Report of

the 5th Meeting of the Working Group on

RCA Medium-Term Strategy Coordination

Vienna, Austria

28-31 January 2019

1. Introduction

Upon approval of the 47th RCA General Conference Meeting held on 14 September 2018 in Vienna, Austria, the Fifth Meeting of the Working Group on the RCA Medium Term Strategy Coordination (WG MTSC) was held on 28-31 January in Vienna, Austria. The adopted Agenda of the Meeting is in **Annex 1**.

The Meeting of the WG MTSC had ten (10) participants comprising representatives from AUL, BGD, JPN, MAL, PHI, ROK, RCA PAC and RCARO. The representative from AUL was the interim WG Chair. The List of Participants is in **Annex 2**.

The meeting was officially opened by Dir-TCAP who affirmed the importance of the MTS Review and the WG MTSC in helping direct that process.

The main purposes of the meeting were to:

- Review implementation of activities identified in the WG MTSC Annual Work Plan and review their suitability to inform the MTS mid-term review in 2021; and
- Identify new elements and functions to be incorporated into the RCA processes and Project Designs for the 20/21 TC cycle to give effect to the MTS

It is expected that the meeting produces the following documents for consideration by the 41st National Representatives (NRM):

- Working Group Meeting Report including:
    - Working Group Progress Report;
    - Updated WG Annual Work Plan;
- Associated documents with the various activities identified in the Work Plan

2. Composition and Terms of Reference of the WG MTSC

The meeting endorsed Deputy Chair, Mark Alexander (AUL), as the acting Chair for the meeting, following unavailability of the Chair Chris Daughney (NZE) due to a change in employer. AUL noted that at this point Daughney was only unavailable for one meeting and that there was not a need to formally replace the Chair at this point, but agreed to keep the WG apprised of any change and, if needed, seek approval for a change of Chair at the 41st NRM.

The WG Acting Chair will liaise with the WG Chair to determine their ongoing availability and report the findings to the WG by the end of February 2019. If a permanent change of WG Chair is required, a recommendation will be made to and sought from the 41st NRM.

The meeting briefly reviewed the WG MTSC Terms of Reference (ToR). It was decided that no immediate changes were necessary to the ToR, although some comments were made:

- PAC noted that there was an inconsistency between the current membership of the WG and that stated in ToR, specifically that there were two members from BGD. The WG noted that the membership reflected the identified needed skill set and was approved at the 47th GCM. A small change was proposed to the ToR for endorsement at the 41st NRM. This is included as **Annex 3**.
- PAC noted that there was perhaps a need to expand the timing of the ToR which currently extends to the 49th GCM in 2020. Specifically, it was thought that the WG could provide support for PAC in conduct of the MTS review from 2021 until the end of the MTS in 2023. There was also some discussion about whether the WG could contribute to the formulation of the next MTS in 2024, although there was thought this would likely be a new WG would be established. AUL suggested that the ToR be reviewed more fulsomely at the next meeting of the WG with any changes to be endorsed by the NRs at 48th GCM.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM endorse the WG to review the TOR at the 6th Meeting of the WG, to ensure that the WG is providing appropriate support of the MTS Review. Any resulting proposed changes would be reviewed and endorsed at the 48th GCM.

The meeting reviewed the Annual Work Plan for 2018 (**Annex 4**) against information provided by the Secretariat in advance of the meeting to verify if it was sufficient to substantially progress the required activities. AUL noted that while the updated Project Participation Forms (PPFs) had been endorsed at the 47th GCM, these had not been completed by the NRs by December, as required under the Guidelines and Operating Rules (GOR). At the request of the Acting Chair, the Secretariat had sent these out to the NRs for projects commencing in 2019 (RAS6093 and RAS7031) for completion ASAP, although at the time of the meeting, only ten (10) replies had been received and these were often only partially completed. However, the WG members tasked with leading the activities for each Performance Indicator (PI) suggested they could at least make partial progress based on this and other information provided ahead of the meeting by the Secretariat.

