

Report of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee for 2020/21

The report of the RCA PAC for 2020/21 containing completed and planned activities is herewith submitted to the 43rd RCA NRM

Proposed Action:

The NRM may note the contents of the report and provide feedback to PAC on the completed and planned activities. The NRM may also decide on the recommendations contained in the report of the meeting of the PAC held on 27th of February 2021 (Annex 1).

Report of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee to the 43rd RCA NRM
on its Activities in 2020-2021

The activities of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee since the 49th GCM held in September 2020 and the activities planned for 2021 are hereby presented for the information of the 43rd RCA NRM.

1. Development of the RCA Regional Programme Framework (RPF) for 2024-29

- a. A survey was conducted to identify the priorities and the needs of the RCA Government Parties
- b. The RPF was drafted in consultation with the relevant stakeholders and was presented for the approval of the 43rd RCA NRM

Further details are contained in the Background Paper on the Regional Programme Framework.

2. RCA Programme for 2022/23

- a. Guidance was provided to the LCCs for improving project designs through virtual meetings and through correspondence with the LCCs.
- b. RCA Chair was assisted to prepare the RCA Regional Programme Note.

Further details are contained in the Background Paper on the RCA Programme for 2022/23.

3. RCA Research Project (Work carried out by the RRC*)

- a. 3 Research Agreement and 9 Research Contract Proposals for the Phase II of the RCA Research Project on Monitoring Air-Pollution were reviewed
- b. The Annual and Final Progress Reports of the Phase I of the Project of the 11 participating GPs were reviewed and an Achievement Report was prepared for the Director of the RCARO.
- c. Participated in the Research Review Meeting (virtual meeting) held on the 18th and 19th of March, for the review of the Work Plans for implementation of Phase II of the project.

*RRC comprises the PAC and the Technical Officer of the project

4. Meetings of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee

The following virtual meetings of the RCA PAC were held since September 2020:

1. 19th September 2020 – To brief the PAC members of the outcomes of the 49th GCM and to agree on the future course of action of PAC activities
2. 21st November 2020 – To agree on the review of the project designs and to make preparations for the meetings with the LCCs and TOs
3. November/ December 2020 – Virtual meetings with LCCs and TOs on improving project designs (Separate meeting for each project)

4. 9th January 2021 – To make preparations for the Expert Group Meetings appointed for drafting of the RPF
5. 27th February 2021 – To review the status of the RPF and to agree on the issues to be presented to the 43rd NRM. The report of the meeting is attached as Annex 1.

Planned Activities

1. Preparations for RCA TC Programme for 2024/25

Time Frame	Activity
May –August 2021	Submission of Pre-Concepts for the projects to be implemented under the RCA Programme for 2024/25 by NRs
May 17 2021	Finalized project designs for the 2022/23 cycle uploaded onto PCMF
1 st August 2021	Deadline for submission of Pre-Concepts for 2024/25 programme
2 nd August – 31 st August 2021	Review of the Pre-Concepts by PAC
1 – 7 September 2021	Consolidation of the reviews of the Pre-Concepts by RCA Chair
17 th September 2021	Presentation of the outcomes of the reviews to the 50 th RCA General Conference Meeting
17 th September – 31 st December 2021	Preparation and submission of Project Concepts by NRs
January – February 2022	Review of Project Concepts by PAC
March 2022	Submission of the recommendations of PAC to the 44 th NRM

RCA Programme Advisory Committee (PAC)

Report of the Meeting Held on the 27th of February (Virtual Meeting)

Introduction:

The first meeting of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee for 2021 was held on the 27th of February as a virtual meeting. The purpose of the Meeting was, to a) review the progress of the preparation of the RCA Regional Programme Framework, and b) to agree on the issues to be presented to the 43rd RCA NRM .

All the members of the RCA PAC attended the Meeting, which was chaired by Dr Prinath Dias, Chair of the RCA PAC.

