



**REGIONAL COOPERATIVE
AGREEMENT**



**INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY
AGENCY**

REPORT OF

THE 37th RCA GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETING

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IAEA Headquarters
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DRAFT

ACRONYMS

CRP(s)	Co-ordinated Research Project(s)
DDG-TC	Deputy Director General, Technical Cooperation
DDG-NA	Deputy Director General, Nuclear Applications and Research
DIR-TCAP	Director for the Asia and the Pacific Region
DIR-RCARO	Director RCA Regional Office
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GCM	RCA General Conference Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
MS(s)	RCA Member State(s)
MTS	RCA Medium Term Strategy
NR(s)	National RCA Representative(s)
NRM	RCA Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
PACT	Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy
PLCC	Project Lead Country Coordinator
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RCARO SAC	RCARO Standing Advisory Committee
RCA FP	RCA Focal Person
RRU(s)	Regional Resource Unit(s)
SAGTAC	Standing Advisory Committee on Technical Assistance and Cooperation
SH-TCAP-1	Head of Section 1 of the Asia and the Pacific Region
TC	Technical Cooperation
TCAP	Division for Asia and the Pacific
TCDC	Technical Cooperation among Development Countries
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

INTRODUCTION

The 37th RCA General Conference Meeting was held on the 26th of September 2008 at the IAEA Headquarters, Vienna, Austria. Twenty nine participants from the 17 RCA Member States; Australia (AUL), Bangladesh (BGD), China (CPR), India (IND), Indonesia (INS), Japan (JPN), Republic of Korea (ROK), Malaysia (MAL), Mongolia (MON), Myanmar (MYA), New Zealand (NZL), Pakistan (PAK), the Philippines (PHI), Singapore (SIN), Sri Lanka (SRL), Thailand (THA), Vietnam (VIE), and three representatives of RCA Regional Office (RCARO) attended the Meeting.

Ms. Ana Maria Cetto, (DDG-TC), Mr. Werner Burkart (DDG-NA), Mr. Manase Peter Salema (DIR-TCAP), Mr. Zhang Jing (SH-TCAP-1) and Mr. Prinath Dias (RCA FP) represented the IAEA. Agency's Technical Officers, Project Management Officers of TCAP and support staff also attended.

The list of the participants is given in Annex 1.

I. Opening

I.1 Opening Remarks by the RCA Chair

Dr. Vuong Huu Tan, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, Vietnam, welcomed the participants and the invitees. He noted with satisfaction that since the last GCM, the RCA had made significant progress in ensuring that the programme responded productively and efficiently to the needs of the MSs. He commented on the satisfactory progress made in implementing the decisions made at the 30th NRM and in the implementation of the MTS and thanked the DDGs, DIR-TCAP, RCA FP and the staff of the Division for Asia and the Pacific for their support of the Programme. He summarized the main issues to be discussed at the Meeting and sought the cooperation of all the delegates to bring the Meeting to a successful conclusion.

The Opening Remarks of the RCA Chair are given in Annex 2.

I.2 Messages from the IAEA

The Chair invited Ms. Ana Maria Cetto (DDG-TC) to deliver her message.

Ms. Cetto thanked the MSs for inviting her to attend this Meeting and welcomed the delegates to Vienna. She noted the progress made in ensuring that the RCA programme responded productively and efficiently to the needs of its MSs and the progress made during the past year in the implementation of the MTS.

Commenting on the report of the Working Group on Enhancing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, she noted with interest the recommendations related to: the sustainability of projects; the monitoring the progress of the national component of the projects by the MSs: the drawing up of plans on how to finish the projects so that there were sustainable outcomes; and, the recommendation on exploring possible sources of funding other than the IAEA for implementing TCDC activities. She said that the recommendations made in this report would play a significant role in future TCDC activities within the RCA Programme.

She commented on the significant role played by the NRs in the development of the RCA programme for 2009/2011 and said that the decision to reduce the number of projects to 15 and focusing on key priority areas that would benefit from regional cooperation and applications of

nuclear technology, would avoid the dispersion of effort and resources that occurred in a programme with a large number of projects.

She noted with satisfaction the greater responsibility the NRs have undertaken under the MTS to ensure the successful implementation of agreed regional projects, and the attainment of their declared objectives and expected outcomes. In particular she was pleased to observe that at the annual regional meetings the progress of each of the projects would be reviewed against the identified Milestones and Key Performance Indicators.

She said that the ongoing efforts to publicize RCA project successes as a means to establish partnerships with other regional and international organisations reflected one of the goals of the TC Strategy and the publication of success stories through the RCARO would contribute to improving the visibility of the RCA Programme in the region.

She expressed the wish that the Meeting would successfully achieve all its objectives and said that she looked forward to learning about the outcome of the deliberations.

The Message of DDG TC is given in Annex 3.

The Chair invited Mr. Werner Burkart (DDG-NA) to deliver his message.

