



MEETING REPORT

34th MEETING OF THE NATIONAL RCA REPRESENTATIVES

17-20 April 2012

Beijing, China

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34th Meeting of National RCA Representatives

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1. Opening Ceremony

The 34th Meeting of National RCA Representatives was held at the China National Convention Center, Beijing, China, 17 to 20 April 2012 and was attended by 42 participants from 17 RCA Member States and the RCA Regional Office (RCARO). The list of participants is given in Annex 1.

The IAEA was represented by Mr Kwaku Aning, Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation (DDG-TC), Mr Ali Boussaha, Director, Division for Asia and the Pacific (DIR-TCAP) and Mr Kesrat Sukasam, RCA Focal Person (RCA-FP). Nepal attended the Meeting as an observer, whilst Cambodia's planned attendance as an observer did not eventuate. Dr Sueo Machi represented the Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA).

The Chairman of the China Atomic Energy Authority (CAEA), Mr CHEN Qiufa, gave welcoming remarks and the opening announcement, referring to the 40th anniversary of the RCA as the backdrop for his speech. He noted that for the past 40 years, RCA member states have cooperated to advance the application of nuclear science and technology in a wide range of fields, such as industry, agriculture, human health and environmental protection, contributing significantly to the regional social-economic development. From a Chinese perspective, China had witnessed rapid expansion of nuclear technology application and was moving toward large-scale industrialised development with promising market prospects. Since joining the RCA, China had participated in all varieties of cooperation activities, actively providing expert support to other members. For a long time China had been the lead country coordinator for nuclear applications in agriculture, particularly mutation breeding technology.

To ensure a promising future in promoting regional peaceful uses of nuclear energy Mr Chen pronounced four major aims for the RCA to consider: a) practical cooperation in realising tangible economic and social benefits; b) efficient management with governments taking on the role to support integrated plans to push forward domestic industrialised development of nuclear technology applications; c) scientific and technological innovation by increasing input in scientific research; and d) valuing human resource development at times of expansion of nuclear energy and the need for strengthening nuclear safety and nuclear security, as well as the prospect of large-scale and industrialised application of nuclear technology. Mr Chen's remarks are given in Annex 2.

Mr Kwaku Aning delivered the opening statement on behalf of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr Yukiya Amano. He extended a special welcome to the representative of Nepal, the Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA), and those who were attending the RCA Representatives Meeting for the first time. The DDG-TC also drew attention to the significance of the RCA 40th

Anniversary, noting that the RCA is the oldest regional cooperative agreement within the framework of the IAEA, and was a highly effective mechanism for successful regional cooperation. Mr Aning noted that since the RCA GCM in September last year, almost half of the 17 RCA Member States had appointed new National RCA Representatives (NRs). He welcomed them all and also introduced Mr Ali Boussaha as the new Director for the Division of Asia and the Pacific.

Mr Aning acknowledged the good progress of the implementation of the new RCA Programme for the 2012–2013 cycle with 15 new projects with sizeable budget allocation. He encouraged all to translate work plans into actual operations delivering tangible results. He also referred to the planning of the 2014-15 cycle, which would take advantage of the RCA initiative in reviewing its programme development process.

The DDG-TC emphasised the importance of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) in the region. He declared that the Secretariat stood ready to act as a catalytic agent in facilitating the cooperation and encouraged NRs to build bridges with the other regional cooperative agreements, AFRA, ARASIA and ARCAL. He thanked the RCA Regional Office for their efforts in establishing partnerships with other organisations and enhancing the visibility of the RCA Programme.

Mr Aning concluded by urging NRs to coordinate effectively with their respective national authorities to ensure the timely submission of the notification of acceptance of the 5th Extension Agreement to the Agency. The DDG-TC's statement is given in Annex 3.

The RCA Chair, Dr Anhar Riza Antariksawan, presented a statement acknowledging the participation of the IAEA and the arrangements made by the host country, China, in the preparations for the NRM. The Chair highlighted the Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries as a cornerstone within the RCA framework of cooperation where the less developed countries enhance their knowledge and address technology gaps through transfer of knowledge and technology from developed MS in the region. He expected the further development of expertise in RCA MS, to the point where many more would become Lead Country Coordinators in RCA project implementation.

