GLOBAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE
ON AGRICULTURAL GREENHOUSE GASES

7 – 9 April | 2010 | Wellington | New Zealand

Senior Officials' Meeting

Te Papa, Wellington, New Zealand

Meeting Summary Report

OVERVIEW

The first senior officials' meeting of the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases was held in Wellington, New Zealand from 7-9 April 2010, with a field trip on Saturday 10 April. This document is a summary of discussions during that meeting and its final outcomes. It should be read alongside the two key documents arising from the meeting – the draft work plan and outline of the proposed Charter – and the Joint Ministerial Statement.

PARTICIPANTS

2 Twenty seven countries were represented at the meeting by over 70 delegates, comprising senior officials and science leaders from agricultural and environment ministries and research institutions. Twenty four of the 28 Alliance member countries were represented at the meeting (see below), along with three observer countries. A full participants list will be circulated separately.

Participating Alliance members

Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile (Embassy representation), Denmark, France, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Peru (Embassy representation), Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA, Uruguay, Vietnam.

Alliance members unable to attend

Colombia, Ghana, India, Philippines

Observers to the Alliance meeting

Brazil, China, Korea

CHAIRING

3 The meeting was chaired by New Zealand's International Climate Change Negotiations Minister, Hon Tim Groser, with input from the Agriculture Minister Hon David Carter and the Prime

Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Professor Sir Peter Gluckman. Rapporteur services were provided by New Zealand.

4 Research-related sessions were chaired by Dr Roger Beachy, Director of USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and related break-out sessions of the Research Groups were chaired by the coordinating countries of those Groups. Governance-related sessions were chaired by Jamshed Merchant, Assistant Deputy Minister at Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada.

MEETING OUTCOMES

5 The Alliance meeting delivered on its four key objectives (as set out in the agenda):

- Good progress towards agreeing on the structure and governance for the Alliance.
- Development of a framework for the Research Groups, and organisation of work within those groups, including coordinating countries, and linking to other partner organisations.
- Identification of the elements that could form a draft Alliance Charter.
- Agreed timing and focus for future Alliance meetings, leading up to a Ministerial-level Summit.

6 The meeting achieved agreement on:

- A draft work plan for the next 12 months (see separate document).
- Elements (i.e. section headings) for a draft Charter to be signed by Alliance Ministers in approximately 12 months time (see separately document).
- The establishment of three Research Groups:
  - **Livestock (combining extensive and intensive):** co-coordinated by New Zealand and the Netherlands
  - **Croplands:** coordinated by the US
  - **Paddy rice:** coordinated by Japan
- A process to deal with two key cross-cutting issues that span these groups, and lead countries to coordinate this work (France/Australia on soil carbon; Canada/Netherlands on inventories/measurement).
- New Zealand to continue to act as an interim secretariat for the Alliance, at least until the time of the Ministerial summit.
- The possibility of an Alliance science conference to take place at the same time as the Ministerial meeting, as an opportunity to showcase the first 12 months of work within the Research Groups.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Wednesday 7 April

Welcome and keynote addresses

7 The first senior officials' meeting of the Global Research Alliance opened with a formal Maori welcome and an address from the **New Zealand Prime Minister Hon John Key**[1].

8 Two keynote presentations set the scene for the meeting, providing different and thought provoking lenses through which to consider the Alliance's core challenge of finding ways to produce more food with fewer emissions.

9 **Professor M.S. Swaminathan**, the UNESCO Chair in Eco-technology at the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai, India provided the first keynote address. Swaminathan's presentation, via video link, highlighted agriculture's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, and how issues such as water would impact on the ability of the world to meet growing food demands. Swaminathan recognised how important the Alliance would be to mobilise the power of partnerships and to set out a clear and "implementable" road map to realign global research efforts for climate-resilient agriculture. The particular importance of soil carbon enrichment and the role of tree crops as mitigation and adaptation strategies were noted in this regard. Swaminathan commented that public policy must go hand in hand with technology development, and considered that the Alliance would play a role in spreading a message of hope as countries come together to assess progress towards the UN Millennium Development Goals and as we respond to the "mega-calamity" of climate change.

