GLOBAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE
ON AGRICULTURAL GREENHOUSE GASES

ALLIANCE COUNCIL MEETING

Dublin Castle, Dublin, Ireland

Tuesday 3 – Wednesday 4 June 2025

OVERVIEW

The thirteenth Council meeting of the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA) took place on Tuesday 3 and Wednesday 4 June 2025 in Dublin, Ireland. Other activities of the week included a Gala Dinner on Tuesday 3 June at Dublin Castle, the "Agriculture and Climate Change Conference: From Science to Action" on Thursday 5 June, and field visits on Friday 6 at Teagasc Grange and a Teagasc Signpost Farm. The meeting was opened by Bill Callanan, Chief Inspector (Chief Scientist) at the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM) on Tuesday morning, welcoming all delegates to Ireland.

This report is a summary of the key discussions and outcomes from the GRA Council meeting, recordings of the meeting sessions are available to view:

Day 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNZOHifqjuk

Day 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLfR2LFx1kI

PARTICIPANTS

The meeting was attended by 55 participants, including 36 representatives from 17 countries and other invited guests:

- **GRA Members attending:** Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, South Africa, Spain, and Viet Nam.
- **Invited Partners attending:** Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), European Commission DG AGRI, FONTAGRO, and Global Methane Hub (GMH).

Refer to Appendix 1 for a full list of participants.

QUORUM

With 17 member countries attending, a quorum was not achieved. The procedure for confirmation of decisions will be as follows:

- The list of key outcomes from the meeting are presented below.
- Approval of these outcomes should be provided to the Alliance Secretariat by **15 August 2025.** If the Secretariat is not informed of any concerns by this date, the decisions will be confirmed.

SUMMARY OF THE KEY OUTCOMES

Below is a summary of the key outcomes from the GRA Council meeting held in hybrid format on Tuesday 3 and Wednesday 4 June 2025. The summarised outcomes below are detailed further in the meeting report and should be read in conjunction with the summary below.

The outcomes identified during the meeting will be confirmed through the development of the annual Operational Plan that sits under the GRA Strategic Plan.

Outcomes
Council
Costa Rica confirmed willingness to become Vice-Chair for 2025, Chair following the end of Ireland's period in June 2026, and host of the 2026 Council meeting.
Official membership update: Pakistan joined the GRA and the U.S. withdrew their membership (however, the U.S. will still be involved through Networks and Research Groups).
The GRA Strategic Plan (2026-2030) was approved (taking on board edits made at the meeting in response to feedback received).
The GRA should develop a high-level Strategic Research Agenda. A Working Group will be developed to create GRA's Research Agenda.
The GRA should look for an opportunity to hold a GRA Ministerial event (possibly on the margins of an FAO meeting) and raise the profile of the GRA and its membership.
The GRA Charter should be reviewed, in particular regarding the structure, establishment, and closure of Research Groups, Networks, and Flagships. The Secretariat will advise if changes need to be made.
The GRA Council endorsed Flagships being hosted by a primary Research Group. The GRA Council agreed to review the hosting model of Flagships after 12-24 months.
The GRA Council approved the following proposed GRA Flagship Project: ● Accelerating the development of BNI as a N2O mitigation strategy for grass-based livestock systems (Council Champions: Colombia, Ireland, New Zealand, Spain, UK)
The GRA Council approved the process proposed for the development, review, and approval of GRA Communication Notes under 'science to policy', with an additional period of open review for member comments.
Call for expressions of interest of Member countries and Research Group Co-Chairs to make up the Advisory Group for the GRA Communication Note on Agricultural Greenhouse Gas and Emission Metrics (by 29 August 2025).
Participants recognised the need for a potential Extraordinary Council meeting later this year to approve the GRA restructure.
Research Groups
The Integrative Research Group and Croplands Research Group in their current form are to be closed, with existing Networks to be reviewed once the Co-Chairs of the new Research Group(s) are in place.
A new Research Group titled Crop and Land Use will be formed. Two new Networks are to be established under this research group, 1) Soil and Peat Carbon and 2) Nitrous Oxide.

The role of Co-Chair for the Crop and Land Use Research Group will be open to any member who wishes to chair. Up to four Co-Chairs may be considered. A call for expressions of interest will be sent by the Secretariat. Expressions of interest will be put to the Council for approval. Once approved, co-chairs will establish an implementation group.
The need for an Integrative Research Group to cover cross-cutting issues will be further considered through a working group. The Secretariat will work with Australia, France, Germany, Canada, and other interested members to develop a draft proposal with the intention of presenting at an Extraordinary Council meeting in the second half of the year.
The Indigenous Research Network and Inventories and NDC Network will report to the Special Representative.
Agreed to review the structure of the Paddy Rice Research Group and identify key work areas that the group should focus on (by rice production system rather than by region). The Secretariat will open Expression of Interests for Co-Chairing of the Group. New Co-Chairs will develop a workplan of action in collaboration with IRRI, Africa Rice and others.
Research Groups to develop an annual workplan to be considered by the GRA Council at its annual meeting.
Secretariat
Guidelines for the establishment and closure of Networks to be developed, including that proposals for new Networks will be considered by the GRA Council.
Guidelines for Flagship projects to be updated and clarified regarding the establishment, operation and closure of Flagships.
Agreement for New Zealand to continue hosting the Secretariat and Special Representative until 2028.