The Chair drew attention to a number of important issues currently facing RCA Member States and extended his gratitude to the Thematic Coordinators of the 40th Anniversary exhibition - Australia, China, India, the Philippines and RCARO - for their contributions, and special thanks to the host country for their excellent work in preparing the RCA exhibition. The Chair invited all to the RCA exhibition after the opening ceremony. The statement of the RCA Chair is given in Annex 4.

The Opening Ceremony was followed by a photo session and a tour of the RCA Exhibition. During the tour, brief presentations were made by the Thematic Coordinators of the corresponding five sectors of the exhibition.

2. Welcome Remarks of the Current Chair

Dr Anhar Riza Antariksawan, Deputy Chairman of National Nuclear Energy Agency (BATAN), delivered the welcome remarks as the outgoing Chair, referring in particular to the newly appointed NRs of AUL, BGD, JPN, ROK, MAL, MYA, PAK and SIN and representatives of Nepal. He expressed his appreciation to all NRs for

their cooperation during his tenure as RCA Chair, and special thanks to RCA-FP, Mr Kesrat Sukasam, who had provided strong support.

Dr Antariksawan acknowledged the work of the RCARO in supporting RCA by increasing its visibility through publication of success stories, maintaining the RCA website and participating in many international events. The long-term relationship between the FNCA and RCA was noted and he looked forward to it becoming even more effective in the future. His remarks are contained in Annex 5.

Designation of Chair/ Rapporteurs

Dr Antariksawan then called for nominations for the new Chair of the RCA. MYA proposed CPR to be the new Chair of the RCA. CPR nominated Dr Feng Dongxin, Deputy Director General, Department of International Cooperation, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), as the RCA Chair. Dr Feng was elected by acclamation.

IND proposed NZE and AUL to be rapporteurs of the Meeting, and this was supported by MAL. Mr Frank Bruhn (NZE) and Mr Peter McGlinn (AUL) accepted the appointment.

MYA proposed the NR of the Host Country to be the Chair of the RCA. The Chinese delegation nominated Ms Feng Dongxin, Deputy Director General, Department of International Cooperation, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), to fulfil that role. Dr Feng was elected by acclamation.

IND proposed NZE and AUL to be rapporteurs for the Meeting and both agreed to carry out this task.

Remarks of the new Chair

Dr Feng thanked the participants and acknowledged that she was looking forward to gaining experience in the RCA through her role as the new Chair. She welcomed all the participants to the Meeting and extended special thanks to the former Chair for his efforts in the effective coordination of RCA during the previous year, which would be a solid foundation for her work this year. She also acknowledged the role of the IAEA in supporting RCA to make tangible impacts in the region.

The Chair then invited all participants to briefly introduce themselves.

Adoption of Agenda

The meeting Agenda was adopted without amendment and is contained in Annex 6.

The Meeting agreed to adopt the draft Agenda circulated by the RCA Focal Person without amendments.

3. 33rd RCA NRM and 40th RCA GCM Reports - Matters arising and follow-up actions – RCANRM(34)/2

At the invitation of the Chair, the RCA-FP provided a summary of the most important follow-up actions arising from the above meeting reports.

AUL raised the issue of MS which were not recipients of the TC Programme not being invited to the National Liaison Officer (NLO) meetings organised by the IAEA's Division for Asia & the Pacific, a venue for exchange of information, which precluded those MS an opportunity to provide inputs. IND suggested that the NLO meeting agendas and reports could be shared with those MS who did not participate. The DIR-TCAP noted that in AFRA, the NLO meetings are combined with the AFRA NRM and that this might be considered for the RCA.

The Meeting took note of the report.

4. RCA Annual Report for 2011 – RCANRM(34)/3

The Chair invited the RCA-FP to provide a brief summary of the report which had been circulated to NRs.

The RCA-FP gave a brief overview on the Report, highlighting the activities and the achievements of the RCA programme in 2011 as well as the consideration and decisions made at the NRM and GCM. He also stated that the draft Annual Report contained the structure and contents were according to the requirements of RCA.

NZE and PHI suggested that the outcomes of projects that had been completed during the previous year should be reported in the Annual report, including those that were being developed into Success Stories. There was consensus that this was a worthwhile addition to the Annual Report and that the LCC of each particular project should be responsible for ensuring timely submission of the information.

The Meeting took note of the draft Annual Report and asked the National Representatives of those MSs which led projects that finished in 2011 to liaise with their LCCs to provide details on the key outcomes of their respective projects to be included in the Annual Report by 17 May 2012.