3. Status of the WG MTSC Work Plan

3.1 Performance Indicator 1

JPN provided an update on progress of activities under the WG Annual Work Plan listed under PIs 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3. This report is included as **Annex 5**.

3.1.1 Performance Indicator 1.1

For PI 1.1 the current list of GP depository status of the 2017 RCA was presented. Some seventeen (17) GPs had deposited the acceptance to the 2017 RCA representing 77% of GPs. Three GPs (Cambodia, China and Philippines) were thought to be in various stages of deposit. The deposit status for Laos and Fiji was unknown. While this fell short of the 100% target for excellent performance for target 2, under this PI, the WG noted that this was an improvement over the deposit status at similar stages after previous iterations of the RCA. No further action was recommended.

Analysis of GP attendance at NRMs and GCMs showed that, while attendance of some GPs was low (~50%), no GP had missed two consecutive NRM / GCM meetings from 2017. Accordingly, target 1, for excellent performance against this PI was met. There was discussion on possible reasons why some GPs had lower attendance than others but ,ultimately, the WG decided that this was outside the scope of the ToR.

It was recommended that the WG continue to monitor the performance of the RCA targets for this PI in the run up to the MTS Review.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM endorse the WG MTSC to continue to review implementation of the RCA Program against the targets for Performance Indicator 1.1 in the lead up to the MTS Review.

3.1.2 Performance Indicator 1.2

Analysis of implementation of the targets against PI 1.2 had proved more difficult. As the updated PPFs had not been completed, the Acting Chair had requested the Secretariat to provide PPARs, NPC lists and project design documents for the five most recently completed projects, specifically:

- RAS5070
- RAS5071
- RAS6071
- RAS6072
- RAS6077

By normalizing a variety of factors associated with project activities (e.g. meeting attendance, fellowship completion etc.), an assessment of the completion of the project activities was undertaken (target 1). Due to some incomplete data, the results for RAS5070 and RAS6072 had to be discounted, however analysis was performed on the other three projects. This showed completion rates from 85% to 100%. While technically falling just short of the 100% target for excellent performance, the WG group noted that it was for all intents and purposes achieving it, as any gap could be an artifact of the way the results were normalized.

Percentage of reports submitted according to schedule (target 2) was assessed based on the availability of PPARs for the five projects. Two of the projects (RAS 5070 and RAS6077) did not have the last PPAR so was assessed as not meeting the criteria, meaning the baseline implementation rate was 60%. While this was good, it did not reach the 100% target for excellent performance.

NPC / Alternate NPC attendance at relevant meetings (target 3) was assessed by cross referencing the list of NPCs provided by the Secretariat against the project planning and review meetings for the five identified projects. These meetings were identified as the "relevant" meeting for NPCs. The analysis showed average attendance rates of between 22% and 61%. This was surprisingly low and fell well short of the indicator for excellent performance. It was noted that only some GPs had registered alternate NPCs which may have contributed to the low results.

The WG noted that, while this was an important PI to monitor up to the MTS Review, it was also a very time consuming process for the WG to undertake, even across the five selected projects. This was compounded by the fact that the WG member undertaking such analysis was not necessarily going to be familiar with the projects being analysed. Accordingly, it was suggested that, in future, LCCs should report on the three targets for this PI at the time of preparing PPARs, noting the importance of fulsome and timely participation of NPCs in this process. This also has the added bonus of ensuring the LCC has visibility of any gaps that emanate. The WG understood that this information could not easily be inserted into the existing PPAR template, as it was a TC Programme wide document. As such, it was suggested that these reports be provided by the LCC to the RCA-FP.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM request LCCs to report on the following metrics when completing their PPARs:

- Completion rate of planned activities in the project.
- Rate of required reports from GPs provided on time.
- NPC (or alternate) attendance rate at project planning, and project review meetings.

Such reports should be provided to the RCA-FP for distribution to the WG MTSC.

The WG was not able to analyse National Project Team (NPT) participation rates in RTCs as the details of the NPTs were not available (due to the non-completion / incomplete information of the PPFs). This will need to be revisited at the 6th Meeting of the WG MTSC.