10 **Tim Searchinger**, a Research Scholar and Lecturer at Princeton University provided the second keynote address. Searchinger's presentation centred on the climate change and agriculture challenge, its key sources of emissions and links between agricultural activities in different sectors and world regions, and why technological and science innovation is critical to reducing global emissions. He addressed the interface between science and public policy in this area, identifying the different technological, policy, development and basic research needs across the research areas proposed for the Alliance. Searchinger urged that the Alliance "seek copper bullets, not silver ones", recognising that solutions may consist of many individual steps and interlinked successes. He reminded delegates "not to forget the D in R&D", that is, the practical application, commercial development and diffusion of solutions. Searchinger also sought recognition of the importance of rangelands in regional/global trade-offs arising from alternative land uses for food production, carbon storage, and biofuels, noting that limited data availability in this area makes it difficult to incorporate rangelands into integrated assessments.

Summary of Day 1

11 In opening the working part of the meeting, the Chair invited the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Professor Sir Peter Gluckman, to propose an idea of where the meeting might hope to be at its close on Friday 9 April. Professor Gluckman first reflected on the type of science organisation that the Alliance might be:

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[1] To download the Prime Minister's full address, please see http://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/speech+opening+global+research+alliance

- The Alliance needs to create mechanisms to encourage the sharing of ideas, overriding the traditional competitive nature of individualistic scientific activity.
- The Alliance needs to find ways to ensure that as practical knowledge is gained, it is diffused to those who can use it.
- The Alliance needs to find ways to help scientists in different jurisdictions work effectively together.
- The Alliance's structure needs to allow for the emergence of "big science" possibilities in the future (*a la* the human genome project).
- The Alliance needs to be an effective science organisation, with high standards of conduct, focused on excellent science and knowledge transfer, and open innovation.

12 In striving for this, Professor Gluckman saw this first senior officials' meeting as needing to deliver an agreed process, agenda and timetable for the Alliance's work (including within the Research Groups and on governance matters), with a view to achieving Ministerial sign-off (i.e. on an Alliance Charter) in 12 months time.

13 A round of opening remarks took place after this overview. Countries expressed strong support and commitment for the Alliance. There was a high degree of convergence that:

- The Alliance is about strengthening research collaboration and leveraging collective effort, rather than being about increasing funding per se.
- On funding, the reality is that most contributions will be in-kind.
- The Alliance needs to achieve tangible, practical outcomes – it is not "science for science's sake".
- It needs a light bureaucracy and to get going quickly.
- It is about increasing productivity and achieving win-wins with regards to the synergies between mitigation and adaptation.
- It is not a parallel track to the UNFCCC.
- It needs to overcome traditional difficulties of bringing policy and science together and to find ways to mesh the two to achieve real outcomes on the ground.
- It needs to reach out, in a co-ordinated, simple and efficient way, to partner with other organisations and entities.

14 A key focus for the first day of the meeting was to identify and agree the initial Research Groups and their coordinating countries, the need for any other groups or groupings, and to have a preliminary discussion on Secretariat functions. Day 1 also sought to touch on issues of intellectual property and open innovation, and on communication, collaboration and outreach with Alliance 'partners' (i.e. non-government entities) and with non-member countries.

15 Regarding the **Research Groups**, there was convergence on:

- The need to define the Research Groups according to agricultural systems (i.e. paddy rice, croplands, livestock). This was seen as a powerful means to reach farmers and other 'end users' (e.g. policy makers), although the advantages of other means of disaggregation were also identified.
- That these groupings are intersected by cross-cutting issues such as soil carbon and nitrogen cycling, inventories and measurement/methodological issues.
- That flexibility is retained for the creation of both sub-groups and new groups, but that the Alliance should not spread itself too thinly at this point.

- That the Research Groups' first priority should be to complete a stock-take of effort within countries and with other organisations.

16 There was a discussion on whether or not soil carbon should form an additional Research Group or whether it should be regarded as a cross-cutting issue. This was subsequently resolved during discussions on Day 2 and 3.

17 Countries indicated their interest in engaging in one or more of the proposed Groups. Several expressed their willingness to assist with coordinating any potential grouping on soil carbon. This was picked up again in the discussions on Day 3.