The Meeting also agreed that Member States would provide feedback on the 2011 Annual Report to the RCA Focal Person by 17 May 2012.

5. Review of the RCA Programme in 2011 - RCANRM(34)/4

At the invitation of the Chair, the RCA-FP introduced key points concerning the implementation of the RCA programme in 2011.

The RCA-FP reported that the RCA Programme in 2011 comprised 15 RCA projects, with the budget allotment from TC Funds of Euro 1.3 million. The financial implementation rate was 84%, which was higher than that of 2010. Most of the projects from the 2009-11 TC cycle were closed. However, he noted a recurring poor rate of submission of progress reports, and urged the NRs to ensure compliance with the requirement of timely submission of the six-monthly project progress reports. The RCA-FP also encouraged provisions of extra-budgetary contributions to the RCA

programme and the use of the InTouch platform when submitting nominations for the RCA events. He summarised the history of the Fukushima project, noting with appreciation the extra-budgetary contributions that made the project possible.

AUL noted that there were no statistics on project reports appended to the Implementation Report. The RCA-FP acknowledged the omission, indicating that there was no time under this agenda item to introduce and discuss, but would do so under agenda item 7.

The DIR-TCAP suggested to the meeting to consider in the future including the Implementation Report as part of the Annual Report. Following some discussion, the DIR-TCAP suggested that, if agreeable to the MS, the IAEA could suggest a revised format for the Annual Report which would incorporate the Implementation Report, and send that format to the Chair for consideration.

The National Representatives noted the report provided by the RCA Focal Person and agreed for the 2012 report and thereafter to combine the Implementation Report with the RCA Annual Report.

6. Review of the Progress of the RCA Programme in 2011 – RCANRM(34)/5

The progress of the implementation of the RCA projects was presented by each respective Lead Country. The specific projects presented and discussed were:

RAS5050 (LCC – Australia): Annex 7
RAS6038 (LCC – Australia): Annex 8
RAS7016 (LCC – Australia): Annex 9
RAS5045 (LCC – China): Annex 10
RAS5046 (LCC – China): Annex 11
RAS8111 (LCC – China): Annex 12
RAS6049 (LCC – India): Annex 13
RAS8110 (LCC – India): Annex 14
RAS6053 (LCC – Japan): Annex 15
RAS9042 (LCC – Japan): Annex 16
RAS8109 (LCC – Malaysia): Annex 17
RAS7015 (LCC – New Zealand): Annex 18
RAS8108 (LCC – Pakistan): Annex 19
RAS7019 (LCC – Philippines): Annex 20
RAS7021 (LCC – Australia): Annex 21

After each presentation there was a discussion on implementation issues and especially constraints that were affecting the smooth delivery of the project.

The Meeting observed the good progress and satisfactory outcomes of the RCA projects, and encouraged the LCCs and NPCs to continue the good efforts for successful implementation. The importance of engaging end users and strengthening partnership collaboration were emphasised and encouraged.

As reported last year, timely submission of the progress reports remains an issue, and the Meeting agreed that the National Representatives would engage with their National Project Coordinators to ensure that the reporting obligations are implemented in full and on time.

7. Review of the RCA Programme approved for 2012-2013 and of the Implementation Plan in 2012 and review of the Arrangements towards implementing the 2012 component of the 2012-2013 RCA Programme - RCANRM(34)/6

At the invitation of the Chair, the RCA-FP provided an overview of the report on the 2012-2013 RCA Programme, which had been circulated to NRs. He emphasized the new arrangements for the RCA projects to be managed in addition to the RCA-FP by other PMOs in the Division for Asia & the Pacific. He presented a document on the Plan for Regional Events to be held under RCA projects in 2012, and referred to the list of regional events that did not yet have a proposed venue. The RCA-FP asked that venues for those events be agreed and decided at the Meeting.

A point of discussion of the overview concerned the plan for regional events for 2012. NEP advised that they would soon become party to the RCA, with their instrument of acceptance already submitted. As such, the Nepalese representative enquired if they could be involved in hosting events during 2012-13. The DIR-TCAP remarked that the decision would need to be made by the MS. AUL accepted the proposition from NEP. There were no objections from other MS.