RCARO noted that the redesign of the RCARO website to enable a listing of the NPCs and alternates was in progress but was unlikely to be complete by the 41st NRM. A reschedule to the 48th GCM was requested. The WG noted this and did not see any problems.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM note that the uploading of NPCs and alternates to the RCARO website will be completed by the 48th GCM following redesign of the RCARO website.

3.1.3 Performance Indicator 1.3

From the 2017 In-Kind Contribution report, it was noted that 8 countries had either not reported their in-kind contributions, or reported no contributions in 2017. The WG suspected

that due to participation of all GPs in RCA project activities, that there was at least some in-kind contributions and that the discrepancy was due to information not being reported or captured correctly.

For extra-budgetary contributions, it was noted that the request for such contributions had only gone from the RCA Chair to GPs at the end of 2018, and many GPs were still considering the request. As such, it was probably premature to judge contributions at this stage, and a more meaningful assessment could be conducted at the 6th Meeting of the MTSC.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM endorse the WG MTSC to continue to review implementation of extra-budgetary and in-kind contributions to the RCA against the targets for Performance Indicator 1.3 in the lead up to the MTS Review.

3.2 Performance Indicator 2

PHI provided an update on progress of activities under the WG Annual Work Plan listed under PIs 2.1 and 2.2. This report is included as **Annex 6**.

PAC gave an update on the results of the meeting held the previous week which, inter alia, address progress of activities under the WG MTSC Annual Work Plan listed under PIs 2.3 and 2.4. This report is included as **Annex 7**.

3.2.1 Performance Indicator 2.1

The WG analysed the project designs for the 2020/21 programme cycle against the strategic priorities defined in the MTS. This analysis showed that all of the eight designs were in alignment with the priorities. This was confirmed by PAC from the discussions at their meeting the week prior. Thus target 1 met the criteria for excellent performance. While it does not affect this assessment, it is noted that none of the project designs for 2020/21 fell into the Energy Planning or Industry.

In regards to target 2 – RCA resources being matched across GP priorities – the WG felt that it did not have the information required to undertake this analysis, but more importantly this was an issue that should be decided by NRs and thus it was deferred to the 41st NRM.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM endorse the WG MTSC to continue to review implementation of the RCA against target 1 for Performance Indicator 2.1 in the lead up to the MTS Review.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM consider the distribution of RCA resources across the MTS thematic themes to judge if it is appropriate.

3.2.2 Performance Indicator 2.2

Again, the ability of the WG to analyse performance against this PI was limited, due to non-completion of the PPFs prior to the meeting. However, the WG had acquired CPFs (public versions) and a list of national TC projects for GPs that have national TC programmes. This information was cross referenced against the MTS strategic priorities as a way to check if the

RCA Programme was aligned with the national priorities (as defined in CPFs and national projects). The results of this analysis were:

MTS Strategic Priority	2018/19 Nat. Projects Aligned (of 17)	%	2020/21 Nat. Projects Aligned (of 16)	%
Food and Agriculture	15	88	11	69
Human Health	9	53	13	81
Industry	6	35	5	29
Water Resources and Environment	6	35	7	44
Energy	7	41	2	12
Nuclear and Radiation Safety	9	53	10	59

These results showed that there was strong alignment between national projects (i.e. national priorities) and the MTS strategic priorities for GPs with national TC programmes, in accordance excellent performance for target 1.

What this analysis does not show is the alignment of the RCA programme with the national priorities for GPs without national programs (i.e. target 2). This can really only be obtained by completion of the PPFs. The WG noted that the most efficient way to do this would be for the 2020/21 project designs, once they are approved at the 41st NRM. The forms should be completed by all GPs so that the results for target 1 can also be confirmed. It was noted that this will push back the date of the relevant activity under the WG Annual Work Plan to the 48th GCM.

It is recommended that, following approval of the 2020/21 project designs at the 41st NRM, the RCA-FP send the PPFs to the NRs for all participating GPs requesting their full completion and return within 4 weeks for distribution to the WG MTSC Chair. This distribution process would be repeated for the approval of the 2022/23 project designs in 2021 in accordance with the timeline indicated in the GOR.