CONTACTS FOR COUNTRY INVOLVEMENT

Communication Note Advisory Group
• Nomination of Member countries and Research Group Co-Chairs for the membership of an Advisory Group for the Communication Note on Ag GHG and Emissions Metrics by 29 August 2025: secretariat@globalresearchalliance.org.
Strategic Research Agenda
• A Working Group will be established to develop the GRA Strategic Research Agenda: secretariat@globalresearchalliance.org
Research Groups
• Expressions of interest by Member countries for co-chairing the Paddy Rice Research Group and the new Crop and Land Use Research Group by 29 August 2025: secretariat@globalresearchalliance.org • Working group to be established for reviewing the need for a Research Group to cover cross-cutting issues: secretariat@globalreachalliance.org
Flagship Projects
• BNI as a N2O mitigation strategy for grass-based livestock systems: cecile.deklein@agresearch.co.nz

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

OPENING REMARKS

1. The meeting was opened by Dr Bill Callanan, Chief Inspector Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). Bill noted that he and Dr Karl Walsh, Head of the Research, Bioeconomy & Codex Division (DAFM) would be sharing Chair duties over the course of the two days and looked forward to constructive discussions that would position the GRA for another productive year and beyond.
2. Ireland expressed its appreciation to Spain, the outgoing GRA Chair, for their valuable contributions during their term. Special thanks were extended to Jose-Luis Alonso-Prados and Maria-Luisa Tello, who were present at the meeting representing Spain, for their leadership and continued support.
3. Ireland commenced its term as GRA Chair on 1 January 2025 for an 18-month period, marking its first time in this role since joining the Alliance.
4. Ireland's objectives as Chair are to strengthen international collaboration, drive scientific innovation, and support global efforts toward sustainable and climate-resilient food systems. This includes enhancing the GRA's global profile and leadership, advancing research priorities on mitigation and food security, and building momentum and resourcing to support GRA initiatives.
5. Ireland has actively supported two key Council projects: the development of a new strategic plan and a review of the GRA's structure. Karl has led these discussions, which have involved substantial work since the last Extraordinary Council meeting in 2024.
6. Ireland reflected on the recent G20 Meeting on food sustainability held in South Africa, noting the shared global challenge of feeding a growing population while mitigating GHG emissions. Emphasis was placed on the importance of working at the intersection of science and policy to develop actionable solutions.
7. In addition to the Council meeting, Ireland is hosting a gala dinner to promote networking and raise the Alliance's profile among senior Irish climate officials. A one-day conference titled *Agriculture and Climate Change: Science into Action* will follow, featuring contributions from the Taoiseach, the Minister for Agriculture, the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Food, and international GRA-affiliated researchers.
8. On GRA membership, Ireland welcomed Pakistan as a new member, represented by the Global Climate-Change Impact Studies Centre. Ireland also acknowledged the withdrawal of the United States, recognising their foundational contributions and encouraging continued collaboration through GRA Research Groups and Networks.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE NEW VICE-CHAIR

9. The new GRA Council Vice-Chair was announced on the second day of the meeting, following the presentation of a letter from Costa Rica's Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Mr Victor Julio Carvajal Porras (Appendix 2). The letter stated Costa Rica's interest in taking on the role of Council Chair, following on from Ireland, and hosting the 2026 GRA Council meeting.
10. Members of the Council welcomed Costa Rica's expression of interest to take on the Council Chair and accepted Dr Roberto Camacho Montero, Executive Director of the National Agricultural Research Institute, Costa Rica to take the position of Vice Chair.

REPORT FROM THE SECRETARIAT AND SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

1. Deborah Knox, Head of Secretariat, and Dr Harry Clark, Special Representative, provided updates on the GRA's activities in the past year. The GRA welcomed Pakistan as our newest member, joining in March 2025. Unfortunately, The U.S. has made the decision to leave the GRA, providing formal notification of this decision in April 2025. While they are no longer a member country of the GRA, their experts are still welcome to participate in groups and activities.
2. The GRA currently has 29 Partner organisations. There have been no new additions over the past year. One Partner, the Global Agribusiness Alliance—previously operating under the World Business Council for Sustainable Development—has concluded its work, resulting in a reduction in the total number of Partners.
3. The GRA has recently released the 2025 Annual Highlights Report showcasing events and achievements over the last year. The document is available on the website to view and share.
4. Round seven of the GRA CLIFF-GRADS fellowship programme will be opening shortly for research institutes to put forward opportunities to host students for up to six months. Hosting students through this programme is open to all GRA members and partners and we encourage you to get in contact with the Secretariat if you are interested and would like more information.
5. As GRA Special Representative, Dr Harry Clark has contributed to several events including the International Research Symposium on Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Mitigation (Agri-GHG Symposium), hosted by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture in Berlin in October 2024. This event was co-organised by the GRA and CGIAR, as well as Germany, and hosted meetings of the GRA's Livestock Research Group, Integrative Research Group, and Networks alongside.
6. The week before the Council meeting, Harry attended the G20 Meeting of the Chief Agricultural Scientists in South Africa giving the keynote presentation during the session 'Reinforcing Climate Smart Agriculture: Resilience, Mitigation and Early Warning Systems.'
7. The GRA has been working with Partner organisations providing science and evidence for protocols and reports as they are developed. This includes assessment and testing of the ADOPT model for the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) Integrated Agriculture and Food systems report. The GRA has partnered with 5 major dairy companies to produce a publicly available methodology for incorporating mitigation technologies into dairy LCA, which will be available later this month.
8. A key role of the Special Representative is supporting GRA Flagship projects and developing future projects. Recent achievements have seen funding secured for a project on Rumen microbes, Rumen Gateway, through the Global Methane Hub. A future project to develop good practice guidelines on animal health is under development with partnership from the Environmental Defense Fund and the Global Dairy Platform.

ADOPTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-30

9. An outcome from the 2024 Extraordinary GRA Council meeting (online) was that Council Members agreed to update the GRA Strategic Plan for the 2026 -2030 period. A working group, consisting of representatives from Canada, China, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Spain, The UK, and Zimbabwe, developed the initial draft. The report of the working group and the developed Strategic Plan was then shared with the Council for comments prior to the Council meeting.

10. The working group undertook a series of activities to understand the relevance of the GRA for Members and Partners, 15 years after its establishment. The group analysed several global organisations that play a similar role to the GRA; they undertook a survey of Members and Partners to identify current research needs and priorities; they wrote to GRA Partners requesting comments on the effectiveness and opportunity of working with the GRA and organised regional meetings to discuss the priorities of GRA members.