AUL noted that it would not be possible to volunteer to host any event without first consulting with the potential national host organisations. It was suggested that the list should have been distributed well before the Meeting, along with the other Meeting background papers, to allow NRs to bring proposals to the Meeting. IND, PHI and MAL agreed that they needed to confirm with their relevant authorities and institutions on the possibility of hosting any event to ensure resources would be available.

The DIR-TCAP appreciated the comments from the MS and suggested two weeks for each potential host country to nominate to host. He drew the attention of the MS to the fact that there was a lead time of four months to enable the IAEA to effectively process implementation of regional events.

In his overview, the RCA-FP also presented a table listing the six-monthly reporting of the projects country by country. The meeting commented that MS had not had the chance to review the accuracy of the contents of this table, and therefore requested time to review and update the information. It was also requested that such an important document be circulated as part of the background papers ahead of future NRMs. The Meeting agreed that in the future every MS participating in an RCA project would provide a six-monthly report, regardless of whether they are a resource or recipient MS.

The Meeting recognised the progress that has been made in planning for implementation of the 2012/13 RCA programme.

The Meeting also noted that the information about events requiring hosting had only been made available at this agenda item and therefore requested more time for the National Representatives to engage with their LCCs who would then seek out hosting possibilities through the NPCs. The Meeting requested the NRs to provide this information to the RCA Focal Person by 5 May 2012.

The RCA Focal Person presented a table listing the six-monthly reporting of the projects country by country. It was pointed out that Member States had not had the chance to review the accuracy of the contents of this table. They therefore requested time to review and update the information. They also requested that such an important document be circulated as part of the background documents ahead of future NRMs.

The Meeting agreed that in the future every MS participating in an RCA project would provide a six-monthly report, regardless of whether they are a resource or recipient MS.

8. Report of the Working Group on RCA Procedure for Programme Development - RCANRM(34)/7

The Chair invited the Working Group Chair, Mr Frank Bruhn (NR NZE), to provide background and a brief summary.

Mr Bruhn recalled that the original intent of the Working Group was to examine specific aspects of the Procedures, the most recent to examine the project concept and design stage process. This was later expanded to examine the entire development cycle process. The final report of the Working Group was presented at the 40th GCM in 2011.

At the suggestion of the WG Chair, a consultant (Dr John Easey) was recruited to carry out analysis to identify how and where better complementarity could be provided between: (a) the aspirations of the RCA Member States to have their identified projects supported and funded; and (b) the capability and capacity of the Agency to accommodate such requests within the processes and procedures governing the TC programme. The subsequent report on that analysis made 28 recommendations concerning a broad spectrum of issues associated with the RCA processes and procedures used for the development of the 2012/2013 programme as well as for future programmes. The WG Chair presented and deliberated the 28 recommendations one by one. The presentation is contained in Annex 22.

The participants expressed appreciation to Dr Easey for his efforts in preparing the comprehensive report. The report was adopted by the Meeting and opinions sought on the recommendations.

An issue was raised as to how to oversee and monitor the entire project management cycle, from the concept stage through project implementation and beyond. The meeting discussed the subject in detail, including a suggestion to set up an oversight committee.

The Chair enquired the interest to establish a Committee to oversight the RCA programme planning and monitoring. The composition and TOR of the Committee could be proposed for consideration by the NRs. The Chair also clarified to the questions of PHI and AUL that the Committee would be a recommending but not a decision body, and could hold two annual meetings before NRMs and GCMs.

The DIR-TCAP expressed the view that any enhanced modalities that will contribute to further increasing the effectiveness of programme management, planning and monitoring will be to the advantage of RCA. The proposed Programme Oversight

Committee as an advisory committee to assist the NRs in decision making in the programme management should be useful. He further stated that the IAEA, as a partner of RCA, would support the idea proposed by the Chair.

At the request of AUL to share good experience of AFRA, the DIR-TCAP informed that AFRA has three existing Committees: High Level Steering Committee on Human Resources Development & Nuclear Knowledge Management; Committee on Partnership Building & Resource Mobilization; and Committee on Programme Management.

The Chair of the Working Group proposed to form a committee consisting of the RCA Chair, the RCA-FP, Dr Easey, and himself as the Committee Chair. This proposal was accepted by the Meeting.

The Meeting adopted all recommendations of the report except the one relating to the Best Practice Initiative, which was postponed to be discussed under the relevant Agenda Item 15.

