



**Minutes of AARINENA Executive Committee Meeting
ICARDA , Aleppo-Syria 3rd of May 2009**



Present:

Dr. Ahmed Al-Bakri , AARINENA President

Dr. Ayman Abou-Hadid ,AARINENA Vice President , Nile Valley &
Red Sea and Maghreb Sub-regional Representatives

Dr. Walid Tawil, Mashreq Sub regional Representative

Dr. Yousif Al-Shayji, Arabian Peninsula sub regional Representative

Dr. Mohamed Roozitalab , West Asia sub regional Representative

Dr. Dr. Mahmoud Solh, CGIAR Representative

Dr. Mark Holderness, GFAR Representative

Dr. Ibrahim Hamdan, AARINENA Executive Secretary

Dr. Majd Jamal, ICARDA (Observer)

Dr. Jozef Turk, Bioversity International (Observer)

Dr. El-Tahir Ibrahim , PGRN Coordinator (Observer)

Dr. Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary APAARI (Observer)

Absent : CSOs Representative

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

Dr. Al Bakri welcomed the Committee members and reviewed the agenda of the meeting. He suggested to shift the item on the Climate Change Conference by Dr. Solh to item number 1, due to prescheduled meetings for Dr. Solh. Then he asked for any issues under other items to be added. Dr. Al Shayji requested to add the 2nd Biotechnology Conference during the 12 General Conference in Kuwait. Dr. Al Bakri mentioned that since the secretariat received the financial report from ICARDA to be added in addition. The agenda of the meeting was adopted as follows:

1-International Conference on Food Security & Climate Change, Dr. Solh, ICARDA DG

2-Progress Report and Planned activities, AARINENA Executive Secretary

3-NASRO Meeting, Dr. Ayman Abou-Hadid , Vice President

4-GCARD Preparation, Dr. Mark Holderness , GFAR Executive Secretary

5-PGRN plan of work, Dr. El-Tahir Ibrahim , Network Coordinator

6- Financial and Membership Status, Executive Secretary and 2nd Biotech. Conference

Item 1-International Conference on Food Security & Climate Change, Dr. Solh:

Dr. Solh Welcomed the participants and was pleased holding this meeting at ICARDA and thanked the members who participated at ICARDA presentation day. He indicated that during his visit to Jordan for the Celebration of the Year of Agriculture declared by his Majesty King Abdulla II for 2009, ICARDA , NCARE and other partners are planning to organize an International Conference on "Food Security and Climate Change in Dry Areas" to be held in Jordan from 12-15 October 2009. The objective of the conference is to exchange views and experiences with national, international experts and stakeholders on food security issues expected to be impacted by climate change in dry the areas. Dr. Solh invited AARINENA to be a partner along with other national, regional and international organizations in this important Conference.

Dr. Paroda referred to APAARI conference on climate change held in Japan last October, he suggested that proposed conference by ICARDA and AARINENA to focus on research agenda relevant to CWANA region. He indicated APAARI interest to be associated with this Conference.

Dr. Holderness thanked Dr. Solh for this initiative and indicated that GFAR will be associated with the conference on Climate change in Copenhagen in December 2009 ,he inquired how there will be a linkage or duplication with the proposed conference. Dr. Solh responded that both the APAARI-Japan Conference and the proposed Amman conference will focus on technical issues in dry areas that will help the Copenhagen Conference.

At the end of discussion of this item, AARINENA Executive Committee members endorsed cosponsoring this conference and asked the secretariat to respond positively to ICARDA invitation.

Item 2- Progress Report and Planned Activity, Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary presented the progress report on AARINENA activities since the last meeting that was held in Damascus October 2008. he summarized the achievements as follows:1)-Bioinformatics Training Course AGERI-Egypt, Nov. 2008 2)-Participation, GFAR Statuary meeting in Maputo, Nov.08 3)-Preparing Regional proposal on "Generation and Policy & Institutional Mapping on Food & Bioenergy" through, 4)Preparing a proposal on: "Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators(ASTI) initiative March 2009., 5) Enhancing AARINENA Web April 2009 6) Preparation for the Global Conference for Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) continuing, 7) Support to NASRO April 2009, 8) AARINENA participated in the EU Funded Network on Monitoring and Quality Assurance in Food Supply Chain, Italy, October 2008, 9)- AARINENA participated in the Impact Assessment of AR held at EMBRAPA, Brazil Nov.2008 , 10)-AARINENA participated in the FAO consultation Meeting on Establishing Regional Platform for GM Crops In the NENA region, Sudan, Dec.2008.,11)-AARINENA Vice Chair participated at FARA Board , Ghana, Mar. 2009.12)- AARINENA Delegation participated in scientific visit to CIRAD laboratories in France March 2009 (RABNet), 13)-Publications: i. Newsletter 16-2 ii. Amended Constitution and iii- Proceedings of the 11th GC .