18 Discussion followed on what it means to be a **'co-ordinating country/s'** of a Research Group. There was general agreement that the functions of a coordinating country should be centred on maintaining momentum, building trust with its members and with other partners, and "getting the work up and running". Science leadership was identified as an important feature. The hope was also expressed that as the Alliance grows, so does its ability to have 'co-chairs' or alternating leads for these Groups. Responsibilities of any coordinating country could include:

- Organising meetings.
- Leading active networks of science/policy/industry individuals across participating countries (and ensuring key scientists from non-Alliance countries are involved according to approved and common guidelines).
- Providing regular updates to the wider Alliance membership on the Group's activities.
- Engaging outside partners on the work of the Group.
- Collecting, collating and organising information.
- E-networking.
- Recognising synergies with other Groups (i.e. cross-cutting issues) and ensuring these are addressed at Group and Alliance levels.

19 There was a brief exchange on the functions of an **Alliance Secretariat** – is it a small-scale 'administrative support unit' or an overall 'coordinator'? A number of possible functions were identified including keeping track of the membership, collating information, maintaining a website and/or news service, directing enquiries, sharing information between Research Groups (or acting as a support for those Groups), channelling communications, performing an outreach function for partners, supporting a future Alliance Board.

20 There was a short and productive discussion on **intellectual property rights** (IPR). The importance of this issue to the Alliance was acknowledged. There was general convergence around the principle of openness, although realism about the challenges in how this should be handled. Some countries considered that IPR did not require immediate resolution; rather it was better to take time to discuss the issues and at the appropriate level (i.e. within Research Groups). Others considered there was merit in achieving consensus on overarching IPR principles for the Alliance. There was general agreement that the issue should be picked up in discussions within Research Groups and during the drafting of the Charter.

21 There was a discussion on levels of **partnership** within the Alliance. There was agreement on the importance of outreach to non-government partners (e.g. farmer organisations, IGOs, international/regional research institutions, the private sector, philanthropics, NGOs etc) and that this should happen soon so as to ensure a good understanding of the Alliance's purpose, scope and intended operations. Other points included:

- The need for a distinction between Alliance Members (governments) and partners (non-government entities).
- Governments' memberships are taken care of currently through the Joint Ministerial Statement and in the future, through signing up to an Alliance Charter.
- The Secretariat could retain oversight of Alliance-level outreach to non-government entities (i.e. IGOs, NGOs, international/regional research institutions, private sector, philanthropics etc).
- International/regional organisations could be involved through Partnerships in specific projects and programmes at the Research Group level.
- The challenges inherent in setting up partnerships with both NGOs and the private sector.
- Regardless of whom the outreach was too, the importance of communication was identified to enable others to understand the Alliance's focus and work.

22 There was short discussion of the participation of **non-member countries** in the Alliance. Principles of openness and inclusivity received mention: the Alliance should not restrict key researchers from non-Alliance countries from participating. Some considered that non-member countries should not have ability to influence or direct Alliance-level policy development or priority setting. Guidelines would be needed to manage benefits from intellectual property arising from participation in the Research Groups (i.e. that accrual of this should be a benefit of Alliance Members). Above all, the hope was expressed that countries would continue to join the Alliance as full members – the best way to participate in, and influence, its work. Further discussion of non-member countries continued on Day 3.

23 Before drawing the day to a close, there was a brief exchange of views on some of the big **science challenges** ahead for the proposed Research Groups and the areas that the Alliance could help with. These were picked up during subsequent discussions within Research Groups and on cross-cutting issues.

Thursday 8 April

24 Thursday's discussions focused on two key areas – Research Groups and governance – and involved parallel sessions and breakout groups.

Research Groups: general discussions

25 Day 2's general discussions on Research Groups were chaired by Dr Roger Beachy, Director of USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. These focused on agreeing the Research Groups and common activities to cover (especially in the first 12 months but also in the longer-term), and considering how best to deal with cross-cutting issues that span all Groups.

26 It was agreed that there would be **three Research Groups**:

- **Croplands:** including agroforestry systems and feedstocks – coordinated by the US.
- **Livestock:** merging the original proposal for two separate groups on extensive and intensive livestock – co-coordinated by New Zealand and the Netherlands.
- **Paddy field management:** coordinated by Japan.

