



**REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT**  
**INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

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**REPORT OF THE**  
**46<sup>th</sup>**  
**NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING (NRM)**  
**OF THE**  
**REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR RESEARCH,**  
**DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING RELATED TO NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND**  
**TECHNOLOGY FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (RCA)**

**14-17 May 2024**

**Beijing, China**

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## ACRONYMS

ANPC	Alternate National Project Coordinator
CRP	Cooperative Research Project
DDG-TC	Deputy Director General, Technical Cooperation Department
DIR-TCAP	Director for Asia and the Pacific Division
DIR-RCARO	Director of RCA Regional Office
EBT	Extra Budgetary
FNCA	Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia
GCM	General Conference Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
GP	Government Party to the RCA Agreement
IAEA BOG	IAEA Board of Governors
LCC	Lead Country Coordinator
MTSC	Mid-Term Strategy Coordination
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPT	National Project Team
NR	National RCA Representative(s)
NRM	National RCA Representatives Regional Meeting
PCMF	TC Programme Cycle Management Framework
PPAR	Project Progress Assessment Report
QF	Quadripartite Forum
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCA GOR	RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules
RCA PAC	RCA Programme Advisory Committee
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RCARO SAC	RCARO Standing Advisory Committee
RCA-FP	RCA Focal Person
RRC	Research Review Committee
TACC	Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee
TC	Technical Cooperation Programme
TCPC	Division of Programme Support and Coordination
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
WG	Working Group

## **Introduction**

The 46th RCA Meeting of National Representatives was held at Tangla Hotel in Beijing, China on 14-17 May 2024.

The Meeting was attended by 20 RCA Government Parties: Australia (AUL), Bangladesh (BGD), Cambodia (KAM), China (CPR), Fiji (FIJ), Indonesia (INS), Japan (JPN), Korea (ROK), Laos (LAO), Malaysia (MAL), Mongolia (MON), Myanmar (MYA), Nepal (NEP), New Zealand (NZE), Pakistan (PAK), Philippines (PHI), Singapore (SIN), Sri Lanka (SRL), Thailand (THA) and Vietnam (VIE).

Mr Hua Liu (DDG-TC), Mr Gashaw Gebeyehu Wolde (Acting SH-TCAP1), and Ms Khemphone Phaokhamkeo (RCA-FP) represented the IAEA.

Representatives of RCARO joined the Meeting.

Chair of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee (virtual) and FNCA Coordinator also attended the Meeting.

The list of participants is given in **Annex 1**.

## **Opening**

Ms Natascha Spark, RCA Chair and NR of AUL, opened the meeting.

Mr Liu Jing, Vice Chairman of China Atomic Energy Authority (CAEA), delivered his welcome remarks to participants as representative of the host country (CPR) (**Annex 2**).

Mr Hua Liu, DDG-TC, delivered his remarks as representative of the IAEA (**Annex 3**).

## **Designation of New RCA Chair and Rapporteurs**

The NR of AUL delivered her remarks as the outgoing RCA Chair (**Annex 4**) and recommended the NR of CPR as the new RCA Chair.

The Meeting unanimously endorsed the NR of CPR to be the new RCA Chair.

The new RCA Chair, the NR of CPR, delivered her remarks (**Annex 5**).

**Ms Lili XIAO, on behalf of the NR of CPR, was unanimously elected as the new RCA Chair.  
CPR, AUL and RCARO were appointed as rapporteurs for the Meeting.**

## **1. Adoption of the Agenda**

The Meeting adopted the provisional agenda with one amendment (**RCANRM(46)/1**) (**Annex 6**) and appointed AUL, FIJ and RCARO to be the rapporteurs.

**The SAC adopted the draft agenda with a revision to add the below item under the Any Other Business:**

- **Follow-up discussion on the Rapid Review of RCA Governance undertaken in 2023 and reported to the 52<sup>nd</sup> RCA GCM**

## **2. Report on the follow-up actions of the 52<sup>nd</sup> GCM by the RCA-FP**

The RCA-FP provided a report on the follow-up actions of the 52<sup>nd</sup> GCM (**Annex 7**).