11. It was clear that there was still a need for the GRA, as there are no other organisations that operate in quite the same space and way as the GRA. It was also clear that Members see a need to renew commitments to the GRA, and a recommendation of the working group was to consider holding a GRA Ministerial meeting, as the last one was held in 2011.

12. The four Key Strategies of the GRA Strategic Plan are the pillars of the GRA's work and are recommended to remain, with a potential addition of a science to policy pillar.

13. Four Key Strategies:

    - Further Research Collaboration;
    - Foster Outreach, Knowledge Sharing, and Information Exchange;
    - Build Effective Partnerships; and
    - Leverage Financial and Other Resources.

14. The GRA Strategic Plan is advanced through an Operational Plan, developed annually following actions arising from the Council meeting. However, a recommendation from the working group is the development of a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA), which would help set the direction of GRA research.

Discussion

15. The group discussed the recommendations put forward by the working group, particularly the suggestion to hold a Ministerial meeting and the development of a Strategic Research Agenda. There was general agreement from members that the Strategic Plan and accompanying recommendations were well aligned with the GRA's direction and priorities.

16. There was strong support from Members to develop a Strategic Research Agenda, noting that it was important to develop this at the right level for the GRA as a voluntary organisation which aligns existing research mechanisms and resource. An SRA would be a mechanism to provide direction and guidance to the Research Groups and Networks and helpful to share with Partners and other organisations as a basis for developing future collaborations. The group agreed to develop an SRA that focused on research priorities and scope, rather than a detailed list of projects.

17. The group noted that several items of substance, including the new Strategic Plan, could be brought to Ministers if a Ministerial meeting was organised. Although members were supportive of the idea of holding a Ministerial meeting and interested to keep discussing, they were not able to commit at this stage as it is a matter for Ministerial consideration. It was noted that the right opportunity would need to be identified to bring Ministers together, preferably early in the term of the new Strategic Plan. Options suggested included alongside an FAO Ministerial meeting (2026) or the 2026 Global Forum on Food and Agriculture (GFFA) in Berlin.

18. Members discussed the need to have adaptation practices included in the Strategic Plan as well as mitigation, this visibility is important for developing country members. The Special Representative noted that the Charter includes references to adaptation. The group discussed current activities in several Research Groups which have a strong adaptation

focus, including carbon storage through soil sequestration and the Agroforestry Flagship The Charter and Strategic Plan does allow for the identification of adaptation synergies.

19. Karl confirmed agreement to establish a Working Group for developing the SRA, with details on its management to be confirmed. The group will comprise representatives from the Secretariat, Special Representative, Chair, Vice-Chair, GRA Members, and Partners.

20. The recommendation to strengthen the science to policy focus for the GRA was discussed by the members who felt it was important to ensure this was well integrated into all areas of the GRA to improve the translation of GRA activities to policy makers and other groups. The Research Groups were supportive of having greater clarity of the Council's needs and interests, one of the GRA's strengths is providing that link between science and policy.

21. The recommendation to amend the Charter was discussed by the group, considering the need to update the section on how new groups are established and disestablished within the GRA structure. Hayden Montgomery (former GRA Special Representative) questioned the need to open the Charter for amendments, as the Charter was developed to be flexible with regards to the establishment and disestablishment of groups. The group agreed to review the Charter, alongside the development of guidelines for Networks and Research Groups and identify if any changes may be needed.

Strategic plan 2026-2030 Finalisation

22. The Group agreed that the way the Strategic Plan had been outlined was very clear and could easily see where the development of an SRA could support the measures of success. An SRA should relate to the key actions of the Strategic Plan.

23. A mid-term review to track progress was seen as a useful inclusion to the plan and would allow the Council to consider the direction of the GRA before the end of the plans term.

24. The Council agreed to the suggestion that engagement metrics be added to the Strategic Plan, and that these are easy to measure to reduce burden on the Secretariat. It was suggested that metrics could do more to measure the progress against actions, but that only 1-2 measures be included for each action area.

25. The Strategic Plan was finalised on the second day, following approval from the Council to the Secretariat and Chair's changes to the text based on the discussion.

26. The changes to the Strategic Plan will be circulated to the Members along with the Council Meeting Report.

RESEARCH GROUPS STRUCTURE REVIEW

27. The second working group, established during the 2024 Extraordinary Council meeting, was tasked with reviewing the structure and scope of the GRA's Research Groups. Working group representatives were from Ireland, Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Ghana, New Zealand, Spain, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, and Zimbabwe.

28. The review made use of the information collected during the Strategic Plan development process and separately undertook an analysis of participation over the last few years for each of the Research Groups and met with the Research Group Co-Chairs to develop the recommendations.

29. The working group paper provided 17 recommendations for the Council to consider, which were grouped into five areas: 1) Structures of Council, Research Groups, Networks, and Flagships need to be simplified and streamlined, 2) LRG generally works well but the other Research Groups have issues that need to be addressed, 3) Key success factors for a

Research Group, 4) Guidelines for establishment, review and closure of Networks, 5) Create activities enabling regional involvement.

Discussion

30. The Chair opened the discussion looking first at the recommendations B-F, which focus on the development of Guidelines for Research Groups, Networks, and Flagships, workplans and reporting from the Research Groups and the development of regional activities and joint research calls. The Structural recommendations in Section A were addressed second.

31. The group discussed the recommendation to locate Flagship projects within a Research Group. The decision behind linking Flagships to Research Groups was to ensure the dissemination of project outcomes to the relevant group, but the Research Group Co-Chairs would not be expected to coordinate the activities of the project. Flagships are to be hosted by a primary Research Group, although Flagships may be cross-cutting in nature. The guidelines that will be developed by the Secretariat will provide clarity on what a Flagship is and the establishment and operation of a Flagship. The guidelines and decision to have Research Groups act as a Flagship host will be reviewed in 2 years.