27 Key points made during the discussions on the different kinds of **activities** that Research Groups should undertake (especially in the first 12 months but also in the longer term) included:

- Group activities would include not only research *per se* but also transfer of information, extension and capacity building, and attention to cross-cutting issues e.g. related to measurement and estimation techniques.
- The Joint Ministerial Statement provides a comprehensive list of activities and Groups should consider this.
- For the next 12 months, it will be important to prioritise activities and to ensure that the Research Groups add value to activities already underway within and between countries and with other organisations.
- Reports from Research Groups on their activities should seek to follow a consistent format.
- An initial stock-take of research activities undertaken currently in countries participating in the Research Groups would help to identify gaps and opportunities, including further development of a joint research agenda.
- Detailed discussions within Groups on issues such as funding and IPR would be premature until a clearer sense of current activities, research gaps and opportunities was developed.
- The Alliance should take learnings from existing successful multi-institutional activities.
- Interaction with stakeholders will be important to shape research agendas, to validate outputs for their practical applicability, and to ensure successful uptake.
- Privately funded research activities could be significant in some sectors and regions.
- It will be important to actively engage in communicating the goals and activities of the Alliance to increase its visibility to researchers who do not consider themselves to be actively involved in mitigation research but do so indirectly through research on production efficiency.
- Fellowships already announced by the US and planned by New Zealand would contribute to education, collaboration, and capability enhancement objectives.

28 Countries considered options for engaging researchers and institutions as widely as possible and to avoid duplication. Examples for successful collaborative projects and possible research partners were EU Joint Programme Initiatives, CCAFS, IPCC (Working Group III and the Task Group on Greenhouse Gas Inventories with its Emissions Factors Database), FAO (recent projects to undertake a stock-take of mitigation projects in developing countries and work to update the Livestock's Long Shadow report), and the Mexico Soil Carbon project. LEARN[2] was also referred to as a useful model to engage and communicate with a wide network of researchers but it was noted that its work would need to be accelerated to meet Alliance timelines, especially those relating to any stock-taking exercises within the next 12 months.

29 There was general agreement that the Research Groups should initially focus on a **stock-take** of work within participating countries to identify current activities, opportunities, gaps and areas of overlap, and that this needed to include:

- Partnerships with other organisations outside of governments.
- Recognition that not all systems/crops will give the same outputs and detail.
- Identification and prioritisation of cross-cutting issues.
- An ability to ensure delivery: publicity, willingness of stakeholders to engage, funding are obstacles to maintaining momentum.

[2] Livestock Emissions Abatement Research Network (http://www.livestockemissions.net/)

30 A compilation of mitigation options and potentials for the near and long term was identified as a product that could emerge over time from the stock-take.

31 It was agreed that the collection of information within Research Groups should include the development of joint databases. However, such efforts needed to be mindful of differences in data qualities and protocols, as well as country-specific differences in emissions due to different management practices or environmental conditions. Concerns were raised over potential incompatibility of different data sets and difficulties with compiling data from different sources. Initially, it was agreed that the stock-take by Research Groups would focus on high-level common reporting of research activities, not research results themselves.

32 Consideration was also given to managing **cross-cutting themes** across Groups. Several options were considered, but using lead scientists from within the various Research Groups to act as promoters and coordinators of cross-cutting issues was regarded as most effective and least bureaucratically cumbersome. The role of the Alliance's Secretariat would be to assist with overall coordination of the cross-cutting themes, but not to become involved in the definition of specific scientific questions and ways to address them. A process for addressing cross-cutting issues was subsequently agreed on Day 3.

Research Group breakout sessions

33 The three Research Groups convened as informal break-out sessions during the afternoon of Day 2. These were chaired by the coordinating countries and considered Group scope, possible cross-cutting issues, the timeframe and process for completion of the initial stock-take of research activities, and modus operandi and communication in the near term.

Livestock Research Group

34 The Group agreed it would operate as a single group (as opposed to the initial proposal that it be two Groups, one on Extensive (grazing) Livestock and the other on Intensive Livestock) at least until completion of the stock-take. At that point, there would be a reconsideration of potential divisions based on different livestock systems (ruminant, non ruminant, extensive, intensive, manure- or feedstock based) if members saw this as useful. The Group would be co-coordinated by New Zealand and the Netherlands. Each member country would nominate representatives as contact points for the stock-take exercise. The Group noted that in the medium term, a more extensive Group governance structure would need to be developed, following further discussion and decisions of the Alliance as a whole.