**The Meeting reviewed the seven (7) recommendations from the last Meeting and the progress made under each recommendation. The Meeting highlighted the importance of the NRs taking a proactive role coordinating with the relevant LCCs and NPCs. As per the RCA GOR, the Meeting reaffirmed that background documents for the NR meetings should be circulated at least four weeks ahead of the meetings to allow enough time for the NRs to review and provide inputs and comments.**

**The Meeting took note of the Report (RCANRM (46)/2). The Meeting urged the NRs of LCs to submit the remaining PPARs as soon as possible. The Meeting requested the RCA NRs to review the below documents and provide feedback by 5 July 2024:**

- **Updated RCA GOR (conclusions and recommendations from the 46th RCA NRM and 52<sup>nd</sup> RCA GCM)**
- **Handbook on RCA and RCA GOR**

## **3. Report on the implementation of the RCA programme in 2023 by the RCA FP - RCANRM(46)/3**

The RCA-FP provided a presentation on the implementation of the RCA programme in 2023 (**Annex 8**). Specifically, her presentation addressed the following;

- a) Review of the implementation of the RCA programme in 2023
- b) Draft RCA Annual Report 2023
- c) Planned arrangements of regional events in 2024
- d) Systematic Approach to Budgeting for the RCA

**The Meeting took note of the RCA-FP's presentation on the implementation of the RCA programme in 2023. The Meeting noted that in 2023, there were sixteen (16) active projects under five thematic areas and management. Updates on the structure of the RCA Annual Report were made in line with the recommendations from the 52<sup>nd</sup> RCA GCM.**

**The RCA-FP noted that there is an urgent need for resource mobilization for the sustainability of the RCA Programme. There is a gap between the RCA's available**

resources and required funds. The RCA-FP's analysis showed that while the required budget continues to increase, the EBT is decreasing while the TC Fund is staying almost the same.

The Meeting invited NRs who were yet to provide comments on the draft RCA Annual Report 2023 (Annex 9) to do so by 21 June, 2024.

#### **4. RCA Technical Cooperation Programme 2026/2027 Cycle Concept Papers – RCANRM(46)/4**

The Chair of RCA Programme Advisory Committee provided the Report of the RCA PAC on RCA Technical Cooperation Programme Concept Papers for the RCA Programme Cycle 2026-2027 (Annex 10). To avoid repetition with the previous speaker, the RCA-FP did not deliver her planned presentation on “Preparing the programme note.”

The Meeting took note of the report of RCA PAC including the consolidated ranking of the NRs on the project concepts for RCA Programme Cycle 2026-2027 and appreciated the strong support and contribution provided by RCA PAC.

The IAEA DDG-TC spoke and suggested that RCA project concepts could be combined under four thematic areas to reflect the IAEA's flagship initiatives. The IAEA DDG-TC said this approach would be more holistic, more integrated and more flexible, and ultimately more impactful. In this way, the RCA could attract more resources from outside partners. The IAEA indicated that additional budget from the TCF and targeted technical support from TOs could be sought to develop and implement a combined approach. The IAEA confirmed that the deadline for the submission of the Regional Programme Note (set at 31 May) could be extended by two weeks to accommodate a combined approach. The design phase, of 1-2 years, would follow on from the submission of the RPN.

The Meeting took into consideration the merits of a combined approach and decided to include in the RPN four thematic projects to align with IAEA flagship initiatives and to attract more funding avenues. The 10 priority ranked projects would be combined as follows: four human health projects combined into two; four agriculture projects combined into two; and one project each under industry and the environment. A number of LCCs would participate in the combined projects in human health and agriculture.

The RCA-FP offered to coordinate virtual meetings and consultations with IAEA Technical Officers, potential LCCs, NRs and RCA PAC to further explore how to combine projects under thematic areas aligned to IAEA flagship initiatives.

**5. Report of RCA Chairs' Committee on the review on the procedure and process of developing and selecting the RCA TC projects by the RCA Chair Committee - RCANRM(46)/5**

Due to time constraints, the presentation on the Rapid Review (RCANRM (46)/5) was not delivered. The Meeting agreed that the analysis and recommendations in the Rapid Review were important and warranted further consideration.