32. There was a suggestion that Networks could be established with fixed timelines and then renewed if the activities are still of interest. However, it was agreed that the guidelines developed would clarify the abilities of Research Groups to close Networks and have the backing of the Council if required. It was agreed that any new Networks established would be the decision of the Council.

33. Of value to Council members was the opportunity to include more scientists at the Council meeting and foster discussions between policy makers and scientists. The group agreed that Network leads as well as Research Group and Flagship leads should be invited to attend the Council meeting. Countries hosting the Council meeting should be encouraged to hold a science conference alongside a Council meeting, noting that this should not place an extra burden on countries wishing to take on the role of Council Chair. The Council Chair should also provide the opportunity to Research Groups to hold a meeting alongside the Council.

34. The Chair then opened the floor for discussion on the proposal to establish a new Crop and Land Use Group and looking whether there is a need for a cross-cutting Research Group. This had been discussed the day previously by Research Group Co-Chairs, who proposed disestablishing the Integrative Research Group and including cross-cutting activities within each of the remaining three groups.

35. The group discussed the approach to focus on systems rather than sources of greenhouse gas emissions. However, the Livestock Research Group also considers nitrous oxide emissions as well, in the Manure Management Network, but the options to reduce these emissions are very different from the nitrous oxide emissions from fertilisers that would be the focus for the Crop and Land Use group.

36. There was agreement to establish a Crop and Land Use Group. The focus of the group would be research on carbon in agricultural soils and nitrous oxide fertiliser emissions. Once the new Co-Chairs are confirmed they will be asked to identify the appropriate Network structure.

37. The group noted that, in line with the earlier discussion on locating Flagship projects within a Research Group, a dedicated Network on agroforestry and agroecology might not be necessary, as a Flagship on the same topic already exists and has been proposed to be located within the Crop and Land Use Group. Ultimately, the decision on which Networks to establish under each new Research Group will rest with the new co-chairs, who will present their proposal to the Council.

38. The proposal to stand down the Integrative Research Group and ensure that cross-cutting activities are happening within each Research Group rather than having one group responsible was considered against an alternative proposal to rename the group as the Farm Systems group and continue to have a group that would cover this systems approach.

39. There was a concern that the scope of the Integrative/Farm Systems Research Group could continue to expand beyond its intended focus. It was emphasised that the objective of the review is to ensure alignment with the GRA's core activities, and that the group should be structured in a way that avoids becoming a catch-all for diverse topics.

40. A conclusion on the need for a cross-cutting group was not reached. Members requested further time to deliberate and return to discuss the scope of a potential Farm Systems Group at an Extraordinary meeting later in the year.

41. There was a discussion on the scope and structure of the Paddy Rice Research Group, following the recommendation to review the Sub-Groups of this group and consider creating Networks instead. The suggestion to have the group consider upland rice as well as paddy rice systems was not seen as a feasible option given the differences in the two systems. However, although the regional approach was seen to work well for Asia, the other Co-Chairs were not present at the meeting, so a final decision was not able to be reached. The Paddy Rice Research Group will also seek expressions of interest for new Co-Chairs who will be asked to consider the scope once appointed.

Actions

42. The Croplands Research Group and Integrative Research Group in their current forms will be closed.

43. A new Crop and Land Use Research Group will be established, with a call for up to four Co-Chairs to be sent out by the Secretariat.

44. A further proposal on the need for a cross-cutting/Farm Systems Research Group will be developed for discussion and decision at an Extraordinary Council meeting later in 2025.

45. The Paddy Rice Research Group will also open an expression of interest for new Co-Chairs to develop a workplan of action in collaboration with IRRI, Africa Rice and others.

46. The Inventories and NDC Network and the Indigenous Research Network will be established as stand-alone groups, reporting to the Special Representative.

47. Once all Co-Chairs have been confirmed, an implementation group will be established with Co-Chairs, Secretariat, Special Representative and maybe the GRA Chair to identify Networks and ensure existing activities are included in the new structure.

RESEARCH GROUP REPORTS

Livestock Research Group (LRG)

48. Sinead Leahy (New Zealand) provided updates on the LRG activities.

49. LRG held its annual meeting alongside the Agri-GHG Symposium in Berlin on 24 October 2024 with 46 participants including both online and in-person attendees, representing at least 21 member countries and seven partner organisations. The key outcomes of the meeting and priorities for 2025 include exploring opportunities to broaden dissemination of the Feed Additive Flagship outputs to a wider range of stakeholders across academia and industry; identifying core messages for collaboration with the Global Methane Hub (GMH), coordinated through Co-Chairs and Network Leads; considering further actions that the GRA or LRG can take to strengthen science-to-policy engagement in support of the wider

GRA Council-led initiative (e.g. the communication note on GHG metrics); and advancing skill development and capacity building, with particular attention to the shortage of early-career researchers—especially in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)—and the need to support policy and practice change. For the full meeting report and documents, visit the GRA website here.

50. The **Animal Selection, Genetics and Genomics Network**, led by Suzanne Rowe, continues to explore the role of genetic technologies in managing livestock GHG emissions. With over 200 members across 40 countries—though underrepresented in Africa and Southeast Asia—the network has organised webinars and publications, supported by CLIFF-GRADS alumni for communications and website development. Key projects include the Enteric Flagship, which has collected over 1,000 samples across five countries and remains open for further contributions, and Methane Predicts, a collaborative initiative funded by New Zealand and Ireland to develop high-throughput predictors for methane emissions. The Grass to Gas project under FACCE ERA-GAS also supports protocol and technology sharing.
51. The **Rumen Microbial Genomics Network** has expanded its leadership team to include Milka Popova, Jana Seifert, and Yanfen Cheng, and is actively involved in funded collaborative projects such as MASTER and HoloRuminant. The network is building a GRA Flagship 'culturomics' project with support from the Global Methane Hub and Schmidt Futures. Upcoming activities include an in-person workshop in Clermont-Ferrand on June 2, 2025, a webinar on the practical implications of the Nagoya Protocol, and an online workshop titled "Rumen Microbes: Back to the Roots of Culture."
52. The **Animal Health Network**, co-led by Nick Wheelhouse and Şeyda Özkan, has contributed to several key publications and initiatives. These include a data-driven policy brief authored by Wheelhouse, a paper on livestock abortions and calf mortality in Kenya and Tanzania, and Özkan's technical report and policy brief on digital extension services for methane mitigation. Both co-leads are actively involved in the *Animal Health and Climate Phase 1* project, funded by the Global Methane Hub and coordinated by the Environmental Defense Fund, which includes organising workshops and contributing to project documentation.
53. The **Feed and Nutrition Network**, led by David Yanez-Ruiz and Andre Bannink, has grown to 102 members and focused its efforts on completing the Feed Additives Flagship project. This work resulted in six scientific publications, a series of webinars, and a dissemination toolkit shared with authors, the GRA, and the Global Dairy Platform (GDP), which also funded a two-year postdoctoral position. The findings will be showcased in workshops at ADSA 2025 and EAAP 2025. Additionally, the ERANET project 'INTEGRITY', coordinated by INTA Argentina, concluded its work spanning 2021–2025.
54. The **Manure Management Network** has a new co-lead Sven G. Sommer, joining Hongmin Dong. This network has been active in organising webinars on topics such as IPCC inventory parameters and manure management in sub-Saharan Africa. It has also promoted its research priorities through presentations at major conferences including RAMIRAN and GGAA, with contributions from Dr. Sommer and Dr. David Pelster.
55. The presentation concluded with the main ambitions for the LRG: to continue supporting all networks—especially those without core projects—strengthen science-policy links through Council collaboration and policy briefs; expand membership and engagement (with a focus on Africa ahead of GGAA 2025 in Nairobi); build on successful NZ–Ireland funding models to encourage more joint calls; and support Co-Chairs and Network Leads in shaping Global Methane Hub proposals on topics like rumen physiology, GreenFeed methodology, and early life nutrition. Notably, the Co-Chairs also look to involve a fourth Co-Chair from Africa to enhance regional representation and leadership.

Paddy Rice Research Group (PRRG)

56. Yasuhito Shirato (Japan) provided updates on the PRRG activities.

57. No full group meeting was held this year, but regional activities continued.

58. One project is active in the Asia sub-group, and three in the Americas sub-group (two in South America, one in The U.S.).

59. Updates from the Asia subgroup were as follows: The MIRSA-4 project, involving Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam, is focused on implementing the alternate wetting and drying (AWD) water management technique using drought-tolerant rice varieties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions without compromising yield. The project has already achieved a 30% reduction in emissions, now trying to get this to 60%. The sub-group also hosted a regional workshop in Chinese Taipei (21–23 October) titled Regional Landscape of Sustainable Rice Production, which brought together multiple regional and international partners to explore integrated low-carbon technologies and business innovations. The workshop aimed to identify scalable practices, tailor solutions to local contexts, and promote economic opportunities. Additionally, a workshop was held in the Philippines to further support regional collaboration and knowledge exchange.

60. Updates from the Americas subgroup were as follows: Three active projects were reported (two in South America and one in the USA) all focused-on methane mitigation in rice systems. The first, led by Alvaro Roel (INIA-Uruguay) and funded by the GMH via FONTAGRO, is enhancing remote sensing capabilities for methane monitoring across the USA, Uruguay, Peru, and Panama. It has made significant progress in standardising methane measurement protocols in collaboration with USDA-ARS, with fieldwork currently underway in Peru (March–August 2025). The second project, led by Fernando Barrera and Isabel Martinez (IICA Chile), is advancing sustainable, low-methane rice production in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, and Uruguay. It focuses on diagnostics, farmer collaboration, sustainable practices, business models, and carbon market opportunities, supported by GHG measurements and capacity building. In The U.S., research activities include trials on hybrid rice, AWD, furrow irrigation, and smart nitrogen fertilisers. Additional work includes validating CH_4 flux measurement tools and developing the DASIG model for automated GHG flux calculations, which will be made available on the GRA PRRG website. An upcoming workshop on carbon and nitrogen accounting in paddy rice will be held at IRRI in the Philippines from 25–29 August 2025.

61. While the PRRG may not be as active as other Research Groups, the GRA remains a highly valuable platform for sustaining work on rice and GHG emissions. In particular, it enables the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries of Japan to access funding and support for projects in this area, helping to maintain momentum and international collaboration.

Integrative Research Group (IRG)

62. Tiffany Reed-Marshall (Australia) provided updates on the Group activities on behalf of the IRG Co-Chairs.

63. Most recently Heather McGilvray (Australia) has joined the group's Co-Chairs, Jean-François Soussana (France) and Pamela Joosse (Canada).

64. The last meeting of the IRG was alongside the Agri-GHG Symposium in Berlin in October 2024. It was an informal meeting focused on updates of Network activities, opportunities for collaboration across Research Groups, and how to reduce the duplication of work. For the meeting report and documents, visit the GRA website here.

65. The overarching goal of the IRG is to foster collaboration across all GRA Research Groups to reduce greenhouse gas emissions intensity while simultaneously improving overall production efficiency within agricultural systems.

66. The **Inventories and NDC (I&NDC) Network** held a meeting alongside the Agri-GHG Symposium, focusing on the science-to-policy interface. Presentations and a facilitated discussion highlighted priorities such as improving information dissemination, linking projects to finance, capacity building, and guidance on data gaps. Under the GRAIT programme, the network delivered IPCC software training and promoted science-to-policy engagement at regional workshops in Fiji and the Cook Islands, supported a study tour to New Zealand, and held technical training in Samoa. It contributed to PNG's national inventory development and is involved in projects on animal health metrics, mitigation technologies (LEAP), and lifecycle analysis for dairy (MiLCA). A new project is exploring the use of papaya and mango by-products to reduce enteric fermentation emissions. Key communications updates include a LinkedIn account, website enhancements, and the Who's Counting newsletter.