35 The scope of research activities within the Group was discussed. Boundaries would be flexible and needed to consider a systems balance at a range of scales (plot, farm, country, regions, global), including avoided emissions and sequestration. A long list of relevant research activities was identified but could broadly be classified into three areas: inventory-type; mitigation-focused; and process-based.

36 Regarding the stock-take, the Group agreed that this needed to be completed by the end of September 2010. The Group would aim to meet after the Greenhouse Gas and Animal Agriculture Conference (GGAA2010) in Banff, Canada (early October) to discuss the analysis and synthesis of the stock-take results and agree next steps. A template for reporting research activities through the stock-take process would be developed; this template would require further coordination across the other Groups. Discussion revealed different perspectives on the level of detail that could be relevant in the stock-take. Potential elements of the template were identified as including:

- A country overview: key sources of agricultural greenhouse gases, existing research strategies.
- Projects and programmes: who, what, when, where, existing resources devoted to these programmes.

37 Analysis of research gaps at the country and Research Group level, and opportunities for future collaboration, would be based on a synthesis of the research stock-take.

38 There was a discussion on possible cross-cutting issues with other Groups. Key cross-cutting issues identified included: measurement systems and techniques; modelling (the carbon and nitrogen cycles); 'synthesis products' using existing knowledge (a la the IPCC); and reducing inventory uncertainty. There was also discussion of communication between Group members. It was agreed that the Group would use a web-based system for the stock-take and electronic communications as far as possible. Face-to-face meetings would take place on an as-needed basis and making use of opportunities arising from conferences (such as GGAA2010 in October 2010).

39 Next steps for the Group were identified as:

- Developing the template for the stock-take, in conjunction with other Research Groups.
- Providing a focal point and contacts details from each country.
- Clarification of the role of observer countries in subsequent meetings of the Group.
- Decisions on the longer term operational structure, in conjunction with other Research Groups and overall decisions on the operation of the Alliance.

Paddy Field Management Research Group

40 The Group agreed the need to focus on methane, nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide emissions. This would build on the work of the existing Monsoon Asia Agro-Environmental Research Consortium but needed to take into account the different rice growing management practices used in other parts of the world, e.g. South America, and also particular greenhouse gas issues arising from different production practices. Discussion took place on a range of cross-cutting issues that may intersect with other groups, e.g. modelling (soil, crop production), inventory methodologies, research capacity building, technology development/transfer, fertiliser use, and monitoring. There was also further discussion of issues specific to the Paddy Field Management Group such as use/re-use of rice 'waste' products, water regime systems etc.

41 The Group noted the absence of several important paddy rice countries (and other organisations with an interest in this area) from the Alliance, and undertook to engage with them before final decisions on priority areas for attention within the Group were made. The CGIAR (International Rice Research Institute) was identified in particular, especially regarding capacity building activities.

42 As with the Livestock Group, the Paddy Field Management Group agreed that the stock-take exercise should take first priority and be completed within six months. The Japanese National Institute for Agro-Environmental Sciences would take a lead in this process, including working with the coordinators of the other Research Groups to develop a standard template. The Group would meet in approximately six months in Tsukuba, Japan.

43 It was agreed that Japan would act as the interim coordinator for the Paddy Field Management Group. At a later date, questions of rotation of the coordinator role, and the duration a country would hold that role, would be reviewed.

Croplands Research Group

44 As with the other two Groups, the Croplands Research Group began by discussing its scope before moving on to discuss the stock-taking exercise and cross-cutting issues. A list of crops for inclusion in the Group was assembled, including:

- Major agronomic crops (e.g. large acreage grain crops)
- Horticultural and orchard-based crops
- Pasture forages (e.g. alfalfa production)
- Rotational systems
- "Agro-forestry"/"silvopasture"
- Plantation crops (e.g. palm oil, coffee, cocoa)

45 In creating the above list, there was discussion around:

- Whether the approach to scoping/categorising the Group's research should focus on specific crops or on the issues of particular cropping systems (e.g. rotational systems).
- Whether the focus should be on fluxes (e.g. pasture to crop or vice versa), consideration of biomass/residue return, impact on emissions, biomass to animal or to soil carbon etc.
- How to define the scope of crops to be considered.