The Meeting agreed to form a committee to monitor implementation of the recommendations of the Working Group on RCA Programme Development and regularly report on the status of implementation at NRMs and GCMs.

The committee will consist of the Chair of the Working Group as the Committee Chair, the RCA Chair, the RCA Focal Person and Dr John Easey.

9. Preparation of the RCA Programme 2014/2015

a. Guidelines for the Planning and Design of the IAEA 2014-2015 - RCANRM(34)/8

The RCA Focal Person gave an overview of the Guidelines for the Planning and Design of the IAEA 2014/15 Technical Cooperation Programme. The presentation included the process, criteria and timeframe to arrive at the concept papers, which would eventually lead to a Regional Programme Note. The timeframe for the TCP 2014/15 is based on the respective responsibilities and tasks of the IAEA Secretariat and of the Member States. Overall, the plan was for 10-15 new projects per region. Any new projects would require extra-budgetary contribution. The presentation is contained in Annex 23.

AUL enquired how much uncommitted funds would be available in 2014. The RCA-FP was not able to provide this information as the budget was approved by the Board annually and this had not happened for 2014 yet. For the current year, this information could be obtained by all Member States from the PCMF. Furthermore, the RCA-FP emphasized there would be more than just financial aspects to be considered in the approval process.

BGD asked for clarification on the optimum size of projects and AUL pointed out that \$400k per project were mentioned in the Guidelines.

The DIR-TCAP suggested that the Meeting should discuss possibilities of extra-budgetary resource mobilization.

Regarding the number of future projects, INS suggested the creation of four or so “umbrella” projects, corresponding to RCA Priority Sectors, which include a higher number of sub-projects. This idea was supported by AUL, MAL and the RCARO.

b. Proposed project concepts/ideas for the RCA Programme 2014/2015
- RCANRM(34)/9

The Chair informed that there were 30 concept papers proposed by nine Member States for 2014/15, which had been circulated to the NRs. However, the nine NRs of the proposing MSs had met in two informal sessions prior to this discussion to reach consensus on a reduced number of submissions, taking the total down from 30 to 11 concepts.

Individual presentations were made by the respective National Representatives on the following eleven remaining concepts.

RCAAUL01	RCAIND02	RCAIND03	RCAIND07
RCAINS01	RCAROK01	RCAPAK13	RCAPHI01
RCAJPN01	RCAVIE01	RCACPR01	

The presentations are given in Annex 24.

Brief discussions, which included requests for clarification and suggestions on improving the concept papers, were held after each presentation. The Chair requested the NRs of the proposing countries to take the feedback into consideration in revising the concepts.

The NRs of the countries proposing the concepts agreed to ensure that revised papers would be submitted to the RCA Chair by 27 April 2012. The RCA Chair would then circulate the revised drafts to all NRs. The NRs would then provide the RCA Chair with their prioritised listings by 11 May 2012 and the RCA Chair would submit the revised concept paper to the Agency through the PCMF, together with a consolidated ranking, by 31 May 2012.

The DIR-TCAP pointed out that all concepts needed to be of a sufficiently high quality and that the Meeting might wish to explore mechanisms to ensure satisfactory quality.

It was generally agreed that the very short timeframe did not allow for a formal mechanism to be developed and implemented. However, it was noted that there had been and would continue to be productive consultation amongst the Member States through the National Project Coordinators and that this would give the National Representative comfort that the proposals submitted to the RCA Chair would be of a high quality.

Before closing the agenda item, the Chair invited AUL (Dr Easey) to present the sample concept proposals developed by him, featuring the RCA’s four Thematic Areas. Dr Easey explained that based on his work for the RCA WG, he proposed thematic project concepts for consideration by the NRs. The concepts were based on the TC Guidelines and had been circulated to the NRs. The rationale was to maintain a very effective management and implementation system. The LCCs would still fulfil their role in technical management and coordination while the leader of the thematic

“umbrella” projects would provide overall administrative oversight of these areas and act as an interface between the LCCs and the Agency. The meeting came back to this issue under Agenda Item 18 (below).

National Representatives of the countries proposing the concepts will ensure that revised papers will be submitted to the RCA Chair by 27 April 2012.

The RCA Chair will circulate the revised drafts to all NRs.