**The Meeting requested AUL further refine the analysis and recommendations in the Rapid Review (RCANRM(46)/5).**

**6. Report on the RCA Technical Cooperation Programme by NRs of the Project Lead Countries, aligned to IAEA flagship initiative themes, by RCA Chair - RCANRM(46)/6**

Presentations of the on-going projects of RCA TC Programme were provided by the NRs and LCCs of Project Lead Countries. Due to the limited time, each country was requested to present up to 2 projects. The list of presentations delivered is as follows;

<b>Thematic Area or IAEA Initiative</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Annex</b>
<b>Industry</b>	1	RAS1028 (MAL)- Improving the Quality Management Practices in Radiation Processing Facilities for Better Performance and Applications	<b>11</b>
	2	RAS1029 (MAL) Enhancing Regional Capabilities in Advanced Non-Destructive Testing Techniques for Improved Safety and Inspection Performance in Industries	<b>12</b>
<b>Agriculture / Food4Atoms</b>	1	RAS5088 (CPR) Regional Workshop on Accelerating Climate-Resilient Crop Improvement: Optimizing Speed Breeding for Plant Mutation Breeding Applications	<b>13</b>
	2	RAS5091 (AUL) Assessing and Mitigating Agro Contaminants to Improve Water Quality and Soil Productivity in Catchments Using Integrated Isotopic Approaches	<b>14</b>
<b>Environment / GloWAL</b>	1	RAS7040 (VIE) Improving Water Resources Management Practices by Enhancing the Regional Collaboration in Environmental Isotope Analysis and Applications	<b>15</b>
	2	RAS7043 (IND)- NEW- Evaluating the Efficacy of Artificial Recharge to Groundwater in Water Scarce Regions Using Isotope Techniques	<b>16</b>
<b>Human Health / Rays of Hope</b>	1	RAS6101 (CPR) Improving the Quality and Safety of Radiation Medicine through Medical Physicist Education and Training	<b>17</b>
	2	RAS6105 (PAK) Improving Cancer Management through Theranostics by Using Radioisotope Based Diagnostic and Therapeutic Techniques	<b>18</b>
	3	RAS6098 (JPN) Standardizing Radiotherapy in Palliative Care	<b>19</b>
	4	RAS6110 (JPN)- NEW – Improving the Radiotherapy Capacity of Newcomer Government Parties (RCA	<b>20</b>
	5	RAS6100 (ROK)Strengthening Clinical Application of Hypofractionated Radiotherapy	<b>21</b>
	6	RAS6109 (AUL) – NEW - Improving the Quality and Safety of Diagnosis and Interventional Radiology Services to Benefit Health Care by Enhancing the Status Knowledge and Skills of Medical Physicists	<b>22</b>

	7	RAS6108 (AUL)- NEW- Strengthening Cancer Care by Training Radiation Oncology Health Professionals in Consistent and Accurate Data Collection through Oncology Information Systems	23
<b>Radiation Protection</b>	1	RAS9092 (ROK) Strengthening the Capacity to Respond to Radiological Emergencies of Category II and III Facilities	24
<b>Others</b>	1	RAS0086/RAS0092 (ROK) Enhancing the Strategic Management of the Programme under the Regional Cooperative Agreement of Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology for Asia and the Pacific (RCA- AP)	25

**The Meeting took note of the progress reports of the on-going RCA TC projects. The presentations delivered a thorough summary of the project including the activity information, risk management, efficiency, key findings, gender equality issue, and recommendations.**

**The Meeting requested the IAEA to provide more information on the procurement processes.**

**The Meeting noted that the current template for the national progress report does not incorporate impact assessment at national level and requested the RCA Chair to review and revise the template.**

**The Meeting noted that gender considerations should be carefully addressed when designing and implementing the projects, including the current on-going projects.**

**The Meeting noted that it would be useful for the Secretariat to clarify responsibility for coordinating and collating annual performance reporting.**

**The Meeting noted the NRs should contact the IAEA if they are unable to gain access to the project information on PCMF as all activities and reports should be uploaded there.**

**The Meeting agreed that the LCCs, as the main coordinator of each project, should have good access to the reports of project activities, including those they cannot attend, to have a holistic understanding of the project progress. Further, the Meeting noted the value of LCCs attending the regional training courses and sought more information from the Secretariat on options to support.**

## **7. Report on the activities and update of the Regional Cooperative Agreement Regional Office (RCARO), including the achievements of the RCARO projects RP 02 and RP 03, by RCARO Director - RCANRM(46)/7**

The Director of the RCARO presented on the activities of the RCARO (**Annex 26**).

**The Meeting welcomed Mr KIM Dae Ki, the newly appointed Director and wished him success. The Meeting expressed support for the valuable work that RCARO undertakes in raising the visibility of the RCA and also RCARO's efforts on resource mobilization.**

The Meeting highlighted the importance of outreach to the international community and conferences to engage with potential partners. The Meeting also recommended that the RCA Newsletters, a useful document with a variety of RCA success stories, be distributed to a wider scope of stakeholders in and outside the RCA.