46 There was a productive discussion on the scope and type of information to capture in the stock-take exercise and the best way to do this. The US, as coordinator of the Group, would meet with the other Group leads to develop a template for the stock-take exercise and would facilitate the process for compiling and aggregating results. As with the other two Groups, the Croplands Group agreed a timeframe of six months to complete this activity. This would allow for the Group to reconvene in the margins of an annual US agronomy/crop science tri-society conference in Long Beach, California, October 31–November 4, 2010.

Governance discussions

47 Day 2's governance discussions were chaired by Jamshed Merchant, Assistant Deputy Minister at Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada. These sessions focused on possible governance structures and entities for the Alliance, and the need for a Charter to guide its work. Key points included:

- Any Alliance governance structures should remain light and flexible, and able to evolve over time.
- The principal role of any Alliance governance structure is to support the delivery of work within and across the Research Groups and to act as the point of contact with the "outside world".
- An optimal balance of top-down and bottom-up should be struck.
- Governance should be seen as a facilitative process, rather than a priority-setting exercise over countries' domestic programmes.

48 There was convergence on the need for the following **governance elements**:

- A Ministerial oversight role, potentially that meets biennially.

- A 'whole-Alliance' body (i.e. a Council of Members) that meets on an annual or as-needed basis, that takes stock of efforts, monitors progress and measures performance against the Alliance's objectives.
- A small Alliance Secretariat to provide both logistical and intellectual support.
- Defined Research Groups with group-level governance and administrative arrangements, and a process to manage cross-cutting issues.
- A review mechanism.

49 It was agreed that these should be captured as 'organisational elements' in any Alliance Charter.

50 The issue of incentive structures was raised, noting that when considering the design of the Alliance we should think clearly about the value proposition the Alliance creates and why scientists would want to participate in its activities.

51 The concept of an Alliance-level scientific advisory panel was proposed and met with divergent views. It was agreed that more work would be needed to understand what functions this might provide and responsibilities it might hold.

Charter discussions

52 Countries agreed that the Alliance needed a Charter to guide its work and to act as a basis for membership. This document should build off the strong foundation of the Joint Ministerial Statement and ideally, would be ready for signing by Alliance Ministers in 12 months time. Until then, the Joint Ministerial Statement remains the mechanism for confirming membership.

53 Countries considered there was merit in looking at the Charters of other international initiatives (e.g. Methane to Markets, and the Global Bioenergy Partnership) to inform the development of the Alliance's Charter, "there is no sense in reinventing the wheel". A range of elements were suggested for inclusion in the Charter:

- Vision/mission (from the Joint Ministerial Statement)
- Partnership network
- Communication, within and outside the Alliance
- Organisation (e.g. governance)
- Membership
- Funding
- Intellectual property
- Entry into force provisions.

54 A timeframe for developing the Charter was proposed as follows:

- In 3 months (i.e. end of June/early July): draft Charter available for review in a working meeting on governance.
- In 6 months: draft Charter is reviewed in light of Research Groups' stocktaking efforts (scheduled to finish at that time).
- In 12 months: Charter is completed for signing, along with output from the Research Groups side.

55 These discussions were taken forward into Day 3's consideration of an Alliance work plan.

Secretariat discussions

56 Building on Day 1's discussions, possible functions for a Secretariat were identified as including:

- Reporting and meeting documentation.
- Providing logistical support for Research Groups, including collating and analysing cross-Group information.
- Maintaining a website and contact database.
- Managing Alliance-level outreach to partners and other entities.

57 Several countries suggested that New Zealand should continue to act as an interim Secretariat, at least until the proposed Alliance Ministerial Summit in approximately 12 months time. New Zealand agreed to provide this service.

58 To assist with progressing the Alliance's establishment, the Secretariat was invited to prepare initial drafts of a Charter and a 12 month work plan, based on the discussions during this meeting. The Secretariat was also asked to help with an immediate piece of work, the development of guidelines for outreach to potential Alliance partners.

Friday 9 April

59 Before the session commenced, the US took the opportunity to promote its Borlaug Fellowship Program[3], a USDA initiative set up to support the participation of developing country researchers in the Alliance.

60 Day 3's discussions drew the two key areas of the meeting – Research Groups and governance – to a close. Agreement was sought to processes for:

- Conducting the stocktaking exercise in Research Groups
- Addressing cross-cutting issues
- Developing the Charter

61 These were summarised into a work plan for the next 12 months, setting out deadlines for completing key pieces of work and future meetings.

