

Report of the 6th RCARO SAC Meeting

Hanoi, Vietnam, 7 April 2008

Introduction

The 6th RCARO Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting was held at the VAEC Headquarters in Hanoi, Vietnam on 7 April 2008 preceding the 30th NRM with the participation of the National Representatives of Australia (Mr Ron Cameron), Vietnam (Mr Le Van Hong), Japan (Mr Yasuyoshi Komizo) and the Republic of Korea (Mr Dae-ki Kim), and the RCA Focal Person (Mr Prinath Dias).

Mr Michael Co from CAI-Asia Center attended as an invitee. The observers were Mr John Easey (AUL), Mr Le Doan Phac, Ms Nguyen Thi Yen Ninh and Ms Hoang Thi Nhung (VIE), Ms Kyoko Mukaida (JPN), Mr Chang-ho Park and Ms Jae-eun Choi (ROK), and Mr Hiroshi Rikihisa (IAEA TC). The RCARO, represented by Director Mr Kun-mo Choi, Mr Jae-sol Lee and Mr Jeong-hoon Lee, served as the SAC secretariat.

1. Opening remarks by the outgoing Chair, AUL

Mr Ron Cameron opened the Meeting with a warm welcome for the participants. He expressed his gratitude to the Director of the RCARO and his staff by pointing out that the RCARO had been an important initiative of the RCA which had the benefits of providing a regional presence to promote the benefits and visibility for the RCA, thereby helping implement the MTS which was developed a few years ago. He also recognized that the RCARO had shown itself as an effective mechanism to promote partnership as evidenced by the impact of the participation in the PEMSEA and the collaboration with UNDP for the Tsunami project. The RCARO's promotion of activities through its website was also found useful as a platform for providing information with easy access. Particularly in terms of promoting the RCA, RCA Success Stories are essential when informing others what the RCA is all about. Lastly, he emphasized that both the RCA and the RCARO should work as an integrated team towards the same goals and objectives for the region.

2. Welcoming remarks by the incoming Chair, VIE

Mr Le Van Hong was elected as the new Chair. He welcomed all the delegates to Vietnam and commended the RCARO for the work undertaken during the past years.

3. Adoption of the Agenda and appointment of rapporteur

After a brief review of the tasks ahead for the Meeting, the Meeting adopted the Agenda

without revisions and appointed Mr Jeong-hoon Lee as a rapporteur.

4. RCARO 2007 Work Plan Performance

With regard to the RCARO 2007 work plan performance, which has already been considered by the SAC subject to the Procedures for Evaluation of the Performance of the Director of the RCARO, the Meeting advised the RCARO to report the RCARO 2007 performance to the 30th NRM for its information with the following comments and recommendations including minor wording changes:

- 1) On item 2.2.1, one negative should be omitted,
- 2) On item 2.2.2, that three NPCs (SRL, IND, and PAK) also attended the latest FNCA Meeting should be added,
- 3) On item 2.2.1, the promotion of partnership with the FAO. **This may be affected by proposed changes in the Joint Division. The proposal on bird flu was not supported as it was not regarded as a priority for the region.**
- 4) On item 2.2, given the successful and specific outcomes of the workshop, the contents of the item should be modified accordingly,
- 5) The results of the workshop should be better explained in the 2007 performance report and **the workshop report** attached,
- 6) As to establishing the database for contact points at the RCARO website, it was commented by the RCARO that the search and sorting functions related to RCA projects could be integrated in the database, and
- 7) Concerning Mr Ron Szymczak's report on his participation in the PEMSEA, the report needs to be attached to the RCARO 2007 performance report.

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The SAC members reviewed the RCARO 2007 work plan performance. The SAC evaluated the RCARO's activities carried out in 2007 as fully satisfactory. The SAC appreciated the RCARO's efforts to enhance partnerships with other organizations. The SAC were of the view that the RCARO activities in 2007 duly reflected the mandate given to the RCARO. The results of the performance evaluation are to be reported to the 30th NRM for its information.

5. RCARO 2008 Work Plan

After taking note of and having an extensive discussion on the RCARO 2008 work plan, the following recommendations on each item were made:

5.1 Appointment of the Director of the RCARO

In accordance with the decision of the 29th NRM, the Selection Committee Meeting was held in July 2007 in ROK, and revised the relevant guidelines for the selection process,

which were endorsed by the 36th GCM. According to the new Guidelines, a Vacancy Notice for the post of the Director of the RCARO was communicated to the NRs and posted on the RCARO web site from 1 October 2007 to 15 January 2008.

