The RCARO installed an exhibition booth on the activities of the RCA and RCARO, provided travel funds for three RCA experts who made presentations at the 6ICI on IAEA/RCA and RCARO activities. The 16th PBNC held in October 2008 in Aomori, Japan, was organized by the Pacific Nuclear Council and about 800 participants from 18 countries attended the event. The RCARO presented a paper at a keynote session and participated in a subsequent discussion panel.

As to the presentation on RCA/RCARO Programme to targeted audiences, the Meeting made the following recommendations:

To endorse RCARO's participation in the Asian Congress of Radiation Research to be held 17-20 May 2009 in Seoul, ROK, and in the PEMSEA East Asian Seas Congress 2009 to be held 23-27 November 2009 in Manila, PHI.

With regard to future presentations, the RCARO should circulate the proposed presentation materials for additional refinement and/or information to NRs and the RCA Secretariat.

4.3 Development of a Database for Contact to Increase the RCA's Awareness

The Meeting was informed about the progress made in the development of the database. The RCARO carried out a survey in 2007 to collect data from the MSs for establishing a database for the RCA's end-users and potential target conferences for RCA participation, but only received responses from six MSs. In 2008, the RCARO prepared a plan that outlined both the scope and contents of a database and a timeline for actions to be taken, which was approved by the SAC. Based on this plan, the RCARO collected relevant data from the past records on the RCA IAEA projects, information from NPCs, information from the relevant websites, and conference proceedings, etc. It was noted that the temporary staff members of the RCARO from the MSs have made considerable contributions to collecting those data. The data collected were uploaded onto a trial version of the database on the RCARO website, which was developed for this purpose, and equipped with a strong search function. The NRs were given access to a trial version of the database for review and feedback before being open to wider ranges of users.

As regards the database development, the Meeting took note of the progress and commended the RCARO's efforts in establishing the database.

The Meeting agreed that the NRs and NPCs may consider providing the information on their country's end-users to the RCARO, considering that "end-users" are those responsible for transferring benefits of the RCA projects to the final beneficiaries, such as industry sectors or hospitals and that the main purpose of the database is to publicize the RCA's activities and seek potential partners in each MS.

4.4 RCA Partnership with Other Regional Organizations

Major matters in the background paper were reviewed and reported on the actions taken.

4.4.1 Development of an AQM Database with the CAI-Asia

A brief overview regarding the progress of collaboration with Clean Air Initiative for Asia was provided. The proposal with CAI-Asia was to share the RCA database on air particulate pollution levels in the MSs and this was made by the CAI representative who attended at the 30th NRM. The proposal had been discussed at the project Progress Review Meeting and it had been recommended that further improvements to the database should be made before it could be released. The project PLCC has communicated with the CAI on related technical matters.

It was decided at 31st NRM that the database could be released to the CAI-Asia in 2011 following completion of the RCA Project on Air Pollution and clarification of the legal status regarding the release of the database. Posting of the database on RCA MOH was also agreed. As requested following the decision of the 37th GCM, the RCA FP consulted the Office of Legal Affairs of the IAEA on the legality of releasing RCA data. He was advised that the data could be released to other parties only with the consent of all RCA MSs (preferably in writing) and that if it were to be released only to CAI-Asia, it should be done through a formal agreement outlining the benefits to both parties.

It was noted that CAI had made the approach to RCA and had indicated that funding might also be available for the project.

There were questions whether the OLA decision had wider implications concerning the need to have every MS in agreement. The RCA FP agreed to follow this up with OLA to determine the extent of concerns with respect to consensus agreement in RCA decision making.

The Meeting took note of the progress report pertaining to the collaboration with CAI-Asia.

The RCA FP agreed to consult the OLA to determine the extent of concerns with respect to consensus agreement in RCA decision making.

4.4.2 Participation of RCA in the EAS Congress

A brief overview and progress report was given on the collaboration with the PEMSEA (Partnership in Environmental Management of Seas of East Asia). It was decided at the 37th GCM that the RCA should be represented by one or two experts at the Congress on East Asian Seas to be held in November 2009 and that the funds could be provided by the RCARO. The RCA FP then consulted the PLCC and the TO of the relevant RCA projects and informed the RCARO of the selected participants: Dr Ross Jeffrey and Dr Ron Szymczak, who accordingly submitted their paper abstracts to the EAS Congress 2009. It was also agreed that the RCARO would provide financial assistance for their participation. It was proposed that the RCARO should look into the possibility that their papers will be presented at open sessions rather than specialized sessions on nuclear technologies.

The Meeting took note of the report on progress regarding the RCA's participation in the EAS Congress 2009, and note the additional proposal for a presentation by the RCARO and the PLCC of the RCA/UNDP project.

4.4.3. Joint Training Programme with the ARCCNM

The Meeting was briefed on the background of this item. In relation to the joint training programme with the Asian Regional Cooperation for Nuclear Medicine, it was decided at the 30th NRM that the RCARO jointly hold a training course complementary to the RCA projects on PET and PET/CT after consulting with the relevant PLCCs, RCA FP and TOs. The RCARO provided financial assistance for 25 trainees' participation in a training course on the application of advanced nuclear medicine for cancer diagnosis held in November 2008 in IND. The ARCCNM has proposed that a similar programme be held in 2009 and the RCARO supports this initiative.

Concerning the joint training programme with the ARCCNM, the Meeting was of the view that there duplication should be avoided with the existing RCA projects.

The Meeting requested that the prospectus for the training course be sent to the Agency so that it could be reviewed and also that the qualifications of participants be sent to the Agency, which would assist in minimizing duplication and providing the maximum opportunities for training in the region.

4.4.4 Cooperation with FNCA

In accordance with the 37th GCM decision that the Dir-RCARO should represent the RCA at the future FNCA Coordinators Meetings, the Dir-RCARO participated in the 10th FNCA Coordinators Meeting held on 11-13 March 2009 in Tokyo, Japan, in which two cooperative areas: radiation processing; and radiation therapy; were considered. It was reconfirmed that the collaboration between RCA and FNCA would be on the basis of exchange of information.

Regarding the cooperation with FNCA, the Meeting noted that an item increasing the scope of collaboration to mutation breeding would be discussed at the coming 31st NRM.

The Meeting took note of the need to exactly define the scope of cooperation to avoid any confusion.

4.5 Progress of the RCA/UNDP Project

The Meeting was briefed on the progress of this item. The 37th GCM decided that the RCA/UNDP post-tsunami environment impact assessment project would be extended by one more year subject to the agreement of the project participants, during which time RCARO would then be able to develop a new project to be implemented from 2010 onwards. The project extension was agreed by the participants at the project review meeting held in November 2008 in Xiamen, China, and the work plan for 2009 was formulated, which was later submitted to the UNDP. An extension contract of the project was signed by the UNDP, the Government of ROK, and the RCARO in February 2009.

The Meeting took note of the progress, including production of data on the major toxic elements in the sedimentary deposits in IND, INS, MAL, SRL, and THA, and data on the water and soil contamination at several tsunami hit sites in INS and SRL. The Meeting asked the RCARO to exert further efforts to ensure the successful completion of the project at the end of this year.

The Meeting took note of the progress of the RCA/UNDP project, and asked the RCARO to make further efforts for the successful completion of the project at the end of this year.

The RCARO was requested to provide a copy of the Final Report of the Project to the NRs and RCA Secretariat.

4.6 Development of a Follow-up Programme of the RCA/UNDP Project

The Meeting was briefed on the item on the development of a follow-up programme of the RCA/UNDP project. The RCARO reported a plan to formulate new follow-up projects.

The Meeting took note of the work plan.

The Meeting recommended that the work plan be implemented as follows.

- April: Decision on the work plan for formulation of new RCARO projects on four possible concepts
- May: Submission of addition concepts by MSs to the RCARO if any
- July: A workshop of interested stakeholders including SAC members to develop 1-2 new follow-up project(s), including the concept papers
- August: Decision by the SAC on the use of the fast-track mechanism
- September-October: Preparation of the project proposal by the Dir-RCARO and the SAC members and communication with NRs
- November: Submission of the project proposal to funding agencies
- April 2010: Report to the 32nd NRM on the results

4.7 Application for the UNESCAP Tsunami Trust Fund

As regards formulation of a proposal in cooperation with the CCOP (Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia) to seek funds from the UNESCAP's Tsunami

Trust Fund, it was requested at the 37th GCM that the RCARO investigate the nature of the obligations of the recipients, the scope of the work to be carried out and the mechanism to formulate a proposal for the consideration of the SAC. The RCARO reported the results to the SAC as set out in the background paper.

The RCARO was later informed that the UNESCAP had decided to postpone the announcement on application for the Fund.

In preparation for the restarting of the project, the RCARO prepared an estimated timeline for the TTF application: 1) Review and refinement of the original project proposal which was from Feb-May 2009; 2) Partnership agreement with CCOP on the proposal to be made, and if deemed necessary another agreement with a third party from May-June 2009; and 3) Application for the TTF from July-Sept 2009.

Following discussions regarding the CCOP and the TTF, the Meeting expressed appreciation for the RCARO's effort in exploring outside funds.

Regarding the application for the UNESCAP Tsunami Trust Fund, the Meeting was of the opinion that action should be deferred until they advised that further funds are available.

4.8 Workshop on partnership promotion and sustainable development of RCARO

A brief introduction on this agenda item was given to the Meeting. The RCARO has been in operation for seven years with a mandate to increase awareness of the RCA and also to promote RCA partnership and it is going to have a new Dir-RCARO starting from this year. The UNDP/RCA environment project, one of the important RCARO-initiated projects, is to be concluded this year. Against this backdrop, launching new follow-up projects is called for. Four possible project concepts were distributed in the background documents. It was clarified that additional concepts would be welcomed from the MSs. It was decided that there would be a workshop to further develop the concepts. This will involve the participation of a range of experts from MSs depending on the exact nature of the topics to be workshopped.

In addition it was recognized that the RCARO has made good progress in promoting partnerships with other international organizations based on the strategy prepared at the RCARO Future Strategy Workshop held in 2007 in Seoul. It seems that development of future programmes to enhance partnerships needs to be pursued. In order to hold an additional workshop with major RCA stakeholders to discuss several pending and future issues for its sustainable development, the RCARO has prepared a prospectus of a three-day workshop titled Partnership Promotion and Sustainable Development of RCARO and has provisionally planned for it to be held on the 3rd week of June 2009, possibly in ROK. Topics would include the development of strategy for promotion of partnership with international organizations and the setting-up of the future direction of the RCARO activities. It was noted that such a workshop would also benefit from the proposed outcomes of the planned regional technical profile for RCA.

The Meeting welcomed the RCARO's proposal on both workshops as timely and needed approaches. It was recommended that the full prospectus and participation for the workshops needed to be planned in detail.

With regard to a workshop on the development of new RCARO initiated projects, the Meeting took note of the four possible project concepts distributed in the background documents, and agreed that additional concepts would be welcomed from the MSs. It was decided that there would be a workshop to further develop the concepts. This will involve the participation of a range of experts from MSs depending on the exact nature of the topics to be workshopped.

The Meeting noted that topics of the workshop will also include the development of strategy for promotion of partnership with international organizations and the setting-up of the future direction of the RCARO activities. It was also noted that such a workshop would also benefit from the proposed outcomes of the planned regional technical profile for RCA.

The Meeting welcomed the RCARO's proposal on both workshops as timely and needed approaches. It was recommended that the full prospectus and participation for the workshops needed to be planned in detail.

5. Appointment of the RCARO Director

With regard to appointment of the new Dir-RCARO, a summary of actions taken according to the established procedure was given: 1) The vacancy notice was circulated to the NRs and posted on the websites of the RCARO and the IAEA/TC/RCA; 2) The RCARO received an application from the host government of the RCARO, Mr. Mun-Ki Lee, former Director General of Nuclear Energy Bureau at the MEST in ROK. 3) The RCARO sent the application to the SC members for their consideration and taking necessary steps as to the recommendation to the SAC. 4) The SC members reviewed his application and sent their assessment to the chairperson. 5) The chair of the SC informed the RCARO that the SC had evaluated his application for the position of Director and agreed to recommend him for appointment.

At the invitation of the Chair, Dr John Easey, SC Chair, who attended the Meeting on invitation, reported to the Meeting on details of the criteria, information on the candidate, opinions of the SC members, and the final recommendations of the SC.

The Meeting thanked Dr John Easey for his contribution.

As to the selection and appointment of the new Dir-RCARO, the Meeting agreed to recommend Dr Mun-Ki Lee to be appointed as a new Dir-RCARO at the 31st NRM.

6. Any Other Business

No issues were raised under this item.

7. Arrangements for 9th RCARO SAC Meeting

It was noted that the 9th RCARO SAC meeting would be held prior to the 38th RCA GCM in September 2009.

8. Closing

The Chair thanked all those who contributed to the success of the Meeting and declared the Meeting closed.

REV 23 April 2009