Research Groups: stock-take exercise

62 Coordinating countries of the Research Groups met to discuss the development of a template to collect information for the agreed research stock-take. The main purpose of the stock-take exercise was to help identify opportunities for collaboration, critical gaps in current research, and to allow a 'SWOT' analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for ensuring viable agricultural production, the results of which could be submitted for publication in scientific journals. Each country would be requested to supply high-level information on its key agricultural systems, current emissions and trends, a summary of existing research strategies and priorities, and

[3] See www.fas.usda.gov/icd/borlaug/Special_Programs/GRA/GRA%20Main.asp

to identify any synergies between mitigation and adaptation research. The proposed method of collecting information on specific research activities was to use an Excel spreadsheet with drop-down menus at an appropriate level of detail for each area of activity, including:

- Agricultural systems
- Gases of interest
- Focus of research
- Level of effort (measured in FTEs)
- Contacts

63 The spreadsheet would be designed to minimise the time required for its completion. Coordinators of the Research Groups agreed to consult further with countries on the relevant categories and details to be captured in the spreadsheet. This consultation would occur during April, with a final draft spreadsheet to be circulated by early May, for finalisation by July 2010. The template would then be circulated to Research Group participants (countries) for completion within six months. Responsibility for completion and return of the stock-take to the coordinators would rest with country contact points, who may chose to circulate the spreadsheet to individual researchers and institutes to ensure, to the extent possible, comprehensive coverage of country-wide research activities. Countries were asked to nominate a contact point to complete this template.

Research Groups: cross-cutting issues

64 There was a further discussion on a process for addressing cross-cutting issues, as identified by the Research Groups on Day 2:

Cross-cutting issues identified by each Research Group		
Croplands	**Livestock**	**Paddy Field Management**
• (These three issues were prioritised from a much longer list) • Inventories • Soil carbon • Technology transfer	• Measurement systems and techniques • Modelling (soil carbon and nitrogen cycle) • Reducing inventory uncertainty	• Methodology, measurement • Modelling • N input and N_2O emissions • Soil C sequestration

65 The discussion focused initially on further understanding these areas, before moving to identify the ones that required immediate attention. Key points during this discussion included:

- Developing common protocols for the collection of information on greenhouse gas emissions would be helpful so that countries' results are comparable.
- The need to take a holistic approach to addressing issues of land use change. While the impacts of this change will be address in the Croplands Group, the drivers sit within the Livestock Group (e.g. in relation to feedstocks).
- A 'synthesis report' on the ancillary benefits of mitigation practices could be a helpful contribution from the Alliance in the future.

- There is a unique opportunity for an 'interface' between the Croplands and Livestock Groups around silvopastoral systems issues.
- Future cross-cutting issues could include: bioenergy, mixed systems, life-cycle analysis.

66 Based on the issues identified by the Groups and the subsequent discussion, countries agreed that the two cross-cutting issues that required immediate attention were:

- Issues relating to carbon and nitrogen cycling in agricultural soils (co-ordinated by lead scientists from France and Australia); and
- Inventories and related measurement and methodologies issues (co-ordinated by lead scientists from Canada and the Netherlands).

67 Countries were invited to meet informally to discuss how these issues might best be addressed.

68 On **soil carbon and nitrogen cycling**, countries agreed to gather information on main methods in use and existing experiments, models and data sets as part of the wider Research Groups' stock-taking exercise. Countries would aim for a meeting in 12 months time and to develop a strategic plan on carbon and nitrogen cycling. Links with the cross-cutting issue on inventories were identified including by contributing to and improving methods for inventories, and providing estimates of interactions. Foreseen deliverables over time from the cross-cutting exercise on soil carbon and nitrogen cycling included:

- Improved methodologies for estimating carbon sequestration (including comparing and improving models and combining data streams).
- Mapping carbon stock change and nitrogen emissions in agricultural systems.
- Refining the technical potential of mitigation options for soils in terms of carbon sequestration and nitrogen mitigation.
- Developing a research and training network.

69 A similar process was agreed for work on the cross-cutting issue of **inventories**, i.e. countries gathering information on current activities and approaches, with the aim of identifying common research opportunities and interests and looking to convene as a group in 12 months time.