The DDG-NA thanked the MSs for the invitation extended to him to address the RCA GCM. He congratulated the MSs on the progress made and positive achievements during the past year in the various fields of nuclear sciences and applications. He spoke on the benefits derived by the MSs from the RCA projects in areas of Radiation and Radioisotope Technology, Human Health, Water Resources, and Food and Agriculture. He gave a short summary of the work being carried out on cancer control through PACT. He also spoke about the work carried out on water resources and said that the efforts in this area were focused on carrying out assessments of ground water resources that would lead to new regulations for protection of ground water resources. He said that an Atlas containing hydrological data generated through TC Projects and CRPs was expected to be published in 2008. He said that the projects implemented in Food and Agriculture with the technical support of IAEA/FAO Joint Division were helping the MSs to: use land resources more sustainably; to improve livestock production; to improve quality and stress tolerance of crops; and, to expand trade in agricultural products through food irradiation. He commented on the ongoing reform process in the FAO which could adversely affect the Joint Division and stated that representations had been made to FAO in this regard. He concluded by wishing the Meeting every success.

The Message of DDG-NA is given in Annex 4.

AUL asked DDG-NA about the views of SAGNA on the current proposals related to IAEA/FAO Joint Division and about the relative contributions of the IAEA and of the FAO to the joint Division. DDG-NA stated that detailed information had been presented to the Board of Governors Meeting held in March and to the current Board Meeting. Copies of these documents would be made available to this Meeting's delegates.

CPR stated that, in consultation with G-77, it was planning to present a resolution to the IAEA General Conference expressing concern regarding this issue and had also briefed the delegates of the Peoples Republic of China to the FAO General Conference in this regard.

DDG-NA thanked the MSs for their support on this issue.

JPN stated that two Background Papers containing a resolution proposed by MAL and a proposal made by AUL had been circulated by the RCA FP to the NRs only a few days prior to the Meeting and suggested that, although these two papers could be discussed at this Meeting, no decisions should be made due to the insufficient time given for consultations.

AUL appreciated the concern expressed by JPN and advised that the paper submitted by AUL did not require a decision.

I.3 Adoption of Agenda – RCANRM(37)/1

The revised Agenda, which was circulated to the participants, was adopted with the amendment following a proposal from PAK to have the Lunch Break at 1300-1400 to enable some of the participants to attend religious observances. The adopted Agenda is given in Annex 5.

The Meeting agreed to adopt the Agenda with the above-mentioned changes.

I.4 Appointment of rapporteurs

At the invitation of the Chair, the RCA FP announced that Mr. J-K Lee, of the RCA Secretariat, would be the rapporteur for the Meeting.

II. Matters arising from the 30thth Regional Meeting of National RCA Representatives – Hanoi, Vietnam, 8-10 April 2008 – RCAGCM (37)/2

The Chair referred to Background Paper [RCAGCM (37)/2], which dealt with 14 issues raised at the 30th NRM held in Vietnam, and asked the delegates for any general comments before proceeding to discuss the specific outstanding issues

Referring to Item no. 5 the Chair requested the NRs to provide information as soon as possible to the RCA FP, on the extrabudgetary contributions they intend to make to the RCA Programme in 2009.

The Chair invited DIR-TCAP to report on Item No. 6, which related to the enquiry made at the 30th NRM about the IAEA's plans for maintaining the integrity of the Distance Assisted Training (DAT) material prepared under RCA Project RAS/6/029. DIR-TCAP, stated that following the 30th NRM he held consultations within the Secretariat on the general issue of maintaining the integrity of all training material developed under both TC projects and CRPs, giving the RCA case as an example. In these consultations it was confirmed that maintaining the integrity of such materials fell within the core functions of the Agency. He said that all training materials developed by the Agency would be reviewed from a technical standpoint on a regular basis to assess any needs and requirements for modifying and/or upgrading them and would become the responsibility of the relevant technical department. He confirmed that the Agency would be able to maintain the integrity of the DAT materials.

The Chair invited AUL to present the proposal contained in the Background Paper RCAGCM(37)/9 regarding collaboration between the IAEA and Research Institute for Asia and the Pacific (RIAP), University of Sydney, for the management of the DAT Programme. AUL thanked Mr. Salema for the information and said that the DAT materials had been developed partly with Australian extrabudgetary funds and AUL has taken the leadership in developing these materials. AUL further stated that the issue was not simply maintaining the integrity of the materials but ensuring that the Member States would continue to have access to these materials in a sustainable manner. In their letter, which was circulated to the NRs, RIAP was

proposing to carry out a schedule of tasks on behalf of the IAEA and in consultation with the IAEA. No additional funding would be required for this purpose.

JPN inquired whether any other additional resources would be needed for this purpose and the legal nature of the proposed MOU. AUL confirmed that no additional funds would be required from the IAEA and added that the point at issue for the RIAP was to secure an assurance from the IAEA that it would cooperate with them, since the IAEA held the copyright of these materials. The proposed RIAP contribution was detailed in their letter.

