



REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY



REPORT OF
THE 7TH RCARO STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Room B0979
IAEA Headquarters
Vienna, Austria

25 September 2008
15:00-18:00h

Introduction

The 7th RCA Regional Office Standing Advisory Committee Meeting (the Meeting) was held at the IAEA Headquarters in Vienna, Austria on 25 September 2008 preceding the 37th RCA GCM with the participation of the National RCA Representatives of AUL (Mr John Easey on behalf of AUL NR), VIE (Mr Vuong Huu Tan, on behalf of VIE NR), JPN (Mr Tsutomu Arai) and ROK (Mr Young-sik Kim, on behalf of ROK NR), and the RCA Focal Person (Mr Prinath Dias).

The observers were Ms Hoang Thi Nhung (VIE); Ms Jae-eun Choi (ROK); and Mr Jeong-Kong Lee (IAEA TC). The RCARO, represented by Director Mr Kun-mo Choi, Mr Jae-sol Lee and Mr Jeong-hoon Lee, served as the secretariat.

1. Opening remarks by the RCA Chair (VIE)

Mr Vuong Huu Tan, attending on behalf of the RCA Chair, welcomed all the participants.

2. Adoption of the agenda and Appointment of a rapporteur

After a review of the tasks ahead, the Meeting adopted the draft Agenda without amendments and appointed Mr Jeong-hoon Jay Lee as rapporteur.

3. Discussions on the major issues of the RCARO Work Plan

3.1 Publication of the 2nd batch of RCA success stories

At the invitation of the Chair, Mr Jae-sol Lee reported on the actions taken, summarizing the status on the preparations of the 2nd batch of the RCA success stories: The 1st batch of the 5 RCA success stories was printed and disseminated to the NRs in 2007. In accordance with the decision of the 30th NRM, the 2nd batch of the 4 RCA success stories on 1) plant breeding, 2) marine pollution, 3) non-destructive testing, and 4) geothermal exploration, which had been selected at the 36th GCM, were revised after a review by the relevant PLCCs, the RCA Focal Person, and the RCARO on the accuracy of the contents including a proper selection of photographs, and has been submitted to the 37th RCA GCM for approval. Relating to the publication, a draft survey form was prepared by the RCARO to evaluate the benefits of the RCA success stories.

The Meeting commended the RCARO for its excellent work and efforts put into preparing for the RCA success stories despite difficulty getting consensus from many people involved. However, reviewing and commenting on this item by the SAC would be not relevant since the Success Stories

have to be approved by the RCA GCM.

Regarding the survey on the impact of the RCA success stories, the Meeting recommended that once the decision was made for publication, the RCARO send the survey form developed by Mr Tim Haydon and the RCARO to end-users, along with the RCA success stories. Responding to a comment made by the RCA Focal Person, AUL pointed out the Survey Form has been prepared in consultation with a group of professionals in this area.

The Meeting noted that 4 Success Stories on *Plant Breeding, Marine Pollution, Non-Destructive Testing, and Geothermal Exploration* have been submitted for the approval of the 37th GCM.

Regarding the survey on the impact of the RCA success stories, the Meeting recommended that subject to the decision of the approval for publication at the 37th GCM, the RCARO circulate the survey form together with the RCA success stories.

Efforts for further exploring 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.

3.2 RCARO sequel project to the RCA/UNDP project

The Meeting was briefed on the background and processes that had taken place in the development of the RCARO sequel project to the RCA/UNDP project on a tsunami: Given that the current RCA/UNDP project ends at the end of this year and the earmarked fund from the ROK government, approximately USD100,000 a year will continue if the RCA could suggest an appropriate proposal, the 30th NRM agreed that the RCARO would use the fund for one of the 15 RCA projects for 2009-20011 as a sequel project under the RCARO-initiated framework, and the RAS2007009 project on *Regional Harmonization of Nuclear and Isotopic Techniques for Marine Pollution Management* (new project) was chosen due to an easier transition process compared to the one with a continuation project, and a utilization of marine area infrastructure resources gained from the RCA/UNDP project. Through electronic communications with the project stakeholders including, the RCA Focal Person and all NRs, agreement on this initiative was reconfirmed, with some issues to be addressed when implementing the project. Afterwards the RCARO sent a confirmation letter to the IAEA on the transfer of financial sources and its readiness to take over the project.

The RCA Focal Person, Mr Prinath Dias, stated that the confirmation of the RCARO was received only about a week previously, by which time the TC Programme for 2009/2011 had been finalized and submitted to the IAEA Board of Governors. He indicated that there could be some difficulties in withdrawing the project from the TC Programme at this stage. The Meeting recommended, in case

that the IAEA could not withdraw the project from the TC Programme, that the RCARO use this fund to extend the current tsunami project by one more year, subject to the agreement of the participants of the project, during which time the RCARO would be able to consider a new project to be implemented from 2010 onward.

The Director of the RCARO expressed regret that, despite the agreements of all the stakeholders including the NR of PLC, the PLCC, the SAC and all NRs, this initiative could not proceed further.