Outcomes of the Meeting

1. The status of development of the RCA Regional Programme Framework (RPF)

The Chair informed that the draft version of the RCA RPF had been circulated to all RCA National Representatives and to the WG Group on the RCA MTS and comments are expected on or before the 16th of March. The Meeting recommended to submit the RPF for the approval of the 43rd NRM after revising the draft version based on the comments of the RCA NRs and RCA WG on MTS.

Recommendation 1

The PAC recommends that the RCA RPF revised based on the comments of the RCA NRs and of RCA WG on MTS be submitted to the 43rd NRM for approval, after a final review by PAC.

2. Other issues to be presented to the 43rd NRM

a) Revision of the Terms of reference of the RCA PAC

The Chair informed a revised version of the TOR of PAC was presented to the 49th GCM held in September 2020, but was not taken up for discussion due to lack of time. The PAC was of the view that as the RCA Programme Advisory Committee, the PAC can contribute immensely to RCA by advising the RCA National Representatives of all aspects of the RCA Programme, namely, development,

implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The PAC recommended submission of the revised TOR for the approval of the next NRM.

Recommendation 2

The PAC recommends the submission of the revised TOR of the PAC for the approval of the 43rd RCA NRM.

b) NPCs' role and responsibilities

PAC realizes that the effectiveness of the NPCs is crucial in the success of RCA projects. PAC also noted that there is a need for an effective mechanism to make the NPCs aware of their roles and responsibilities and RCA procedures relevant to them, since the GOR mostly covers RCA policy matters that are not relevant to the NPCs. For the effective delivery of the information, it is suggested to include the roles and responsibilities of NPCs in the Agenda of the kick-off meeting of the each project. PAC will readily prepare and distribute the lecture materials based on the extract of the GOR as well as provide an on-line presentation upon request.

Recommendation 3

The PAC recommends that the roles and responsibilities of the NPCs should be conveyed to them through the relevant extract of the GOR at the beginning of each project cycle, and it should be an item on the Agenda of the kick-off meeting of each project.

c) Procedure for Project Development

The current procedure for project development was discussed and the PAC was of the opinion it is not conducive for addressing special needs of new RCA GPs, allowing long term planning, and ensuring a balanced programme. PAC was also of the opinion that the level of involvement of the RCA NRs in programme development should be enhanced. It was also noted that since the Pre-Concepts for the next TC cycle have to be invited in 2021, it may not be feasible to revise the procedure at this stage. However, PAC was of the opinion that action should be taken to address the specific needs of new GPs within the current procedure for project development.

Recommendation 4

The PAC recommends that the NRM considers revising the procedure for project development for future TC cycles taking into consideration the need for long term planning, the specific needs of new GPs, and ensuring a balanced programme.

Recommendation 5

The PAC recommends that the needs of the new GPs are assessed through consultations with new GPs and through expert missions conducted under RAS0086 (Enhancing the Management and Implementation of Activities under the Framework). The meeting also recommended establishing a mentoring scheme between new GPs and RCA GPs with expertise in areas of their needs, to promote TCDC.

d) Finalizing the Reports of RCA NRMs and GCMs

PAC noted the difficulties faced in finalizing the report of the last GCM and was of the view sufficient time should be allocated in the Agendas of future NRMs and GCMs for finalizing the reports, as was the case before virtual meetings were brought about by the Covid pandemic. The PAC also re-iterated the need to ensure the decisions agreed at the meetings are not subsequently changed and to ensure the procedure in the GOR on finalizing the meeting reports is strictly followed. The PAC also was of the opinion the duration of the meetings should be of sufficient length to make it possible to devote sufficient time for discussion of all the Agenda items, even if it is held as a virtual meeting. The PAC observed that the LCC reports were not presented at the last NRM and was of the opinion this should be re-instated as an Agenda item of future meetings.

Recommendation 6

The PAC recommends that sufficient time should be allowed for finalizing the reports of the meetings of RCA NRs and decisions agreed at the meetings should not be subsequently changed as stipulated in the GOR. The PAC also recommends that the duration of NRMs should be long enough to allow for sufficient time for discussion of all Agenda items, and LCC reports should continue to be an Agenda Item, even if the Meetings are held as virtual meetings.