On the issue of the proposed collaboration between RIAP and IAEA, Mr. Salema inquired what the intended next steps were - whether RIAP would submit a more detailed proposal to the IAEA explaining its requirements. AUL stated that, it would be helpful if there were a clear definition of the bounds that would be imposed by the IAEA on the use of these materials, because of the IAEA copyright. AUL further stated that input from this NRM concerning any further matters that needed to be taken into account before any formal application was made would be welcome. Mr. Salema said that a formal proposal from the RIAP would have to be considered by the relevant competent IAEA offices. He further stated that without any prejudice to this proposal, he wished to state that the work done by the IAEA Secretariat, was not limited to maintaining the integrity of training and educational material, but also for dissemination of this material to the Member States, and that in both cases cooperation with Member State experts was part of how it operates.

RCA FP gave a short description on the actions that had been undertaken to deliver the DAT materials on conventional nuclear medicine as well as the actions that were being undertaken to deliver the new DAT materials on PET, PET/CT and SPECT/CT that were currently under development.

The Chair announced that Items 7-10 in the Background Paper RCAGCM(37)/2, concerning the RCARO would be considered under the relevant Agenda Items.

Referring to Item 13, regarding extending the area of collaboration with FNCA to Mutation Breeding, the Chair invited comment from CPR as the Lead Country for the relevant RCA Project.

CPR informed the Meeting that the PLCC had been consulted in this regard, and that CPR endorsed collaboration with FNCA on Mutation Breeding. AUL stated that collaboration with FNCA in the other two areas of activities was based on exchange of information through the project leaders of the two programmes and collaboration in Mutation Breeding also should be on the same basis.

The Meeting decided that the RCA Focal Person should inform the FNCA Coordinator of the agreement of the RCA to collaborate with FNCA in activities related to Mutation Breeding. The collaboration would be on the basis of exchange of information.

II.2 Report of the Working Group on Enhancing TCDC – RCAGCM(37)/3

The Chair invited Dr. Alumanda Dela Rosa, NR PHI, and the Chair of the Working Group to make a presentation on this Item. She said that, following a proposal made by AUL, the 30th RCA NRM had appointed a Working Group to make recommendations to the 37th GCM on enhancing TCDC in the RCA Programme. She said that the Meeting of the Working Group with the participation of representatives of AUL, BGD, CPR, INS, MAL, PHI and ROK was held in

Malaysia on 30 July to 1 August 2008. She said that the Working Group report contained eleven recommendations, in accordance with its Terms of Reference, and it had been circulated to the NRs for their comments. She said the report had been revised based on the comments received from Japan and Pakistan and the revised report was contained in the Background Paper RCAGCM(37)/3. Summarizing the Working Group discussions she noted that the contribution that both the developed and the developing countries could make to the enhancement of TCDC in RCA Programme had been recognised as an important factor. The recommendations of the Working Group had also been focussed on the important added value that contributions from the developing MSs could make to the projects. She emphasized that the recommendations did not change established RCA practices and were not contrary to IAEA TC practices and procedures. She gave a brief overview of all the Working Group recommendations.

At the invitation of the Chair, AUL highlighted the importance of making use of the substantial added value that the MSs gave to projects as they were adapted to meet the local conditions and needs, and went on to opine that not enough effort had been placed on this aspect in the past.

The Chair suggested that the Meeting considered each of the recommendations separately.

Recommendation 1

Recommendation 1 was adopted without any revisions.

Recommendation 2

Recommendation 2 was adopted without any revisions.

Recommendation 3

AUL sought clarification with regard to the need for this recommendation since the opportunities for TCDC activities would be identified during the development of the project. AUL was of the opinion that this recommendation should apply only to projects where significant TCDC components had been identified.

DIR-RCARO stated that in his view, the primary requirement should be the ability of the recruited expert to achieve the expected outcome of the mission.

RCA FP stated that according to his understanding, while the Working Group agreed that the ability of an expert to successfully complete an assignment should be the primary requirement in recruitment, the ability of an expert from a developing country to better understand the local conditions of another developing country was considered to be an additional important factor in some cases. This consideration had been influential in recommending the hierarchy proposed in this recommendation.

The Meeting adopted this recommendation with revisions to indicate that it should apply only to projects with significant TCDC components.

Recommendation 4

At the invitation of the Chair, JPN proposed that the provision of information on RRUs by the NRs, as stated in this recommendation, should be on a voluntary basis and this recommendation should be accordingly revised.

NZL inquired about the procedure for providing information on RRUs. The RCA FP stated that a database on RRUs had been created and focal points had been appointed for updating RRU data. However, since the database had not been updated by these focal persons, it had become necessary for the Secretariat to obtain the relevant information from each MS to update the database.

The Meeting decided to adopt this recommendation with revisions to indicate that the provision of the requested information would be voluntary.

Recommendation 5

At the invitation of the Chair JPN proposed that identification of experts and lecturers by NRs should be on the basis of individual events. AUL, clarifying the purpose of this recommendation, stated that the intention was to obtain information to update the roster of experts and lecturers maintained by the IAEA and stated that would not be feasible to do it on an individual event basis, since this would impose a heavy work load on the Secretariat due to the large number of events implemented under the RCA Programme. RCA FP confirmed that it would not be possible for the Secretariat to implement this proposal due to the lead time requirements for the large number of events implemented.

IND agreed with the views expressed by AUL and the RCA FP.

JPN stated that this recommendation could be accepted if there were no change in the past practice of inviting nominations from MSs for each of the events.

The RCA FP stated that the practice of inviting nominations from MSs for participation in regional events would continue. He also noted that the recommendation under discussion related to the recruitment by the Agency, of experts required to provide technical support for the implementation of project activities.

Recommendation 5 was adopted without any revisions.

Recommendation 6

PAK stated that its comments on the recommendations of the Working Group had been provided and some of them have been incorporated in the final version of the Report. PAK also stated that the Chair of the Working Group had provided clarifications on the issues raised. Commenting on recommendations 6 and 7, PAK expressed the view that the review of the effectiveness of TCDC strategy should be an integral part of the overall evaluation and monitoring of the RCA Programme and a follow-up Meeting of the Working Group would not be required for this purpose. PAK also stated that TCDC activities should be properly introduced in the Concept Forms and on the PCMF platform as a monitoring and an evaluation tool.

There were no other comments regarding this recommendation.

Recommendation 6 was adopted without any revisions.

Recommendation 7

Commenting on the comments of PAK on this recommendation, PHI stated that the Working Group had made this recommendation for the purpose of reviewing the overall TCDC strategy and not for reviewing the TCDC activities on a project-by-project basis.

PAK stated that this recommendation could be considered by the NRs after two years.

AUL supported the views of PAK.

PHI suggested that this recommendation should be modified to indicate a Working Group may be convened after two years if necessary.

Recommendation 7 was adopted with the revision proposed by PHI

Recommendation 8

There were no comments on recommendation 8.

Recommendation 8 was adopted without any revisions.

Recommendation 9

There were no comments on recommendation 9.

Recommendation 9 was adopted without any revisions.

Recommendation 10

JPN stated that it would be premature to consider this recommendation since this was a matter under the consideration of the Board of Governors and requested that its reservations on this recommendation be recorded in the minutes of the Meeting.

IND expressed the view that this resolution did not reflect on the outcome of the Board of Governors Meeting, but it was simply an expression of the MSs' views on this issue.

AUL suggested that the views of the RCA on this subject should be expressed before the Board of Governors took a decision. AUL also stated that the proposal to introduce a programme support cost would adversely affect the TCDC activities that would most benefit the MSs at the lowest end of the development scale.

PHI agreed with the views expressed by AUL.

The RCA FP stated that MAL had drafted a resolution in this regard, which has been circulated to the MSs, and suggested the Meeting take a decision on whether this resolution could be adopted or not.

JPN stated that the comments made by AUL with regard to the report of the Working Group are acceptable, but a decision on the resolution that was circulated by MAL through the RCA Secretariat should be postponed since there had been insufficient time for MSs to have consultations.

Recommendation 10 was adopted without any revisions. The resolution presented on this issue was not adopted.

Recommendation 11

PAK stated that this issue was not within the purview or the mandate of the Working Group on TCDC and it was not in favour of this recommendation.

PHI responded that this recommendation fell under the last of the agreed tasks delegated to the Working Group, namely “other significant matters that may arise during the Working Group’s deliberations”.

VIE agreed with this recommendation, but was not in favour of the proposal to submit the certificate awarded upon completion of the exercise along with nominations for regional events.

IND stated that, while the objective of this recommendation could be understood, the issue was whether a Working Group on TCDC could make a recommendation that would affect the whole RCA Programme.

PAK stated that while it had no objection to information on RCA Programme being provided on a CD, it was not in favour of any testing of the knowledge or award of any certificates.

AUL stated that the first part of the recommendation regarding the preparation of the CD could be a task that could be undertaken by RCARO, but the second part of the recommendation relating to the use of the certificate for screening nominations for regional events was a more complex issue.

NZL inquired whether there was a need to produce a CD with information on RCA since sufficient information was already available.

AUL stated that, although sufficient information was available, it was not being used effectively by some of the RCA stakeholders. The purpose of the interactive CD was to assist in assessing and verifying that users had understood the material and gained a basic understanding about essential key features of the RCA and its programme.

The RCA FP stated that from day-to-day interactions with the RCA stakeholders, it was clear that many of them did not have a clear understanding of the RCA Programme.

CPR suggested posting this proposed material on the RCA Members Only web-site and requesting the potential participants of RCA events to register to use this material.

The Meeting agreed to the production of an interactive CD containing information on RCA and its programme. The Meeting did not agree to the proposal for the issue of a certificate or submission of the certificate to the IAEA with nominations for regional events.

The recommendations adopted by the Meeting are given in Annex 6.

II.3 Format of the RCA Annual Report

At the invitation of Chair, RCA FP introduced this item contained in the Background Document RCAGCM (37)/4, which was based on the decision taken at the 30th NRM to invite suggestions from MSs for improving the format of the Annual Report. He reported that the proposals received from AUL along with a version containing the revisions made by the Secretariat were contained in the Background Paper. He reviewed the objective of the revision, which was to make the Annual Report a useful document for the RCA stakeholders and suitable for presentation to potential partners. One of the main revisions suggested was to discontinue the

practice of including the Annual Reports of individual RCA MSs in the RCA Annual Report because of the difficulty of maintaining quality and uniformity. It was proposed that instead these reports could be tabled at the RCA NRMs. It had been also suggested that matters pertaining to RCARO be incorporated in the report under relevant sections rather than a separate part of the Report. Another revision that had been suggested was to reduce the amount of financial details provided, which were of limited use compared to the effort required to prepare them. He said that if the Meeting agreed to these suggestions in principle, further details could be worked out through further consultations.

AUL commented that there was very little difference between its proposal and the proposal made by the Secretariat and as stated by the RCA FP the main issues were the Annual Reports of the MSs and the amount of financial details provided. He said the minor differences between the two proposals could be resolved through consultations.

PAK stated that it would be helpful to prepare a format for the Annual Reports of the MSs. RCA FP stated that the 30th NRM had decided that the format used by IND in preparation of its 2007 Annual Report should be used as the format for the Annual Reports of the MSs.

The Meeting agreed in principle to revisions suggested and requested the Secretariat to finalize the format of the report through further consultations as required.

III. RCA Programme in 2009-2011

The Chair invited the RCA FP to introduce this item.

RCA FP noted that the Background Paper on this issue, RCAGCM (37)/5 – Rev.1, contained: a summary of the procedure adopted at the 29th NRM for the development of the RCA Programme; the list of the projects for implementation in 2009/2011; and, the Budget allocations for the projects, which were based on the Project Work Plans. These Work Plans were not presented to the Meeting since they were very detailed and all NRs could access them in PCMF.

AUL inquired whether it would be possible to add extrabudgetary funds to individual projects for implementing TCDC activities, which were not envisaged at the planning stage but became necessary during the implementation stage of the projects. AUL also inquired whether there was a mechanism for the use of extrabudgetary funds provided for activities related to the sustainability of completed projects.

The RCA FP stated that there had not been any difficulties in the past in adding extrabudgetary funds provided by the MSs to individual projects, as and when they were provided. He also stated that the sustainability of projects was a responsibility of the MSs and the Agency would not be able to provide technical inputs after a project had been closed.

AUL stated that the residual funds of two projects implemented with extrabudgetary funds provided by AUL were to be used for TCDC activities and inquired how these funds could be utilized after these projects are closed. The RCA FP advised that these funds had been transferred to the RCA Project on Management of TCDC approved for implementation in 2007, and they could be used for the planned TCDC activities in 2009.

PHI stated that one of the recommendations of the Working Group on Enhancing TCDC was that the MSs should have an exit strategy for sustaining project activities and whether funds could be provided for such purposes. The RCA FP stated that it would not be possible for the Agency to

continue to provide support after a project was closed and sustainability was mainly the responsibility of the MSs.

DIR-RCARO stated that, in consultation with the RCA FP and the relevant PLCC, they had made preparations to implement the RCA Project on “Regional Harmonization of Nuclear and Isotopic Techniques for Marine Pollution Management” with funds provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea and that the IAEA has been informed by the RCARO about this. The Secretariat’s position about this was requested, since this project appeared in the Background Paper as one of the projects to be implemented under the TC Programme.

Mr. M. P. Salema, DIR-TCAP noted that the RCA had developed its programme through an elaborate process and had submitted to the IAEA a list of projects requesting IAEA support for their implementation. He commented that the IAEA had allocated resources to all the RCA projects that had been submitted and if there were a decision to withdraw any of these projects, it would be a decision of the RCA MSs.

DIR-RCARO suggested the discussion of this issue during his presentation.

NZL inquired if this project were implemented through RCARO, could the funds allocated for the project be used for another of the RCA Projects. AUL also sought the same clarification.

Mr. M. P. Salema, stated that, if the MSs wished, this project could be implemented either as a “Footnote a/” with extrabudgetary funds provided by RCARO or as a project implemented by the RCARO similar to the way the project on the “Environmental Effects of the Tsunami” was implemented. He went on to explain that if this project were implemented through one of these two mechanisms, the TC funds allocated for this project could be used for other national or regional projects of the Division for Asia and the Pacific, which still remained unfunded. He further advised that, according to Agency policy, no Member State or a regional programme had a fixed allocation of the TCF.

PHI stated that, under the MTS, the number of RCA Projects had been reduced, so that more resources could be allocated to the projects, and inquired how the level of funding for the 2009/2011 compared with the funds allocated for the 2007/2008 programme. The RCA FP stated that allocation of funds for each of the projects was based on the Work Plans and it was difficult to compare the allocations for the two projects cycles, since it was not possible to identify a suitable parameter to do so, due to the difference in the duration of the two TC cycles. He further said that the percentage of the Hard Core component of the RCA Programme of 2009/2011 was more than the Hard Core component of the 2007/2008 Programme.

Mr. Salema stated the MTS had made it possible to design a results based quality programme for the RCA. He said that in a results based environment, it was necessary to consider the programme first and then the resources required to implement the programme to produce the desired results. He also advised that because of the discipline of the RCA in developing a focused programme of well-designed projects, the RCA Programme had been fully funded.

The Chair stated that the decision regarding the project on Marine Pollution could be taken during the Agenda Item on the Report of the DIR-RCARO and, subject to this decision, the rest of the projects could be considered as approved.

The Meeting approved the proposed programme subject to a decision on the project on Marine Pollution Management.

IV. Progress of the Implementation of RCA Medium Term Strategy

Chair invited RCA FP to introduce this item.

RCA FP noted that in accordance with the decision taken on this matter, a report on the progress of the implementation of the MTS had been submitted to all NR Meetings held since its adoption. He said that all activities of the Implementation Plan except Item C.1.9 “Highlight of project output and outcome from the Annual Report to be published at the RCA homepage” had been implemented or were in the process of being implemented. .

The Meeting noted the report on the progress of implementation of the RCA Medium Term Strategy.

V. RCA Regional Office

VI. Report of the Director of RCARO

At the invitation of the Chair the DIR-RCARO, Dr. K-M. Choi presented his report.

He stated that the RCARO was planning to conduct a survey to find out the effectiveness of RCA Success Stories and the questionnaires prepared for this purpose would be circulated together with the second set of Success Stories.

Reporting on the progress of collaboration with Clean Air-Initiative for Asia (CAI-Asia), he referred to the proposal to share the RCA database on air-pollution levels which had been made by the CAI Representative who attended the 30th NRM. He went on to advise that this proposal had been discussed at the project Progress Review Meeting and it had been recommended that further improvements to the database should be made before it could be released. He also stated that the project PLCC would communicate with the CAI on related technical matters.

DIR-RCARO noted that PEMSEA (Partnership in Environmental Management of Seas of East Asia) was planning to hold the next EAS (East Asian Seas) Congress in 2009, and the representation of RCA at this event would be helpful in improving the collaboration with PEMSEA. He recalled that RCA participated in the last Congress held in 2006.

Referring to the proposal to conduct a Workshop on improving the capabilities of RCA with the financial support of the RCARO, DIR-RCARO stated that the RCARO made this proposal at the 30th NRM, and following that the RCARO was requested to seek the views of the National RCA Representatives. He advised that a proposal had been received from Bangladesh for a Workshop on “Strengthening the Infrastructure for a Nuclear Power Programme”. He noted that there had been a proposal for an RCA Project on this topic but this had not been approved for implementation in 2009/2011. The RCA FP stated that this project proposal was discussed at the 30th NRM and the decision in this regard was made according to the wishes of the MSs.

Reporting on the status of the establishment of a database of end-users, DIR-RCARO stated that six MSs had responded to the questionnaire they had been sent. He advised that the RCARO was planning to create a database of the RCA stakeholders, end-users and international conferences relevant to RCA and noted that better cooperation from the RCA MSs would be required for the preparation of this database.

The DIR-RCARO, speaking on the appointment of the next DIR-RCARO, stated that action would be taken as decided by the 30th NRM. He gave a summary of the process. He expected that the new DIR-RCARO would be appointed at the 31st NRM to be held in Japan in 2009.

DIR-RCARO also reported on a proposal to seek support from UNESCAP's Tsunami Trust Fund and advised that RCARO was collaborating with the Coordinating Committee for Geosciences Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP) on the matter.

Referring to the efforts of RCARO to develop a project to be implemented with funds provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea, the DIR-RCARO recalled that the 30th NRM had decided that the RCARO should consider supporting one of the RCA projects approved for the 2009/2011-project cycle. Following consultations with the relevant stakeholders, the RCARO had selected the project on "Regional Harmonization of Nuclear and Isotopic Techniques for Marine Pollution Management". The RCA FP had consulted the National RCA Representatives about this and no objections had been received to the proposal. He said that the RCA FP had been informed about the agreement of the Government of the Republic of Korea and the RCARO expected that the project would have been withdrawn from the IAEA TC Project portfolio.

The Chair suggested that the discussion on the presentation of the RCARO Chair could be taken together with the Report of the RCARO SAC Meeting, since the issues are common.

V2. Report of the Chairman of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee

The RCA Chair, who also functioned as the Chair of the RCARO SAC, presented the report of the 7th Meeting RCARO SAC held on 25 September 2008.

The Chair advised that the RCARO SAC had recommended the four Success Stories prepared for publication in 2008, for the approval by the 37th GCM. He further stated that the SAC recommended the circulation of the Questionnaire prepared by the RCARO to survey the effectiveness of the Success Stories and efforts for preparing a 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.

The Chair reported that the RCARO SAC had proposed that the implementation of the project on the Environmental Effects of Tsunami should be extended to 2009 as a possible alternative, if the project on "Regional Harmonization of Nuclear and Isotopic Techniques for Marine Pollution Management" could not be withdrawn by the IAEA. He commented further that if this were accepted, a new project could be formulated for implementation from 2010.

AUL proposed that the project on "Marine Pollution" be implemented through the Agency and the funds allocated for RCARO be utilized for extension of the "Tsunami Project" as suggested by the RCARO SAC. This view was supported by PAK, PHI, IND and MAL.

The Meeting decided that the proposed RCA project on "Regional Harmonization of Nuclear and Isotopic Techniques for Marine Pollution Management" should be implemented as an IAEA TC Project. The Meeting also decided that the current UNDP/RCA Project on "Mitigation of Coastal Impact of Natural Disasters like Tsunami Using Nuclear or Isotope-based Techniques" should be extended to 2009 as recommended by the RCARO SAC. The Meeting also decided that the RCARO should formulate a new project for implementation from 2010 onwards.

Referring to the proposal on the collaboration with CAI-Asia Centre, the Chair stated that the SAC had recommended the provision of the RCA database to CAI, after the completion of the current project at the end of 2010, since additional data was required to complete the database. He also stated that the SAC had recommended that the RCA FP should clarify the legal issues related to release of this database. He also stated that the SAC had recommended the posting of this database on RCA Members Only Homepage. The Meeting agreed to the recommendations of the RCARO SAC.

The Meeting decided that the database on air particulate pollution levels in the RCA Member States could be released to the CAI-Asia in 2011, if there were no legal impediments to do so. It was also decided that the RCA Focal Person should clarify the legality of releasing this data. The Meeting also decided that the database should be posted on the RCA Members Only Homepage.

Regarding the participation of RCA at the Congress on East Asian Seas, the Chair stated that the SAC recommended the participants to be persons of high profile, and the RCA FP should identify suitable persons in consultation with the PLCC and the TO of the relevant RCA Project. The Meeting had noted that the RCARO had offered to provide financial support for one or two participants. The Meeting accepted the recommendation of the SAC.

The Meeting decided that RCA should be represented at the Congress on East Asian Seas to be held in November 2009, by one or two persons selected in consultation with the TO and the PLCC of the relevant RCA Project. The Meeting noted that funds would be provided by RCARO.

Referring to the proposal for conducting a Workshop for enhancing the capabilities of RCA, the Chair stated that, as decided by the 30th NRM, the RCARO had invited proposals from the MSs but the only proposal received was from BGD. This was for a Workshop on “Strengthening Nuclear Power Infrastructure and Planning for Introduction of Nuclear Power Plants”. He advised that the SAC had referred this proposal to the GCM for decision. He also said that some SAC Members had proposed conducting a Workshop on drafting good Success Stories, but the RCARO had indicated that the time available would not be sufficient to conduct such a Workshop in 2008.

AUL stated the decision made by the 30th NRM was to conduct a Workshop on enhancing the capabilities of the RCA and not of RCA projects.

The DIR-RCARO stated that the original plan was to conduct a Workshop in one of the MSs on a topic that would help the MS in implementing its programme. He stated that since no such proposals were received, the proposal from BGD could be considered if it helps BGD to meet its current needs, even though it was a deviation from the original plan.

BGD stated that a number of MSs, namely PHI, MAL, THA, VIE, and BGD were planning to commence nuclear power programmes. He also stated that the highest growth in nuclear power in the future would be in Asia. Considering this scenario he stated that this Workshop would be of benefit to BGD and several other MSs.

JPN indicated inability to support the proposal of BGD and suggested that a Workshop should not be held this year if a suitable alternate topic could not be identified.

AUL expressed support to the views expressed by JPN and recalled that a proposal for a project on nuclear power had not been approved at the 30th NRM.

IND agreed with the views expressed by AUL and stated that the decision made at the 30th NRM was to conduct a Workshop to improve the capabilities of RCA and a Workshop need not be held in 2008, if a suitable topic could not be found.

The Chair inquired whether a decision for not holding a workshop this year would result in funds not been allocated for a Workshop next year. The DIR- RCARO stated that the RCARO would be willing to support a Workshop on a topic acceptable to the MSs, when the MSs decided to hold such a Workshop.

The Meeting decided that a Workshop should not be conducted in 2008.

Referring to the establishment of a database of end-users the Chair stated that the Meeting took note of the progress on the database development, and commended the RCARO's efforts in establishing the database. He also said that the Meeting recommended the RCARO devise a proper level of access control to the database.

The Meeting adopted the recommendation of the RCARO SAC and decided that the RCARO should devise a proper level of access control to the database.

The Chair presented the recommendations of the RCARO SAC on the appointment of the new DIR-RCARO and stated that the Vacancy Notice would be issued on 15th of October and the appointment was expected to be made at the 31st NRM.

The Meeting accepted the recommendations of the RCARO SAC.

The Chair stated that the RCARO SAC considered a proposal made by RCARO to seek funds from UNECSAP Tsunami Trust Fund and had requested the RCARO to find out the nature of the obligations of the recipients, the scope of the work to be carried out and the mechanism to formulate a proposal for the consideration of the SAC.

The Meeting accepted the recommendations of the RCARO SAC.

V.3 Publication of RCA success stories

Chair invited RCA FP to introduce the item, who stated that as decided at the 30th NRM, the four Success Stories to be published were submitted for the approval of the 37th RCA GCM.

PAK stated that the capacity of the geothermal plants installed in the Philippines as given in the success story on "Harnessing Energy from the Heart of the Earth" should be changed to 49 MW. He also said that PAK was proposing a number of revisions of the Success Story on "Strengthening Skills in NDT for Regional Industry" and he would inform the RCA FP of these revisions separately.

The Meeting approved the publication of the Success Stories subject to the revisions proposed by Pakistan.

VI.1. 31st RCA Meeting of National Representatives, Japan 2009

JPN confirmed its agreement to host the 31st NRM in 2009 and stated that additional information including the dates of the Meeting would be conveyed in due course.

VI.2 32nd RCA Meeting of National Representatives, 2010

PHI indicated its interest in hosting the 32nd RCA NRM to be held in 2010.

VI.3 RCA Representations at the FNCA Coordinators' Meeting

RCA FP introducing this item at the invitation of the Chair said that a representative of RCA had been attending the FNCA Coordinators Meetings and a representative of FNCA had been attending Meetings of National RCA Representatives over past several years, to maintain collaboration between the two programmes. He said that the RCA FP had represented RCA at the past FNCA Coordinators Meetings. He said it would be more appropriate for the MSs to appoint a suitable person to represent RCA at these Meetings since the RCA FP did not have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the RCA. He further said that from the Agency's point of view also, it would not be appropriate for a member of the Secretariat to attend these Meetings.

IND proposed that the current Chair of the RCA should represent RCA at the FNCA Meetings.

PHI suggested that DIR-RCARO should represent RCA since it had been decided that RCARO should liaise with FNCA. DIR-RCARO stated that FNCA seem to prefer to communicate with the RCA FP rather than RCARO regarding collaborative activities. AUL stated that it would prefer the RCA FP to represent RCA, but if it were not possible due to an IAEA decision, AUL would agree to RCARO representing RCA.

DIR-RCARO said that in principle, RCARO could represent RCA at FNCA Meetings, but he would like to consult RCARO SAC to identify a suitable person depending on the nature of the FNCA Meeting.

VIE stated that it would be more appropriate for a person with the knowledge of all RCA Projects to attend the FNCA Meetings, since one of the main objectives was to avoid duplication.

The Meeting decided that the Director of the RCARO should represent RCA at the future FNCA Coordinators Meetings.

VII. Any other business

There were no issues to be discussed under any other business.

VIII. Closing

At the invitation of the Chair to make concluding remarks, the DIR-TCAP, Mr. M. P. Salema, renewed the commitment of the Agency, as the Secretariat of the RCA, to provide the services required by the RCA, which included the services provided by the RCA FP, technical backstopping and the services required from the support staff. Sharing his personal reflections on the RCA, Mr. Salema commented on the evolution of the RCA Programme over the past few years, and stated that the formulation and the adoption of the MTS and its implementation plan, had resulted in a more focused Programme aligned with the needs of the MSs, and had improved

the ownership of the programme by the MSs. He further stated that efforts should be made to resist the natural tendency to revert to some of the past practices, which RCA had decided were not in line with the MTS. He also stated that RCA should build on the important milestones achieved during the past few years.

IND, on behalf of all delegates thanked the Secretariat for conducting the Meeting in a professional and excellent manner.

The RCA FP thanked the NRs for their cooperation in implementing the RCA Programme, and the Chair for conducting the Meeting and reaching a successful conclusion. He also thanked the DIR-TCAP, SH-TCAP1, and the staff of the Division for Asia and the Pacific and the Technical Officers of the RCA Projects for their support during the past year.

The Chair thanked all those who contributed to the success of the Meeting and declared the Meeting closed.

DRAFT