The Meeting recommended, in case that the IAEA could not withdraw the project, the RCARO should use this fund to extend the current tsunami project by one more year, subject to the agreement of the participants of the project, during which time the RCARO would be able to consider a new project to be implemented from 2010 onward.

3.3.1 Development of an AQM database with the CAI Asia Center

A brief introduction on this agenda item was given to the Meeting: As one of the RCARO's efforts to enhance partnerships with regional organizations, the CAI was invited to the 30th NRM and exchanged views with the RCA on the joint development of a database for an integrated air quality management, and the Meeting requested the RCARO to contact the relevant PLCC to comment on the feasibility of the joint development with the AQM. The views of the PLCC, Mr Andreas Markwitz, were sent to the RCARO as follows, reflecting the outcomes of the RCA's air pollution project meeting held in August in Sri Lanka:

- The 12 out of 16 MSs participating in the air pollution project supported in principle the idea of developing a database with CAI.
- The current data accumulated by the project contains datasets from 14 MSs covering time period from January 2001 to May 2008.
- The collected data appears to be in good condition in general, and yet there remain some issues to be addressed such as missing data, uncertainties and limits of detection.
- Collection of all the data such as the mass, black carbon and elemental data including uncertainties and limits of detection will be made by 31 May 2009; and the data collected will be optimized by the end of 2010; and then the RCA database on air particulate matter will be available to interested outside parties such as the CAI Asia Centre.

Noting that more work should be done before the release at the end of 2010, the Meeting recommended that:

- a) As viewed by the PLCC, the RCA would make efforts to enhance the quality and quantity of its dataset by 2010, which would be possibly incorporated into the RCA Members Only Homepage so that this dataset could be used by the RCA community,

- b) The RCA Focal Person should clarify legal issues on the use of RCA products when open to access by the general public, and
- c) The PLCC would release the database if there is no legal problem and requests for distribution from outside organizations are received.

Regarding the PLCC's attending the BAQ (Better Air Quality) meeting to be held in Bangkok, Thailand on 12-14 November 2008, the Meeting was of the view that the PLCC's attending the meeting would be beneficial, and recommended the RCARO's support for his attendance. However, the Meeting noted that the PLCC should be refrained from making any commitments on behalf of the RCA.

The Meeting recommended that:

- a) The PLCC in consultation with the NPCs, the Technical Officer and the RCA Focal Person should take action to complete the database by including missing data, and improve the quality of the database as necessary, upon the completion of the current RCA Project at the end of 2010,
- b) The PLCC should provide this database to the RCA Focal Person for posting on the RCA members Only Homepage for the use of RCA stakeholders,
- c) The RCA Focal Person should clarify legal issues related to the release of the database for public use, and
- d) The database containing data produced by the Member States that have agreed to release their data should be released to public use through the RCA Focal Person, subject to any legal issues that would have to be resolved.

3.3.2 Participation for the EAS Congress 2009

The Meeting was briefed on this agenda item: PEMSEA (Partnership in Environmental Management of Seas of East Asia) organizes an EAS (East Asian Seas) Congress every 3 years, with the first one having been held in 2003 in Malaysia, the second in 2006 in Haikou City in China and the third announced for 2009 in Manila, Philippines. The RCA had actively participated in the EAS Congress 2006, held in Haikou, co-organizing with PEMSEA a separate session on nuclear technique applications to marine environment management. The renewal of the collaborative actions of RCA with PEMSEA for the EAS 2009 was discussed during the visit of the RCARO Director to PEMSEA in Manila on 3 December 2007.

With regard to participating in the EAS Congress 2009 to be held 23-27 November 2009 in Manila, the Philippines, the Meeting recommended the following:

- a) High profile persons should represent the RCA in a plenary, which will attract more attention to nuclear applications in solving marine problems. The Technical Officer of the current RCA Project was suggested as a suitable person.
- b) The RCARO should make arrangements for the participation of one or two persons and provide financial support.
- c) The RCA Focal Person should contact the TO and the PLCCs of the RCA Project on marine pollution and other relevant RCA's stakeholders for identifying the suitable persons.

With regard to participating in the EAS Congress 2009 to be held 23-27 November 2009 in Manila, the Philippines, the Meeting recommended the following:

- a) High profile persons should represent the RCA at the Congress to attract more attention to the success of nuclear applications in solving marine problems. The Technical Officer of the current RCA Project was suggested as a suitable person.
- b) The RCARO should make arrangements for the participation of one or two persons and provide financial support
- c) The RCA Focal Person should contact the TO and the PLCCs of the RCA Project on marine pollution and other relevant RCA's stakeholders for identifying the suitable persons.

3.4 Workshop for enhancing the capabilities of the RCA

The Director of the RCARO briefed the Meeting on the background to this item and the actions taken, and stated that: RCARO proposed a workshop at the 30th NRM to be held in a Member State for enhancing the capabilities of the RCA to enhance a local network for an effective implementation of RCA projects and to develop future strategies. The 30th NRM recommended that the MSs submit proposals to the RCARO. A proposal on 'Strengthening Nuclear Power Infrastructure and Planning for Introduction of Nuclear Power Plant' was submitted by Bangladesh, but some SAC members expressed concerns since said topic had been discussed at previous RCA meetings as one of the candidates for the RCA projects for 2009-2011, but was not selected due to other similar TC projects being able to provide the requested support. And the RCARO requested other MSs' proposals again, including Bangladesh, but no alternative proposal was made to the RCARO. Especially, the RCARO consulted the PHI NR on whether to host a workshop in the field of a marine environment, but received no response.