67. The **Indigenous Research Network (IRN)** led the APEC workshop series 'The Power of Inclusivity', with the second workshop held in Peru, focusing on empowering Indigenous youth in climate action. The series engaged 41 countries and expanded IRN membership by 17 countries. New collaborations were formed between New Zealand and Peru on ancestral food systems, with additional connections made in the U.S., Malaysia, the Philippines, and Australia. The IRN is building relationships with indigenous research institutes and policymakers, including the Australian First Nations Ambassador, ahead of COP31.

68. The **Farm to Regional Scale Network** also participated actively in the Agri-GHG Symposium in Berlin. The network is finalising a paper on farm-level GHG accounting led by D. Bretscher and launched the MACSUR SciPolNet project in 2025. Claudia Heidecke (Germany) is the current network lead, with a call open for additional leadership support.

69. The **Soil Carbon International Research Consortium**, formerly transitioned from CRICASA to ORCaSa and officially launched as the Soil Carbon IRC during Soil Mission Week (Nov 2023), offers three core services: a harmonised MRV framework, the Impact4Soil platform (with modules on maps, evidence, practices, data, and networks), and a research alignment and calls programme. Workshops were held across Africa, Southeast Asia, The U.S., Europe, and the Pacific, with upcoming events including a webinar on African soil datasets (June 2025), a symposium and committee meetings in Rio de Janeiro (June 2025), and France–Quebec cooperation meetings (Sept–Oct 2025).

70. The **Circular Food Systems (CFS) Network** organised a webinar series on circular food system principles and funded a research project titled Surfacing the Value of Circularity. It is planning a side event at the International Farming System Design Conference (France, Aug 2025) and has funded three research projects focused on measuring circularity: AgResearch NZ's holistic framework, and two Wageningen-led projects on resource recovery for feed, fuel, and fertiliser in Ethiopia.

Croplands Research Group (CRG)

71. Maria Rosa Mosquera-Losada (Spain) presented on the Group activities on behalf of the Co-Chairs.

72. The CRG network includes researchers from several countries in the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

73. The presentation emphasised the diversity and impact of CRG activities, focusing on results rather than individual network updates noting that some Networks of the CRG are more active than others.

74. The group's projects are primarily funded by the EU and FONTAGRO, covering themes such as forestry, bioeconomy, agroecology, ecosystem services, agroforestry, and land use and soils—reflecting the group's proposed new name as the "Land Use" group. Current projects exceed €25 million in total funding. Two new projects are launching in September and October: GREENCOOP (with China, involving CAU and CAAS) and a water-focused initiative with Tunisia.

75. The Land Use and Carbon Sequestration project is a multi-regional project (Asia, North Africa, Europe) that analyses soil and subsoil layers, incorporating land use data from the past decade via the EU Missions Soil initiative and the LUCAS database. Biochar is being tested as a climate mitigation tool.

76. Two technology upscaling projects:

    - CLIMALACT: developing of sustainability indicators for grazing and forage practices to guarantee sustainability and climate neutrality of the farms in collaboration with Spanish milk companies, covering extensive to intensive systems.
    - ASH4SOIL: developing fertilisers from forest biomass industries to produce electric energy.

77. An agreement signed between USC and FAO supports the development of a global monitoring methodology for agroforestry under the Forest Resource Assessment (FRA), involving over 200 countries. Data analysis has begun in Central America, with work expanding to West Africa and Asia. Findings will be presented at the World Congress on Agroforestry in Rwanda (20 – 24 October 2025).

78. The group's research outputs include three special issues and collaborative publications on climate adaptation and mitigation in Ecuador and Portugal, and a global editorial in *Discover Agriculture*.

79. The group's members participated in high-profile events such as the European CAP Network Conference, the International Agroecology Conference, the Oak Symposium, and REFRESCAR. Topics ranged from forest fire prevention to agroecological weed management.

80. Numerous PhD projects across Spain, Ireland, Portugal, Argentina, and Ecuador are linked to CRG themes, covering topics from agroforestry and biochar to soil health and grazing systems.

81. The CRG has produced four newsletters and is planning to send out a new one in December.

82. The group's engagements with policymakers include meetings with FAO, the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the EU Committee of Regions. These engagements aim to improve policy recognition of CRG contributions and advocate for agroecology's inclusion in future research priorities.

83. The CRG Co-Chairs call for stronger interaction between researchers and policymakers, clearer guidance from the Council and Secretariat on expectations for Research Groups, and greater recognition of network contributors to ensure sustained engagement.

<u>Discussion</u>

84. The Feed Additives Flagship achieved high impact through a dedicated journal special issue, enabled by a full-time postdoctoral position funded by the Global Dairy Platform. This role, filled by a former CLIFF-GRADS scholar, exemplifies the GRA's continuum of capability

development. Hayden Montgomery from The Global Methane Hub (GMH) noted that the flagship status of the project helped secure partner support for this resource, with clear deliverables and timebound goals elevating it as a research priority that required dedicated, full-time leadership.

85. Update from Hayden Montgomery: A project has been approved under the GMH's agriculture programme investigating the B_o coefficient—the maximum methane potential of manure—through a global collaboration involving diverse manure types and systems. The aim is to generate more disaggregated, system-specific coefficients. This initiative is well suited for coordination or uptake by the GRA membership as a Flagship project.

MEMBERS AND PARTNERS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Germany

86. Dorothea Schildt (BMLEH) shared an update on the upcoming Soil Carbon for Climate (SC4C) - pathways and solutions for soil carbon in temperate regions to take place in Berlin, Germany 11-13 September. The website link (www.ktmlandingpage.bmel.de/sc4c) was circulated by the Secretariat ahead of the call for abstracts closure (13 June).

Ireland

87. Ireland and New Zealand have announced the successful projects under the third round of their joint research call. Three projects were successful under the 2024 round looking at topics on the use of Nitrification Inhibitors in Grazing Systems, improving emission factors for N2O emissions from dairy urine in pasture systems and standardising methane emissions measurements to support estimation of emissions at the farm to regional scale. These projects are supporting GRA Flagship projects.