The Meeting requested that RCARO consider presenting the progress of RCARO-led projects, including the partnership projects, and reporting to the RCA NRs in uniformity with the reporting format of the IAEA TC projects.

#### **8. Report of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) on the activities of the RCARO by the RCA Chair - RCANRM(46)/8**

The Chair of the RCARO SAC presented on the report of the RCARO SAC ([Annex 27](#)).

The Meeting took note of the report of the 38<sup>th</sup> RCARO SAC and endorsed the recommendations.

The Meeting noted RCARO's continuing support in coordinating outreach activities and requested that RCARO draft a concept note for two outreach opportunities identified in the RCARO SAC report (IAEA GC RCA Side-event and the special exhibition at the IAEA Ministerial Level Conference). The Meeting agreed to formulate a Task Force which would be providing strategic directions of these outreach activities. All GPs would be able to participate, with the RCA Chair having the leading role of the TF. The following have expressed interest: PAK, KAM, INS, MAL, JPN, AUL, FIJ, MON, VIE, ROK, and CPR.

The Meeting recommended that the archiving of the RCA documents be well undertaken under the PCMF and the RCA Website, with the IAEA TC projects uploaded on the PCMF and other policy and RCARO managed projects documents uploaded on the RCA Website.

The Meeting suggested that it would be helpful for the NRs to provide RCARO with more strategic guidance on outreach activities in the form of a resolution at the next GCM. This could include suggestions of other events such as COP29.

The Meeting requested the RCARO to share the report at least four weeks ahead of the NR meetings, as per the GOR, for the NRs to have better understanding well beforehand.

The Meeting reminded the NRs that as per the GOR, all NRs are welcome to attend the RCARO SAC meeting as observers.

#### **9. Presentation on FNCA's activities and suggested area of cooperation with the RCA by the FNCA Coordinator - RCANRM(46)/9**

The FNCA Advisor provided a report on the FNCA's activities ([Annex 28](#)).

The Meeting noted the report on the FNCA's activities provided by the representative of the FNCA. The Meeting welcomed ongoing collaboration between RCA and FNCA and encouraged more synergies and a wider exchange of information among regional experts.

#### 10. Update on the acceptance of the 2017 RCA - RCANRM(46)/10

The Meeting noted the advice that twenty-one (21) of the twenty-two (22) GPs have submitted their instrument of acceptance of the 2017 RCA to the IAEA. The Meeting looked forward to FIJ depositing their instrument of acceptance soon.

#### 11. Arrangements for the 53rd RCA GCM, 47th RCA NRM, and 48th RCA NRM by the RCA Chair - RCANRM(46)/11

The Meeting noted that the 53<sup>rd</sup> GCM will be held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

FIJ is currently working to host the 47<sup>th</sup> NRM and will advise the Chair accordingly.

As IND is not present in the Meeting, the Meeting decided to further discuss the arrangements of the 48<sup>th</sup> RCA NRM at the 53<sup>rd</sup> RCA GCM.

#### 12. Any other business

The Meeting discussed on other issues as follows;

- IAEA Ministerial Level Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme, Vienna, 26-28 November 2024
- Non-RCA member states in region as observers in RCA TC projects, by RCA FP
- Working Group on review of GOR
- Follow-up discussion on the Rapid Review of RCA Governance undertaken in 2023 and reported to the 52nd RCA GCM

The RCA Chair gave a briefing on the IAEA Ministerial Level Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme to be held in Vienna on 26-28 Nov, 2024.

The Meeting noted that the current RCA GOR does not have specific content on the participation of non-RCA member states in the NR meetings. However, the Meeting agreed it would be valuable to allow non-RCA member observers from the Pacific Island states to attend the 47<sup>th</sup> RCA NRM to be held in Fiji in 2025. The Meeting decided to continue the discussion on this topic during the 53<sup>rd</sup> RCA GCM. AUL volunteered, with NZE, to prepare a concept note on the question of observers, based on IAEA reference documents (Roadmap and Key Steps for broader IAEA Membership).

**Due to time constraints, the Meeting decided to defer the remaining two topics to the 53<sup>rd</sup> RCA GCM.**

### **13. Closure**

Mr Hua Liu, DDG-TC, delivered his closing remarks, as representative of the IAEA (**Annex 29**).

The RCA Chair thanked all participants for their active participation and valuable contributions and declared the meeting adjourned.