In regard the activity in the WG Annual Work plan to close any mis-alignment of the RCA Programme and national priorities, the WG noted that this was:

- unlikely, based on the analysis performed above;
- difficult, if not impossible to do, once projects are in the design process; and
- not the role of the WG to try and re-align projects (it is only to report any misalignment).

As such, it was recommended that this activity be removed from the WG Annual Work Plan.

3.2.3 Performance Indicator 2.3

From the report of the PAC meeting preceding the WG meeting, it was noted that PAC agreed that all of the 2020/21 project designs had well-identified and defined project activities, outputs, and outcomes. Thus, the excellent performance criterion was met for this PI. This should be verified when the projects are put forward for the 2022/23 programme cycle.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM endorse the WG MTSC to continue to review implementation of the RCA against the targets for Performance Indicator 2.3 in the lead up to the MTS Review.

3.2.4 Performance Indicator 2.4

PAC indicated that five of the seven 2020/21 project designs had specifically identified and named potential end-users or beneficiaries, meaning that both targets 1 and 2 would fall short of excellent performance. It was noted that the LCCs were asking NPCs for this information but it was not being received. It is again recommended that the best way to try and address this information shortfall would be to send the PPFs out completion for the 2020/21 projects following their finalisation at the 41st NRM as the PPFs address this issue.

As above, the PPFs for the 2020/21 project designs are requested to be completed following the 41st NRM.

3.3 Performance Indicator 3

3.3.1 Performance Indicator 3.1

AUL provided an update on progress of activities under the WG Annual Work Plan listed under this PI. This report is included as **Annex 8**. The PAC report noted above also provided some further information.

The analysis showed that only two of the eight 2020/21 project designs had any extra-budgetary (EB) contribution associated with them. Both of these projects (RAS2018010 and RAS2018011) were being 100% (or very close to) funded by EB contributions from the ROK Government. None of the other projects had any allowance for EB contributions (RAS2018016 initially looked like it had 25% allowance but closer inspection revealed this was in-kind contributions, not EB).

PAC indicated that at their meeting the previous week, there was significant resistance among LCCs, TOs, PMOs and TC-DC to the idea of including 25% EB activities in project designs. This resistance was primarily around the idea that including such a EB component was:

a) difficult at such a late stage of project design; and

b) inconsistent with the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) and other IAEA processes

The WG accepted these observations, but noted that this was a disconnect with the request of the WG MTSC – as endorsed by the 47th GCM – as well as the Declaration sent to GPs by

the RCA Chair at the end of 2018 seeking EB contributions. Further analysis provided by PAC indicated that there may not be a significant budgetary gap between the 2020/21 project designs and the anticipated TCF allocation to the RCA (down to from 400 000 EUR to around 250 000 EUR). This potentially exacerbates the possibility of receiving EB funding from the Declaration without having defined activities to direct it towards (although any surplus could be redirected to RAS0082 for distribution to future program cycles.

After substantial discussion, the WG recommended that, if the NRs still want to activate the 25% EB components in the design process, it should be done from the start of the 2022/23 cycle (which commences immediately after the 41st NRM).

It is recommended that the 41st NRM note the issues raised by project designers to including a 25% EB component in project designs, especially at a late stage in the design process. If the NRs still desire this process to be followed, it is recommended they direct project designers to include these in the 2022/23 projects from the concept stage.

3.3.2 Performance Indicator 3.2

BGD led a discussion on Performance Indicator 3.2 on Human Resource Development (HRD) within the RCA. This report is included as **Annex 9**. It was noted that there were no specific activities associated with this PI under the WG Annual Work Plan. Following discussion, such an activity was included in the revised Annual Work Plan 2019

The analysis looked at the initial response provided in the ten completed PPFs noted in Part 2 of this report, specifically that in Part 3C (referring to HRD needs) and Part 2 (which identified some HRD capabilities). Some apparent discrepancies were identified between claimed HRD capabilities versus needs (e.g. claimed advanced capability but seeking basic level training). A number of possible reasons for this were discussed including the design of the PPF, and incorrect completion on the part of GPs, but that it was difficult to ascertain the reasons with the limited data set available. Thus, further information in the form of more PPFs should be obtained first. This would also help to provide a baseline for performance against the PI target. It was also noted that it would be helpful for NRs and NPCs to be reminded of the need to provide accurate information when completing project documents (including the PPF), and to ensure that appropriate members of NPTs were nominated for RTC (i.e. not over or under qualified). The Secretariat could be asked to include this later as standard practice in meeting notification and call for nominations.

As above, the PPFs for the 2020/21 project designs are requested to be completed following the 41st NRM.

It is recommended that at its 6th Meeting, the WG MTSC review the information provided on HRD in the completed PPFs to establish a baseline for Performance Indicator 3.2. This is to include a review of the PPF.

It is recommended that at the 41st NRM, the RCA Chair, with the endorsement of the NRs:

- Affirm the importance of GPs:
    - Providing accurate information when completing project documents (including the PPF); and
    - Ensuring that appropriate members of NPTs were nominated for RTCs (i.e. not over or under qualified).
- Request Secretariat to highlight this latter point in RCA RTC notifications and associated prospectii.

3.2.3 Performance Indicator 3.3

ROK provided an update on progress of activities under the WG Annual Work Plan - listed under PIs 3.3. This report is included as **Annex 10**.

Similar to the analysis for PI 3.2, the analysis for programme performance against this PI was limited to the initial responses provided in the ten completed PPFs, in this case, Parts 3D and 3E. This preliminary analysis indicated that the RRUs being volunteered for RAS6093 and RAS7031 were adequate to meet the needs for such RRUs expressed by other GPs. However, this was again based on a small subset of data and would need to be verified across active and planned projects.

As above, the PPFs for the 2020/21 project designs are requested to be completed following the 41st NRM.

Once this data was verified, it was noted that the best way to close identified gaps would not be most adequately addressed by the actions of the WG MTSC. Instead, this would appear to best undertaken during the design stage and confirmed at the initial planning meeting for a new project.

3.4 Performance Indicator 4

On behalf of the Chair of the WG MTSC, AUL presented analysis on outcome monitoring activities under Performance Indicator 4.1. This report and supporting documents are included in a zip file as **Annex 11**. The WG was joined by representatives from TCPC and OIOS for this discussion. There were no specific activities associated with PI 4.2 under the WG Annual Work Plan, so this PI was not addressed.

The WG noted the substantial work done by the Chair on the pilot study of outcome monitoring for RAS7029 on air pollution monitoring and made the following observations:

- The WG noted that the methodology used in the pilot study had changed for the pilot study from outcome mapping to outcome harvesting (OH), and then again to a single sentence OH approach. This followed a change from the OECD-DAC model to outcome mapping agreed at the previous meetings of the WG MTSC. These three changes in the approach and methodology of about four months is an indication that the outcome monitoring process has proved to be difficult.

- This difficulty appeared to be backed up by the results of the pilot study. Specifically, the NPCs appeared to have significant difficulty in presenting cogent, project related outcomes using the OH method. This was only marginally improved by use of the single sentence OH method. Specifically, the WG noted the outcomes:
    - Appeared to often be vaguely written.
    - Frequently failed to differentiate between outcomes and outputs.
    - Were almost exclusively nationally focused instead of regionally focused.
    - Sometimes appeared tangential to the stated desired outcomes in the project design.
- There were often reasons for these shortcomings including:
    - The outcomes were written by the national counterparts (i.e. NPCs), with no attempt to draw them into regional outcomes
    - The original outcomes in the project design were not written with the OH methodology in mind
- Generally, the outcomes drafted using the single sentence OH method appeared of a higher quality and greater relevance.
- While there were shortcomings in the reported outcomes, the fact that they were drafted at all represents a new and noteworthy improvement to RCA projects.
- The WG also appreciated the attempt to draft outcomes for the entire 15-year life cycle of the respective air pollution projects as this enabled a more holistic picture to be obtained.