Since there was no application up to the deadline, the Government of ROK suggested extending the term of the current Director of the RCARO for one year due to the unexpected circumstances arising from the organizational restructuring of the Korean Government. Based on the relevant guidelines and the past practice, ROK also suggested that a new selection process start at the next GCM in 2008 and a selection committee for the RCARO Director be established.

After discussions on the appointment of the RCARO Director, the SAC recommended:

- 1) to accept the suggestion by the ROK of extending the term of the current Director by one year
- 2) that the current Selection Committee take action to select the Director of the RCARO according to the established procedure.

5.2 Publication of the 2nd batch of RCA Success Stories

The first batch of 5 Success Stories was printed and disseminated to the NRs in 2007. The second batch of 7 Success Stories was selected at the 29th NRM, and the 36th GCM recommended additional editorial work for 4 drafts for a publication. The agreed topics of the Success Stories are plant breeding, marine pollution, non-destructive testing, and geothermal exploration. With regard to the publication of the second batch of RCA Success Stories, after the RCARO gave a summary of them to the Meeting, the following comments and recommendations were made:

- 1) The technical information of the RCA Success Stories should be accurate and the RCA should claim credit only for its contributions,
- 2) Since a number of stakeholders have provided inputs to the Success Stories, someone, who is technically conversant and has a good understanding of the details of the RCA projects, should be designated to review and revise the final version before their publication. PLCCs were identified as the most suitable persons to carry out this task,
- 3) PLCCs should also check whether the photographs are suitable,
- 4) The SAC decided to defer the publication of the Success Stories on Energy, Livestock and Radiotracer since they are not yet in a form for publication, and
- 5) The RCARO should carry out a survey to find out how successful the RCA Success Stories have been in promoting the RCA and use this information to improve future

Success Stories.

The Meeting recommended that the 4 Success Stories on Plant Breeding, Marine Pollution, Non-Destructive Testing, and Geothermal Exploration be published after a final review by the relevant PLCCs¹ on the accuracy of the contents including a proper selection of photographs. The Meeting recommended that the RCARO carry out a survey on the impact of the RCA Success Stories including the 5 Stories already published.

The 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.

5.3 RCA partnerships with other regional organizations

5.3.1 Report on the RCARO's visits to the regional organizations and follow-up activities

Pursuant to the decision of the 36th GCM, the RCARO had made visits to regional organizations including UNESCAP, UNEP, UNDP, PEMSEA, ADB and CAI-Asia, and submitted a report on the outcomes of these visits. The Meeting reviewed the results of the visits and made the following recommendations on each visit:

Concerning the partnership with UNESCAP, the Meeting recommended the RCARO to initiate a forum to identify cooperative activities excluding the area of energy security.

As to the partnership with both UNEP and ADB, the Meeting requested the RCARO to send them the updated information on relevant RCA projects for 2009-2011 with a view to finding cooperative items of mutual interest in environmental areas such as air pollution and drinking water.

Regarding the partnership with UNDP, the Meeting concurred with the RCARO's suggestion to invite the partner to the final Meeting of the RCA/UNDP project on a Tsunami.

On the partnership with PEMSEA, the Meeting recommended the RCA's participation in the 2009 PEMSEA congress.

However, with regard to further cooperation and the Letter of Cooperation with the PEMSEA, the SAC Meeting recommended a careful approach with time to understand the scope and implications.

5.3.2 Presentation on the collaborative partnership between the RCA and CAI

¹ Note that the NRM later decided that the success stories should be approved by a Meeting of the NRs before publication.

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With respect to a collaborative partnership between RCA and CAI, Mr Michael Co from CAI-Asia Center gave a presentation on the proposed collaboration between the RCA and CAI-Asia Center, with special focus on the iAQM database. This was followed by Q&A, wherein two main challenges were identified: first, most of the data from the MSs is not ready for release and some MSs have expressed reservations about releasing data (i.e., delay may take several months or more); second, how will the effort be sustained beyond 2010 (i.e., date of project completion). The exact mechanisms for data sharing and maintenance still need to be worked out in detail. A draft LOI is the first step for the proposed collaboration between the two organizations. The Meeting noted that the LOI is a statement of general principles; nowhere in the document is the iAQM database mentioned.