The NRs will provide the RCA Chair with their prioritised listings by 11 May 2012. The RCA Chair will submit the revised concept paper to the Agency through the PCMF together with a consolidated ranking by 31 May 2012.

10. Report of the Director of the RCARO – RCANRM(34)/10

The Director of the RCARO made a presentation on the RCARO report, covering the RCARO’s performance in 2011 and the work plan for 2012. He discussed the Success Story on the marine environment and reported on the RCARO-UNDP project. He also presented plans for a RCARO Strategic Workshop to be held in the near future. The presentation is contained in Annex 25.

INS felt that there was a scope for promoting the RCA beyond UNDP. In principle, RCARO could become the RCA’s ‘Technology Transfer Office’, looking for business opportunities in an environment of increasing need for extra-budgetary funding.

AUL referred to the discussion under the previous agenda item and suggested that there might be a role for the RCARO to be the administrative coordinator of the proposed thematic projects. The role would sit very comfortably with RCARO and this should be a topic for discussion at the upcoming RCARO Strategic Workshop. In the event, the decision taken under Agenda Item 18 (below) rendered that suggestion unnecessary

The Meeting noted the report provided by the Director of the RCARO. The National Representatives commended the RCARO on its successes in promoting the RCA.

11. Report of the Chairman of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee

The Chair read the report of the meeting of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee, which was held on 16 April 2012 and attended by CPR, INS, MYA, ROK, DIR-TCAP and the RCA-FP. The Director of the RCARO and staff also attended. A copy of the report is attached as Annex 26.

The Meeting noted the report and requested the NRs to provide feedback on the draft success stories by 31 May 2012. RCARO agreed to take on board the suggestion made under the previous Agenda Item regarding the idea of the RCARO acting as thematic coordinator for 2014-15 TC cycle projects for further discussion at the proposed workshop on ‘Enhancing Strategic Goals’ (in the event, the decision taken under Agenda Item 18 (below) rendered this suggestion unnecessary). It also agreed to look at expanding the role of RCARO to examining business opportunities and

taking on promising projects, in association with UNDP, that were previously culled during the priority setting exercise.

The RCA-FP requested agreement on the timing of the workshop and it was agreed that this would probably be held in July/August 2012 with the exact dates to be confirmed by 18 May 2012.

The Meeting approved the recommendations of the SAC and requested RCARO to submit a detailed plan for the RCARO Strategic Workshop to the members of the SAC by 20 May 2012.

Regarding the recommendation to include the publication of RCA Success Stories in the TC Best Practice Initiative, the Meeting agreed to discuss this under agenda item 15 together with other proposals for the Best Practice Initiative.

Regarding the draft RCA Success Stories prepared by the RCARO, the Meeting requested the National Representatives to provide their feedback by 31 May 2012.

12. Presentation on FNCA

Dr Machi, FNCA Coordinator of Japan, gave a presentation on the activities of FNCA with a focus on enhancing synergies between RCA and FNCA. A copy of the presentation is attached as Annex 27.

INS commented that there were many obvious synergies between RCA and FNCA and that in their collaboration the two agreements should focus on complementary aspects rather than competing about the same aspects. For example, FNCA's focus was R&D whereas RCA's was on training. This provided natural opportunities for synergies and complementarity.

The Meeting noted the report provided by the FNCA Coordinator of Japan.

13. Collaboration between RCA and FNCA - RCANRM(34)/11

The RCA-FP gave a background on the current collaboration between RCA and FNCA in three thematic areas: Radiation Processing, Radiation Oncology and Mutation Breeding. The current collaboration was focusing on information exchange and supporting participation of NPCs in relevant FNCA meetings. He suggested that the NRM should discuss measures and mechanisms to enhance effectiveness of the collaboration as well as to identify new RCA projects to support the collaboration.

The RCARO Director provided a report on the RCARO's participation in the FNCA Coordinators' Meeting held in Fukui, Japan in March 2012. He suggested several RCA projects for potential collaboration and asked the NRs to provide overall comments and guidance on: (a) these proposed collaborations; (b) the form of information exchange, e.g. workshops; and (c) necessary administrative arrangements such as provision of travel funds. A copy of the presentation is contained in Annex 28.