China

88. China has a national Emissions Reduction and Carbon Sequestration action plan which was released in 2022. More than 50 low Carbon policies have now been put in place with national level reporting produced to measure these. China is willing to work with GRA Members and Partners to support the GRA.

European Commission

89. The European Commission has a work programme for agricultural research and explicitly mentions working with the GRA, particularly in the area of livestock emissions research. Their new work programme that has been developed also refers to the work of the GRA.

Global Methane Hub

90. The Global Methane Hub is launching a rice accelerator similar to the enteric methane accelerator. They have secured $20 million USD to fund significant research over the next few years. The GMH hub hopes to partner with the GRA. The fund is open to countries to invest, and the hope is to reach $100 million.

91. An oversight committee made of six researchers has been appointed, including Dr Masa Iwanaga, former GRA Council Chair. The topic areas for the rice accelerator will cover genetics and plant physiology, etc.

Environmental Defense Fund

92. EDF is working with the corporate sector through the Dairy Action Methane Alliance. This Alliance is made up of 11 global dairy companies who have committed to reporting methane emissions and developing strong technical guidelines. For the beef sector EDF is supporting AgNext to undertake a systems review of U.S. beef and identify the leverage points that will drive change for methane emissions.

93. In partnership with Cornell university, EDF is developing a dairy cattle feed app. This app includes options for reducing emissions in dairy systems.

94. EDF is also involved in the Methane SAT project which was launched a year ago and is currently focussing observing methane emission from oil and gas. A new research project has just launched to explore how agricultural emissions can be included; this work is led by NIWA in New Zealand.

New Zealand

95. New Zealand acknowledged its strong partnerships with Ireland, Germany, and Australia, and highlighted the regional work it has been undertaking with key partners such as FONTAGRO and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC). Its current work programme in Africa and Asia is nearing successful completion, and New Zealand is actively exploring next steps and potential collaborations with other partners.

CHIEAM

96. CHIEM Zaragosa organised the following activities in 2025:

- Webinar on Methane GWP
- Training course on Cattle breeding and low methane emission in collaboration with the GRA and the Re-Livestock Project. The training built the capability of 45 participants.

97. Planned activities:

- Webinar on the measurement of GHG in crops (end of 2025)
- The following courses will be held during 2026: Mitigation in Cropping systems; Regenerative Agriculture, Animal Production Technologies for Mitigation and Adaptation.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE ENTERIC FERMENTATION R&D ACCELERATOR AND THE GRA

98. Hayden Montgomery from the Global Methane Hub (GMH) presented on the collaboration between GMH and GRA through the Enteric Fermentation R&D Accelerator.

99. GMH, alongside other funders, including Ireland, has secured USD 87 million in funding for the Accelerator, which has been further leveraged through aligned contributions from partner organisations. To date, USD 103 million has been awarded across 12 grants.

100. The Accelerator has published a research strategy covering seven key priorities around enteric fermentation. Areas of interest include:

- The effects of stacking genetic improvements and inhibitors
- Early life intervention

- Use of AI for inhibitor screening
- Expansion of current genetics research to draw on wider genetic variation from Asia, tropics and other ruminants
- Animal physiology and behaviour

101. The overarching goal of the Accelerator is to reduce methane emissions by 50% by 2050, with an emphasis on achieving reductions as rapidly as possible.

102. GMH is conducting a survey to gather input from researchers and better understand existing work. The survey will be shared with meeting documentation.

103. The research priorities were informed by the GRA networks, and GMH noted that researchers involved in GRA activities are contributing to the work. There is an opportunity to strengthen these connections and share information more explicitly through GRA channels.

104. Once clear research needs are identified, GMH intends to engage GRA members to help scale up existing initiatives. An open invitation was extended to countries to join and explore opportunities for collaborative research.

105. It is important to involve both public and private sector stakeholders, as they are essential to implementing methane reduction solutions.

106. We need to understand the realistic methane reduction potential across different production systems. While the IPCC does not require methane to be reduced to zero, it is important to pursue meaningful reductions and avoid exempting agricultural methane from climate targets. In some cases, further reductions may require changes in production levels.

107. GMH is also supporting projects seeking Green Climate Fund (GCF) resources and facilitating engagement with the World Bank and African Development Bank (AfDB) to expand support for methane mitigation efforts.

FLAGSHIP UPDATES

Ongoing Flagships

Satellite monitoring to improve livestock management, presented by Hayden Montgomery

108. Objectives: Facilitate the development and use of feed additives to reduce enteric methane emissions; improve academic and industry capability to develop feed additives and contribute to efficacy assessment.

109. Background: Funded by FONTAGRO and New Zealand, this project is led by INTA in collaboration with Uruguay and Argentina. This project is developing decision support tools for farmers using satellite data, generating real-time information on the biomass accessible for cattle.

110. Results to date: A proposal has been finalised, allowing the flagship to move forward.

111. The project will have two main components:

    - The first part of the project will build on the Global Pasture Watch project. The Global Pasture Watch Project develops grassland extent mapping. The new project will build another layer on the platform to provide information on quantity and quality of the available biomass (digestibility, crude protein content, etc). This will be led by the World Resources Institute and their partners.

- Using satellites information for real time decision making on livestock grazing: Grants will be given to institutes working in temperate and tropical systems in Latin America (4 countries) and Africa (4 countries). Seven out of the eight countries involved, are GRA members. The goal is for each country to use the data from the Global Pasture Watch Project to make decisions based on their unique circumstances and conditions.

112. Discussions are ongoing with Indonesian partners to establish a pilot in their country.

113. Opportunities: The Flagship is looking at other countries that could join the project. All information will be publicly available for other countries to use.