The Meeting was of the view that the collaboration with the CAI-Asia Centre would be worthy of being developed further. Given that, there would be two options as to the RCA's approach to the cooperation with the CAI-Asia Center as follows:

- 1) The RCA concludes a LOI with the CAI-Asia Center to pave the way for cooperation between both parties, and the feasibility of the joint development of the AQM would be investigated at the same time
- 2) The RCA first investigates the feasibility of a joint development of the AQM, and then concluding the LOI may follow.

5.3.3 Joint training programme in cooperation with ARCCNM

In relation to the joint training programme in cooperation with the Asian Regional Cooperation for Nuclear Medicine (ARCCNM), the Meeting agreed that the RCARO should pursue cooperative action through discussions with the ARCCNM, and jointly host a training course on the uses of some advanced nuclear medicine since it was expected to contribute to a regional capacity for a cancer diagnosis. The Meeting advised the RCARO to have consultations with PLCCs, RCA Focal Person and TOs of the RCA project on PET and PET/CT to check for duplication with the ongoing RCA projects.

The Meeting advised the RCARO to jointly host a training course after consultation with relevant PLCCs, RCA Focal Person and TOs to ensure that the proposed RTC is complementary to the RCA project on PET and PET/CT and there are no duplications.

5.4 Progress of the RCA/UNDP project and development of a follow-up programme

5.4.1 Progress of the RCA/UNDP project

As regards the progress of the RCA/UNDP project, the Meeting took note of the progress and appreciated the RCARO and ROK for supporting the project and asked the RCARO to make efforts for the success of the project in 2008.

The Meeting took note of the progress of the project.

5.4.2 Development of a Follow-up Programme

Concerning the development of a follow-up programme for the RCA/UNDP project, the Director of the RCARO briefed the Meeting that the partnership with the UNDP Office in ROK would not be feasible in the future due to changes in the status of the Office. However, he suggested that the fund allocated by the Government of ROK for the project would continue to be available in the future if the RCARO could propose any good project to the Korean Government.

After exchanging views, the Meeting advised the RCARO to consider supporting one of the RCA projects for 2009-2011 as a follow-up programme under the framework for the RCARO-initiated projects, preferably in the areas of air pollution or drinking water. More details for an implementation need to be discussed with the RCA Focal Person after the decision of the 30th NRM.

The Meeting recommended that the RCARO consider supporting one of the RCA projects for 2009-2011 as a follow-up programme under the framework for the RCARO-initiated projects, preferably in the areas of air pollution or drinking water. More details for an implementation need to be discussed with the RCA Focal Person after the decision of the 30th RCA NRM.

5.5 Workshop for enhancing the RCA's capabilities

The RCARO proposed a workshop to be held in a Member State with two aims: (1) to enhance a local network for an effective implementation of RCA projects of a Member State by reviewing the local system for managing RCA projects, and (2) to develop future strategies for the RCA and RCARO by reviewing the progress of the RCARO initiatives to enhance the RCA partnerships with regional organizations, thus exploring new RCARO programmes.

After a review of the prospectus for the workshop, the Meeting welcomed the RCARO's proposal on the workshop as a timely approach for enhancing the regional capabilities for a better implementation of the RCA projects, and requested the RCARO to report the proposal to the 30th NRM. It was requested that the enhancement of the TCDC be included as a potential topic to be discussed at the workshop.

The Meeting was supportive of having such a workshop to enhance the capacity of both the RCA Member States and the RCARO, and suggested that the TCDC could be one of the potential topics to be covered during the workshop.

The plan for this workshop would be reported to the 30th NRM for consideration.

6. Other matters

The RCA Focal Person [requested a clarification of the role of the RCARO SAC with regard to issues that require the approval of the NRM.](#) [The Meeting agreed that initial review of such issues by the RCARO SAC would help the deliberations at the NRM.](#)

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7. Next meeting

It was conveyed that the 7th SAC Meeting be held prior to the 37th GCM in Vienna in September 2008.

8. Closing

The Chair of the Meeting thanked all the SAC members for their valuable contributions to the advice and recommendations given to the RCARO, and the Director of the RCARO appreciated the kind support for the activities of the RCARO.

- Revision reflecting comments by AUL, JPN, ROK, VIE and the RCA Focal Person (24 April 2008)