Developing the Charter

70 Based on Day 2's governance discussions, delegates received a draft outline of possible elements of an Alliance Charter. This was revised during the course of Day 3 to include:

- Mission and objectives (drawing from the Joint Ministerial Statement)
- Organisation (e.g. governance arrangements including an Alliance 'council', a secretariat, Research Groups and work on cross-cutting issues, a possible science advisory panel
- Partner network
- Meetings
- Communication, within and outside the Alliance and including a website
- Membership
- Funding
- Intellectual property

- Other (e.g. including decision making processes, entry into force provisions, a review mechanism etc)

71 Key points made during the discussion of the draft outline Charter included:

- The importance of the Joint Ministerial Statement as the foundation stone of the Alliance. The Charter's contents should be rooted in this document.
- Including a set of objectives in the Charter would assist with managing the potential workload of the Alliance, i.e. by identifying first order priorities to address.
- The importance of the connection and synergies between adaptation/mitigation, as reflected in the Joint Ministerial Statement. Research Groups should have these synergies at the front of their minds.
- The need to accelerate work on the partner network so as to allow outreach to take place immediately (i.e. rather than waiting 12 months until the Charter is finished).
- Further thought needs to be given to the role and definition of any science advisory panel, including links with the Research Groups.

72 The timeframes discussed on Day 2 for developing the Charter were agreed in this session. The Secretariat was invited to prepare an initial draft, based on the above headings, for review in 3 months time in a working meeting on governance. It was suggested that the Secretariat look at existing Charters to inform development of the first draft and that these could be provided to the governance grouping of countries.

Alliance work plan

73 Based on the previous days' discussions, a draft work plan was circulated that proposed timings for completion of key pieces of work (e.g. the stock-take exercise, Charter drafting) and of future Alliance meetings during the next 12 months.

74 Several countries suggested that it could be useful to have a science conference linked to the proposed Ministerial meeting in 12 months time. This would allow for research groups to present and showcase their work, and for technical exchanges to take place.

75 Countries asked for clarity around the process of identifying country contacts for the Alliance, and it was agreed that the Secretariat would facilitate this beginning with the email to circulate the meeting report. The Secretariat would also circulate the contact details for the Research Group coordinators and those leading on the cross-cutting issues.

Participation of observers in future meetings

76 Observer countries sought involvement in the development of the draft Charter. This prompted a wider discussion on the participation of observers in the Alliance's work. It was agreed that provision should be made for observer participation in future meetings, based to the guidelines developed for the first meeting (see separate document).

CONCLUSIONS

77 In concluding the meeting, the Chair, Hon Tim Groser, summarised the key outcomes as:

- The outline of a **draft Charter** (see separate document) and a process for its development.
- A **work plan** to guide the Alliance's establishment over the next 12 months (see separate document), including future meetings as follows:
  - In 3 months: Governance group to meet to discuss first draft of Charter.
  - In 6 months:
    - Livestock Group to meet in Banff, Canada (October).
    - Paddy Field Management Group to meet in Tsukuba, Japan (September/October).
    - Croplands Group to meet in Long Beach, California (early Nov).
  - Before the end of 2010: Alliance to meet as a whole to jointly assess progress within the Research Groups and with cross-cutting issues and continue drafting the Charter.
  - Once the Alliance Charter and Research Group outputs are complete, than an Alliance Ministerial meeting can take place, potentially along with an Alliance science conference (date, location to be determined).
- Agreement to a series of immediate actions by the Secretariat (New Zealand), including:
  - **Summary report of the meeting**. This will not identify names or countries. It will go to all Alliance members, including those who could not attend the meeting.
  - **Website** up and running by the end of the month. Over time, this will include functionality to support a shared workspace and e-networking.
  - First draft of a **Charter**, for discussion with countries at a governance working meeting in three months time (late June/early July).
  - Guidelines for engaging with **partners.**
- Agreement that the coordinating countries of the Research Groups will:
  - Continue developing the **draft template for the stock-take** exercise, in consultation with participating countries in those groups.

78 New Zealand's Agriculture Minister, Hon David Carter then closed the meeting thanking delegates for their support and commitment to the Alliance and for their participation in the Wellington meeting. He expressed his hope that the Alliance would be seen as a part of history, responsible for generating scientific solutions for food producers around the world that will help find ways to enhance food security while reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions.