



**REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**



REPORT OF

THE 37th RCARO STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

21 September 2023

Introduction

The 37th Meeting of the RCA Regional Office Standing Advisory Committee (RCARO SAC) was held on 22 September 2023, in the IAEA Headquarters. The Meeting was attended by Ms Natascha Spark (the current RCA Chair, NR of AUL), Mr Tran Chi Thanh (Immediate past RCA Chair, NR of VIE), Ms Lili Xiao (Permanent Mission of China to the IAEA) on behalf of Mr Huang Ping (Immediate next RCA Chair, NR of CPR), Mr Jun Ho Shin (Korea Nuclear International Cooperation Foundation) on behalf of Mr Je Jun Lee (NR of ROK), and representatives from the IAEA, Ms Jane Gerardo-Abaya (DIR-TCAP), Mr Gashaw Gebeyehu Wolde (SH-TCAP1) and Mr Sinh Hoang (RCA FP).

1. Opening

Ms Natascha Spark, the current RCA Chair, NR of AUL, officially opened the Meeting.

Mr Pillhwan Park, the Director of RCARO, welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of the Agenda and Appointment of Rapporteur

The agenda items were reviewed and adopted with no amendment. The RCARO was appointed as rapporteur.

The SAC adopted the draft agenda with no amendment and appointed the RCARO as rapporteur.

3. Discussion on Major Issues on the RCARO Activities

3.1. Taking the Role of Think-Tank for RCA - RCARO/SAC (37)/3.1

The RCARO presented on its efforts to serve as the think-tank for the RCA. The RCARO provided support to the RCA policy meetings in 2023 including the Chairs' Committee meetings. Further, according to the recommendation made at the 45th RCA NRM, RCARO developed a handbook on the RCA and RCA GOR, to help the RCA NRs familiarize with the RCA.

For future plans, the RCARO will expand its support to the RCA GPs, RCA WGs/Committees, RCA Chair and Chairs' Committee, and RCA NR meetings for more efficient decision-making in the RCA. The RCARO also presented on the plans to conduct a survey on the National Nuclear Research Institutes (NNRIs) in the region and to hold a workshop for the RCA NRs in 2024.

The SAC took note of the progress made and plans set in taking the role of the think-tank for the RCA. The SAC welcomed the work on the Handbook on the RCA and RCA GOR and the initiative to hold a workshop for the RCA NRs in 2024. The SAC agreed that these efforts will drive more active participation of the NRs in the RCA with more understanding on the overall RCA.

3.2. Launch of the RCA-US (DOE) Partnership Project - RCARO/SAC (37)/3.2

The RCARO reported on its progress for the development of RCA-DOE partnership project. The RCARO reported that the project was developed in line with the RCA GOR and received a number of positive feedbacks from the GPs. The first event, the project coordination meeting, will be held at the end of this year to set up detailed work plan of the project.

The SAC took note of the progress made for the development of the RCA/DOE Partnership Project.

To give more clarity on who the implementing body of the project is, the SAC requested the name of the project be changed to “RCARO/DOE” partnership project. The SAC reconfirmed that this project is under the RCA framework as a partnership project, as it followed the procedures stipulated in the RCA GOR (fast-track mechanism).

The SAC recommended, for future partnership projects, the RCARO give a clear instruction on specific steps of the fast-track mechanism and ensure more room for input from the RCA GPs.

The SAC suggested the NRs consider reviewing the related guidelines and operating rules of the RCA on inviting external donors outside the region for future bilateral partnerships.

3.3. Implementation of RCA Cooperative Research Activities - RCARO/SAC (37)/3.3

The RCARO presented on the progress under the RCA RP02 and RP03 and future plans for each project. The RCARO also presented on its initiative to expand its support for research in RCA with the support of the Korean Government.

The SAC noted that the RCA RP02 and RP03 are well in progress, enhancing the research component of the RCA Programme. The SAC recommended the RCARO share the achievement report of the RP02 which will be published in early 2024.

The SAC recommended the RCARO include a session on procedures for development of the RCARO led activities/projects during the Workshop for the NRs to be held in 2024.

3.4. Strengthening Information Service in the RCA - RCARO/SAC (37)/3.4

The RCARO presented on the status of information service in the RCA. Information and documents on the RCA projects and policy meetings were collected and uploaded on the website throughout the year. The RCARO also operated a platform for the submission and sharing of the pre-concepts for the RCA Programme cycle 2026-2027. Based on the second amendment to the “Practical Arrangements between the IAEA and the RCARO on Cooperation in the Performance of Secretariat Duties under the 2017 RCA”, the RCARO will be able to gather more information/data from the IAEA on the RCA Programme to be uploaded on the RCA website.

The SAC took note of the progress made for the RCA information service and the plans to more actively gather and utilize the information and data. Recognizing the value of operating the website as the repository for the RCA, the SAC encouraged NRs to provide strong support to the RCARO in collecting the information and data on the RCA projects.

3.5 Appointment of the Next RCARO Director - RCARO/SAC (37)/3.5

The RCARO briefed the SAC with the progress made for the appointment of the next RCARO Director. The SCA took note that the Selection Committee was formed and the “Guidelines on the Selection and Appointment of the Director of the RCA Regional Office” was approved via email. The vacancy notice is placed on the RCA website for the submission of applications.

The SAC took note of the progress for the appointment of the next RCARO Director. The RCARO SAC highly appreciated Director Park for the hard work and active support he provided to the RCA over the last four years.

As the next Director’s duty starts on the 1st of January 2024, the SAC took note that the approval of RCA NRs on the appointment will be processed via electronic communications. The SAC recommended the RCA NRs have a thorough review on the shortlist prepared by the RCARO SAC and participate in the approval process.

3.6 Other Projects and Activities - RCARO/SAC (37)/3.6

The RCARO reported on other activities: promotional activities including the publication of the RCA newsletters; Implementation of RCARO-ASEANTOM Project on Enhancing Emergency Preparedness and Response Capabilities in the ASEAN Region through Building Technical Capacity in Radiation Monitoring and Dose Assessment; Hosting Joint Training with Asia Regional Cooperative Council for Nuclear Medicine (ARCCNM); Participation in the 23rd Coordinators Meeting of the Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA); Implementation of RAS9092 on “strengthening the capacity to respond to radiological emergencies of category II and III facilities in the Asia Pacific region”; Implementation of Project on Enhancing Capability for Developing, Using and Maintaining Radiation Equipment; RCARO Master’s Degree Programme; and RCARO Fellowship Programme.

The SAC expressed appreciation to the RCARO for its contribution to the RCA through various projects and activities.

4. Arrangement for the 38th SAC Meeting

The Meeting was informed that the 38th RCARO SAC Meeting would be held on the day prior to the 46th RCA NRM.

5. Closing

The Chair of the Meeting thanked the SAC members for their advice and recommendations. The Chair also thanked the RCARO for the excellent work and encouraged the RCARO to continue supporting the RCA.