Regarding the support for RCA participation in the FNCA events, the DIR-TCAP and RCA-FP stated that for any regional project, disbursement for activities had to be foreseen in the project work plans; otherwise these activities could not be implemented. Furthermore, the exact scope of any involvement had to be specified; e.g. would it be only information sharing or more than that? What would be the expected impact of the participation of representatives from RCA MSs in FNCA workshops?

Discussion about specific RCA projects that could have aspects of collaboration between RCA and FNCA followed, and it was generally agreed that the Project Planning Meetings of existing projects would provide the opportunity to review objectives under the aspect of increased RCA-FNCA collaboration. Those Project Planning Meetings would also provide the opportunity to discuss the possibility of providing funding for participation in FNCA workshops and meetings.

Overall, the Meeting agreed that collaboration between RCA and FNCA should continue, but that mutual benefits must be better demonstrated.

The Meeting also noted progress of collaboration between RCA and FNCA in the areas of Mutation Breeding, Radiation Processing and Radiation Oncology.

14. Extension of the RCA Agreement – RCANRM(33)/12

The RCA-FP briefly introduced the background including previous discussions, decisions and agreed actions. He conveyed the advice of the IAEA's Legal Office that the original instrument of acceptance of the new Extension Agreement, signed by the Head of State, the Head of Government or the Minister of Foreign Affairs, must be lodged with the Agency. He emphasized that instruments of extension should be lodged before expiration of the current Extension Agreement on 11 June 2012.

The RCA-FP also informed that so far, three instruments of acceptance had been received from MON, IND and SRL and confirmed by OLA. This means that the 5th Extension Agreement has entered into force, but would only have effect after the expiration of the current extension agreement, i.e. as of 12 June 2012. It would remain in force until 11 June 2017.

AUL commented that the extension agreement had been submitted to the Australian Parliament for consideration during May 2012 and that it was not able to guarantee that this would be fully finalized before 12 June 2012.

The National Representatives agreed to check the status of their Member States' Instruments of Acceptance and to bring the need for lodgement by 11 June 2012 to the attention of their respective Governments.

15. RCA proposal for the TC Best Practice Initiative - RCANRM(33)/13

The National Representative of NZE, as chair of the Working Group on RCA Procedure for Programme Development, presented eight examples of potential RCA submissions to the TC Best Practice Initiative. A copy of the presentation is attached as Annex 29.

Several NRs suggested that all examples had their own merit and that therefore all eight examples could be combined into one submission, showcasing the RCA in its entirety as an example of best practice. However, it was realized in the following discussion that such a combined submission would bear the risk that the high impact of very convincing individual examples could be diluted into a bigger, less focussed example. Furthermore, it was observed that all regional agreements had some procedures that were very similar to those of the RCA; hence focus should be kept on those aspects where the RCA is unique.

The Chair then asked the NRs to indicate their support for each example. This resulted in overall support for the following three examples:

- #3: “Evidence-based regional priorities”;
- #6: “On-going promotional and information programme engaging a wide range of stakeholders”; and
- #5: “An active and monitored TCDC programme and partnerships”.

The Chair then asked NRs to volunteer to complete the submissions and submit them to her by 28 April 2012, to enable her to forward them to the TC Best Practice Initiative Focal Point before the submission deadline on 30 April 2012.

NZE volunteered to finalize submission #3, RCARO volunteered to finalize submission #6 and PHI, with support from AUL, volunteered to finalize submission #5.

The Meeting thanked the Chair of the Working Group and Dr Easey for the extensive preparatory work done and the suggested recommendations for submissions to the TC Best Practice Initiative.

The Meeting agreed on the following three examples to be submitted to the Best Practice Initiative:

- **“Evidence-based regional priorities”**
 - questionnaire to be completed by NZE
- **“On-going promotional and information programme engaging a wide range of stakeholders”**
 - questionnaire to be completed by RCARO
- **“An active and monitored TCDC programme and partnerships”**
 - questionnaire to be completed by PHI and AUL

Completed questionnaires will be submitted to the RCA Chair by 28 April 2012, to enable her to forward them to the Focal Point TC Best Practices Survey before the deadline on 30 April 2012.

16. Activities for the 40th Anniversary of the RCA

a) Report on the celebration in connection with the 34th NRM by the Host Country

The Host Country CPR gave a report on the preparations that had been made for the celebration of the RCA's 40th Anniversary. A copy of the presentation is attached as Annex 30.