Given the above, the WG queried how ranking of the impact of the outcomes would be realistically achieved, and whether the value obtained in such a process would justify the effort in doing so. PAC observed that it would be very difficult to use these outcomes in the MTS Review.

With this in mind, the WG noted that it would be more appropriate to expend efforts on further refining the methodology for outcome monitoring, probably the single sentence OH method, with the assistance of TCPC. This could be expanded into a second pilot study for RAS7030 on groundwater monitoring. This project was chosen because it was one of two projects concluding in 2019, and also had a long thematic history in the RCA. It would also be useful to incorporate a defined outcome monitoring process into the project design documents to enable consistency across project life cycles improve LCC and NPC familiarity with the process, which should lead to higher quality outcomes being drafted.

It is recommended that the WG MTSC works with TCPC experts to further refine the Outcome Monitoring methodology (including Single Sentence Outcome Harvesting (OH)) methodology with the aim of:

- Improving its effectiveness in regards to:
    - Differentiating outcomes from outputs
    - Drawing regional outcomes from national outcomes
- Updating the Final Review Meeting Report to provide clear guidance to NPCs on

use of the methodology

- Updating the RCA project design documents to ensure that planned outcomes for new projects are systematically drafted

These documents should be completed for consideration at the 6th Meeting of the WG MTSC and approval at the 48th GCM for inclusion in the project concepts templates for 2022/23.

It is recommended that the 41st NRM endorse the WG MTSC to continue the pilot study for outcome monitoring at the Final Coordination Meeting of RAS7030 to be held in September 2019. This should include a member of the WG MTSC and TC-PC to attend the Final Coordination Meeting. These results will be presented to the 7th Meeting of the WG MTSC.

4. Updated WG MTSC Work Plan for 2019

The discussions during the meeting led to an updated WG Annual Work Plan for 2019, included as **Annex 12**.

As noted above, a consistent theme across the discussion was that the fact that the PPF as updated by the WG at its 4th Meeting and endorsed at the 47th GCM, had not been widely completed, which had impacted at least partially on the ability of the WG to provide fulsome analysis of the RCA against a number of the Performance Indicators. While at least indicative baselines were established for all required Performance Indicators, the WG indicated it could be useful to verify these figures with more fulsome data that would be obtained by wider completion of the PPFs for all active projects.

AUL noted that the 47th GCM had already approved the updated PPFs so there was no need to seek re-endorsement from the NRs. Accordingly, the RCA-FP was asked to send the updated PPF to NRs seeking its completion for all projects that commenced under the 2018/19 project cycle (excluding RAS6093 and RAS7031 which had already been sought). This would be in line with the GOR. This could be done before the 41st NRM to confirm the indicative baselines against the relevant Performance Indicators reported at the meeting.

The RCA-FP is requested to send the PPFs endorsed at the 47th GCM to NRs for all GPs participating in RCA projects that commenced under the 2018/19 program cycle for completion and return to the RCA-FP. The request should be sent by 8 February 2019, with responses requested by 1 March 2019. The RCA-FP is requested to send the collated PPFs to the WG MTSC Chair by 8 March for checking against the Performance Indicators ahead of the 41st NRM.

The WG noted the normal procedure for PPFs as defined in the GOR, calls for the completion by December each year. The WG noted that for the 2020/21 projects, completion is being requested after the 41st NRM to assist with our continued analysis.

A number of members of the WG expressed the view that the PPFs may be overly complicated and may need to be reviewed. The above action seeking dissemination of the PPFs would provide more experience in this regard. It is suggested that the WG MTSC review the PPF at their 6th Meeting.

The WG MTSC should review the usability of the PPF at their 6th Meeting.

5. Closing

It was agreed that that the 6th Meeting of the WG MTSC would be hosted by RCARO in Seoul, ROK, from 29 July to 1 August 2019 subject to confirmation of these details by RCARO and the IAEA.

The Acting Chair thanked the WG members, the RCA PAC Chair, RCARO and the Secretariat for their active participation and contributions at the Meeting and wished them a safe journey home.