Highlights of Planned activities for 2009 were also presented as Follows:

1) Organizing Regional Training Workshop on "Building National Capacities in Information and Knowledge, in collaboration with FAO, GFAR & ICARDA Cairo-Egypt, 17-20 May 2009 (in Progress). 2) Organizing the "13 Conference & Exhibition for Medicinal & Aromatic Plants" in collaboration with ESMAP, ISHS & FAO, Cairo-Egypt, 3-5 October 2009, 3) Considering to Cosponsor with ICARDA & NCARE the International Conference on "Food Security and Climate Change in Dry Areas" Amman-Jordan, 12-15 October, 2009, 4) Integrating Priority setting development with the Regional Consultations for GCARD 5-Cosponsoring The Conference on "Olive Biotech 2009", Sfax-Tunisia,15-19 December 2009 6)-Support INCANA work plan in Collaboration with APAARI , 7)- Review the GPP document on linking farmers to market to be sent to donors 8)-Support to the work plan of the PGRN in collaboration with BI & ICARDA .

Dr. Roozitalab requested support to the web site operated by AREEO, he recommended the presentation of the achievements to be published on the Web. Dr. Paroda indicated that APAARI have done the Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI) initiative and offered to pass this study to

AARINENA. Regarding interregional cooperation Dr. Paroda requested GFAR to support this activity as was done in the past. He is concerned regarding the lack of support to INCANA.

Dr. Holderness congratulated the secretariat to what was achieved with the finite resources available and suggested to circulate the minutes of GFAR program and steering committees along with the electronic conferences of the task force to all members and inquired about follow up on the bioinformatics course that was supported by GFAR.

Item 3- NASRO Meeting, Dr. Ayman Abou-Hadid , Vice President

Dr. Abou-Hadid briefed the meeting on NASRO meeting held at Cairo 19th of April in which all North African countries (Except Morocco) along with FARA board attended this meeting. He indicated that the meeting discussed the two proposals from ARC Egypt and ARC Libya to host the newly established NASRO. Libya proposal included an offer for a building with payments for all NASRO staff including the Executive Secretary and granting diplomatic status to NASRO.

The meeting selected ARC Libya as a venue for NASRO Secretariat pending receiving their offer officially in writing within one month by the 20th of May 2009. The meeting elected Dr. Ayman Abou-Hadid as the NASRO chairman, serving on FARA board and on AARINENA executive committee as sub regional representative for North Africa. The Committee elected Dr. Hamada Azhari , ARC Sudan as an interim Executive Secretary .

Item 4: GCARD Preparation, Dr. Mark Holderness , GFAR Executive Secretary:

Dr. Holderness informed that the purpose of the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) is to ensure agricultural research delivers development value. He presented justifications for the global conference for AR4D and identified the partners in the global ARD system. He indicated that GCARD is a process that takes place over a six year cycle that includes: a) an active task force, b) global regional reviews, c) consultations and d) the GCARD meeting in Montpellier in March 2010. Dr. Holderness explained that the regional review process will help frame the consultations and refresh the regional priorities. He further indicated that a parallel and integrated global review led by the Alliance of CGIAR Centers will deliver a draft Strategic Results Framework – which will be reviewed in the consultation process. He explained that the GCARD Conference should have a very different “look and feel” from past events. He finally explained the steps for Implementation and stated timeline and milestones.

During the discussion of this presentation there was concern by some members of the meeting that GFAR is concentrating most of the efforts on GCARD and becoming as a service to CGIAR other than focusing on the mandate and work plan of GFAR . Dr. Holderness responded that on the contrary GCARD is bringing the CGIAR into GFAR. Dr. Tawil inquired how to enforce NARS with the CG consultations and what are the mechanisms for such consultations.. Dr. Holderness responded that NARS will be involved through regional fora and

recommended the circulation of the minutes of the task force teleconferences to all members.

5-PGRN plan of work, Dr. El-Tahir Ibrahim, Network Coordinator

Dr. El-Tahir made a presentation entitled "Towards an effective Plant Genetic Resources Network in Near East and North Africa" he covered the Background, status, comparison of regional networks, and the way forward towards an effective network. In order to reactivate the network he proposed to organize a Stakeholders' workshop to:

- a) Review and finalize the proposal document for the establishment of the network.
- b) Identify areas for development of a project and strategy to be implemented under the network during the coming 5-10 years.
- c) Funding strategy of the network,
- d) Organizational matters and governance of the network.

Dr. Turok from Bioversity International indicated BI support for the network and for future collaboration.

The committee requested Dr. El-Tahir to prepare a proposal for organizing the stakeholders workshop to be sent to AARINENA secretariat to be forwarded for support from BI, ICARDA, the Trust and GFAR.

6-A Financial and Membership Status, Executive Secretary and 2nd Biotech. Conference.

The executive secretary briefly showed the financial status of the Association accounts since October 2008. He showed the membership status in which many members still did not cover their membership dues for 2009 and few members for 2008. A reminder will be sent to all members who did not honor their membership dues.

6-B Due to shortage of time Dr. Al-Bakri, the chairman of the meeting, informed Dr. Al-Shayji to postpone his presentation for the proposed "2nd International Conference on Biotechnology Applications for the Arid Regions" to the next Executive Committee meeting that will be held during the International Climate Change Conference in Amman Jordan 12-15 of October 2009.

At the closure of the meeting, Dr. Al-Bakri thanked all the participants for their active participation in the meeting and wished them safe trip to their countries.

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