AUL suggested that slides of the posters be posted on the RCARO website for public access. This would be a good opportunity to make government officials aware of the excellent work done by the RCA.

b) Proposal from the Secretariat – RCANRM(33)/13

With reference to the discussions and recommendations of the GCM, the RCA-FP introduced a proposal to highlight the 40th Anniversary at the IAEA General Conference. The scope could range from simply moving the existing material to Vienna to producing new material and holding a panel discussion as part of the General Conference. He invited suggestions for format, topics and possible panellists.

Discussion evolved about the pros and cons of holding panel discussion. Some NRs stated that from their experience there was often very little time available during the General Conference for individuals to attend such a discussion forum. On the other hand, it could help considerably to raise the RCA's profile and would provide a unique opportunity to get many stakeholders together in one place to talk about RCA.

It was agreed that the RCA would go ahead with the planning of a Panel Discussion, and the DIR-TCAP indicated that the IAEA Technical Cooperation Department's communication team would be requested to support.

With the RCARO offered its services and expertise to refine the exhibition, the Meeting agreed that the RCARO and CPR would be in charge of organizing the materials for the exhibition. It was suggested that the Agency check the availability of the space, back panel, LCD big monitor and other related equipment as soon as possible and support for the 40th RCA anniversary exhibition.

In terms of the panel discussion, the NRs of INS, MAL and PAK volunteered to form a committee together with the Secretariat to suggest suitable topics for this event.

The Meeting took note of the report on the celebration in connection with the 34th National Representatives Meeting by the Host Country.

The Meeting also took note of the background paper provided by the Secretariat and agreed that in addition to an exhibition, a panel discussion should be held as an event to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the RCA during the IAEA General Conference 2012. The NRs of INS, MAL and PAK volunteered to form a committee together with the Secretariat to suggest suitable topics for this event.

17. Arrangements for the 41st RCA GCM and the 35th and 36th RCA NRMs

The Meeting agreed with the proposal to hold the 41st RCA GCM on the Friday before the IAEA General Conference, i.e. 14 September 2012.

MYA agreed to host the 35th RCA NRM in 2013. Tentative dates are 18 to 22 March 2013. The venue and dates will be confirmed at the 41st GCM.

Arrangements for the 36th NRM will be discussed at the 41st GCM.

18. Any other business

Re-visit of the RCA programme 2014/15 with respect to the proposal to establish four thematic “umbrella” projects

Discussion was held on the timing of establishing a RCA programme structure consisting of four thematic “umbrella” projects, each would include several sub-projects (ref. Agenda Item 9b). While it was generally agreed that this was the most strategic approach, it was also felt that it would be too big a step to move to this proposed structure in the upcoming TC cycle (2014-2015) and that this should therefore be a matter of thorough discussion and planning for the next TC cycle (2016-2017). Given that decision, the proposal to discuss a possible role for RCARO in relation to coordinating thematic projects (ref. Agenda Items 10 and 11) was unnecessary.

19. Adoption of the Meeting Report of the 34th Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives

At the suggestion of the Chair, the Meeting reviewed and revised the recorded decisions. The RCA-FP was requested to circulate the draft report without annexes to the delegates within one month after the meeting. The NRs shall submit their comments within two weeks of receipt. The RCA-FP will circulate the final report within two weeks after receipt of the comments.

20. Closure

IND, on behalf of all Member States, thanked the CPR Government for the successful preparation and hosting of the Meeting. He also thanked the Chair for conducting the Meeting in such a professional and productive manner. This was supported by all other National Representatives.

The National Representative from PAK, having attended this meeting for the first time, was impressed by the strong “family” feeling that considerably contributed to the success of the meeting. The representative from NEP, as an observer, also congratulated the Chair on successfully conducting a productive meeting

The DIR-TCAP said that he felt honoured and privileged to have been able to attend this meeting and noted that he had learned a lot during the past week. He valued the importance of the RCA, which had done a great job over the past 40 years and inspired all other regional agreements. He reconfirmed the IAEA Secretariat’s full

commitment to be a strong partner in the RCA and wished the National Representatives all the best for a successful RCA programme.

In concluding, the Chair thanked the rapporteurs for preparing the draft of Meeting report and the RCA-FP for working hard in assisting her and the DIR-TCAP for his support. She expressed her sincere and heartfelt thanks to all participants for their productive contributions and wished them all a safe journey back home.