After the RCARO's report on the progress made, the Meeting agreed that:

- a) The results of the action taken by the RCARO to identify a suitable topic for the Workshop should be reported to the 37th GCM,
- b) Some SAC members suggested having a workshop on RCA success stories to discuss the methodology to develop attractive stories. However, the RCARO representatives informed

- that the time available will not be sufficient to organize a workshop on a different topic, and
- c) The only proposal from Bangladesh should be considered at the GCM with the understanding if the GCM is not in favor of this proposal, it will not be possible to conduct a workshop supported by the RCARO this year.

The Meeting agreed that:

- a) The results of the action taken by the RCARO to identify a suitable topic for the Workshop should be reported to the 37th GCM, and
- b) The only proposal received by the RCARO should be considered at the GCM with the understanding if the GCM is not in favor of this proposal, it will not be possible to conduct a workshop supported by the RCARO this year.

3.5 Establishment of a database for end-users

The Meeting was informed that 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 Member States. 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. In accordance with this plan, the RCARO requested the NRs to provide the required data, but only received a response from China.

The Meeting commended the RCARO's efforts in establishing the database. The Meeting was not in agreement with the proposal to release the database to the public as suggested and recommended that the RCARO devise an appropriate level of control for access to this data by considering security issues and its maximum spinoff effects.

The Meeting took note of the progress on the database development, and commended the RCARO's efforts in establishing the database. The Meeting recommended that the RCARO carefully devise an appropriate level of access control by considering security issues and its maximum spinoff effects.

3.6 Process for appointment of the next RCARO Director

As the term of the current RCARO Director, Mr Kun-mo Choi, ends in March 2009, the 30th NRM recommended that the existing Selection Committee continue to function as the Selection Committee for the selection and appointment of a new Director of the RCARO with the new Guidelines on the Selection and Appointment of a RCARO Director revised in 2007. For this purpose, the RCARO confirmed its willingness to provide required services. The following time frame was suggested by the RCARO:

- a) The RCARO open a vacancy notice on or about 15 October 2008.
- b) The RCARO close the vacancy notice on or about 15 January 2009.
- c) A selection committee meeting be held during the middle of February 2009.
- d) A new RCARO Director to be appointed in April 2009 at the 31st NRM to be held in Japan.

As to the process for the selection and appointment of the new RCARO Director, the Meeting recommended the following timeline:

- a) The RCARO open a vacancy notice on or about 15 October 2008.
- b) The RCARO close the vacancy notice on or about 15 January 2009.
- c) A selection committee meeting be held during the middle of February 2009.
- d) A new RCARO Director to be appointed in April 2009 at the 31st NRM to be held in Japan.

4. Other issues

4.1 Application for the UNESCAP Tsunami Trust Fund

At the invitation of the Chair, Mr Jae-sol Lee briefed the Meeting on this issue. He said that as the UNESCAP's Tsunami Trust Fund (TTF) was inviting proposals related to tsunamis and its next announcement would possibly be made in February 2009. He said that the RCARO was considering submitting a proposal in conjunction with the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP), both of which had consensus on making a joint effort to secure the fund. He further said that the RCA might utilize the experiences and knowledge accumulated through the RCA/UNDP project on tsunami. The representatives of the RCARO, the PLCC on a marine environment, and the CCOP met with those in charge of the TTF at the UNESCAP in August 2008 in Bangkok and shared views on the feasibility of making an application for support from the fund.

Following Q&A regarding the CCOP and the TTF, the Meeting expressed appreciation for the RCARO's effort in exploring what outside funds were available, and the Meeting's view was that more detailed information such as 1) recipients' obligations, 2) contents of the work scope with the fund, and 3) the mechanism to formulate a proposal were needed before it would be possible to move forward.

The Meeting expressed concern about the timeframe (possibly February 2008 as deadline), in which the RCARO might have some difficulty in obtaining a decision because the NRM was tentatively scheduled to be held next April.

The Meeting advised the RCARO to provide the information above for their review, and the RCARO agreed it would take steps in line with the SAC's recommendations.

The Meeting advised the RCARO to provide the SAC members with the information on 1) recipients' obligations, 2) contents of the work scope with the fund, and 3) the mechanism to formulate a proposal for their review, and then the RCARO would take next steps in accordance with the SAC's recommendations.

5. Arrangements for the 8th RCARO SAC meeting

The Meeting agreed to hold the 8th RCARO SAC meeting prior to the 31st RCA NRM in Japan in April 2009.

6. Closing

The Chair of the meeting thanked all the SAC members for their valuable contributions on the advice and recommendations given to the RCARO.

- Revision reflecting comments by AUL and the RCA Focal Person (22 Nov 2008)