Agroecology and Agroforestry, presented by Maria Rosa Mosquera-Losada

114. This flagship project was launched to address the need for climate neutrality in farming systems, with agroforestry and agroecology identified by the IPCC as key approaches for climate change mitigation, adaptation, policy development, and monitoring.

115. The flagship aims to develop a portfolio of best practices across agroecosystem, supply chain, and policy levels, all linked to carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reduction potential. These practices are being assessed using a common life cycle assessment (LCA) methodology across a representative set of countries.

116. Agroforestry is defined following FAO guidance as the deliberate integration of woody perennials with agricultural products, applicable across various land uses including arable, forest, and urban systems.

117. Practices under review include silvopasture, hedgerows, silvoarable systems, forest farming, and home gardens. Monitoring efforts are supported by global databases such as LUCAS and the FAO Forest Resource Assessment (FRA), with results from Central America, West Africa, and Asia to be presented at the World Congress on Agroforestry in Rwanda.

118. Agroecology is framed around biodiversity use—through crop and livestock rotations, diversification, and soil protection. The project includes policy analysis across countries such as India, France, Mexico, Brazil, Ghana, Tanzania, and Türkiye, and links agroecological practices to soil health and sustainability.

119. A key innovation is the development of 33 business models using the Canvas framework (which is a type of business model), designed to help farmers and policymakers assess farm activities, value propositions, and cost-benefit strategies. These models are available via a multi-lingual platform and aim to support adoption of agroecological and agroforestry practices.

120. The flagship will contribute to the FAO agroforestry monitoring agreement and align with the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture's Enabling Environment Action Group (EEAG). Outputs will be integrated into the AFINET-AF4EU database and include a live handbook of over 200 documents and videos, a short-term decision support tool (DST), and a book titled *Advances in Temperate Agroforestry*, authored by Rosa Mosquera-Losada, Ladislau Neto, Anastasia Pantera, Allison Morrill Chatrchyan, with contributions from 12 countries.

121. Upcoming presentations of results are planned for the World Agroforestry Conference (Rwanda), IUFRO Conference, EU Parliament, and EU Committee of Regions.

122. The flagship is open for collaboration, with interested parties encouraged to contact the project lead Rosa Mosquera-Losada: mrosa.mosquera.losada@usc.es

Rumen Gateway, presented by Sinead Leahy on behalf of Sharon Huws

123. **Objectives**: deepen the scientific understanding of the rumen microbiome and create a library of relevant microbes involved in methanogenesis in public culture collection.

124. **Results to date:** Difficult to achieve as only a few laboratories in the world can isolate and culture these organisms. The project has been highly involved in capability building activities, more than 10 PhD students involved. The project is also building capability in Argentinian and Brazilian laboratories.

125. **Opportunities:** Findings from this flagship will be used to develop other projects on microbial prediction.

New Flagship Proposal

Biological Inhibition nitrification Flagship, presented by William Burchill on behalf of project lead Cecile De Klein

126. The Flagship has been endorsed by New Zealand and Spain.

127. **Goal:** Accelerate the research on biological nitrification inhibitors (BNI) by connecting existing BNI projects, developing common methodologies and protocols, and developing pathway to implementation.

128. **Background:** nitrification inhibition is a proven concept to reduce N2O emissions, and synthetic inhibitors have proved their efficiency in reducing N2O emissions and nitrate production in the soil. An emerging area is the biological nitrification inhibition (BNI) where some tropical grasses and some crops can express traits where roots exudates released BNI compounds leading to reduction of N2O emissions.

129. **Results to date:**

- International BNI experts group has been established
- Position paper on BNI research published
- Existing evidence of BNI in tropical grass and many crops

130. **Future activities:**

- Develop standardised methodologies
- Identify key research gaps and proposals
- Connect researchers

131. There are many opportunities for GRA members to be involved in this flagship including: access to BNI expert group, training programmes, capability building (Post-Docs and PhD).

132. Members can contact Cecile DeKlein, if they wish to be part of this project: cecile.deklein@agresearch.co.nz

Flagships Under Development

Animal health and climate initiative, presented by John Tauzel

133. **Goal:** Provide governments with high level concepts with the evidence they need that specific animal health solutions can be incorporated into their animal health policy. RGs will

engage in standardise methodology research at national or regional level to understand the prevalence of the disease and quantification, and how to integrate these data into inventories.

134. **Project timeline:**

- Phase 1: Establishing an animal health and climate scientific framework.
- Phase 2: Kenya mastitis demonstration project
- Phase 3: Guidance on incorporating animal health in national inventories and policy in select countries: Uruguay, Kenya, New Zealand, Viet Nam, and Cambodia
- Phase 4: Scaling efforts including GRA Flagship
- Phase 5: Global ambition campaign.

135. Governments need strong science to demonstrate that animal health is connected to climate change, knowing that animal health is highly context specific (disease prevalence).

136. This flagship aims to support action by 30 countries with a focus on smallholder and pastoralist systems.

137. **Opportunities:**
    - Country Champions
    - Direct financial support (estimated up to USD 500,000 per research group), total USD 1.5 million
    - Aligned financial support

B0 Flagship – led by Tony Van der Weeden, Marta Alfaro and Marianne Harl presented by Hayden Montgomery

138. **Goal:** collect data, develop protocols, and asses different manure type with information associated with diet and animal type and dev more refined coefficient for max methane potential. The objective being to make these data available for IPCC guidelines, for countries to refine their inventories.

139. In the long term the project aims to predict manure methane potential from diet characteristics.

140. GMH approved a grant to start the project involving Manure Management Network Members.

GRA COMMUNICATION NOTES

Part One – Communication Notes Process

<u>Background</u>

141. At the previous Extraordinary Council meeting in September 2024, the Science to Policy Working Group presented two workplans—one annual and one long-term—focused on improving communication between science and policy. A key activity was the development of communication notes to guide policymakers on selected topics, with the Council selecting topics and the Secretariat managing the process. These Communication Notes aim to present scientific information in a format useful to policymakers, without prescribing policy.

142. Following on the above discussion, a pilot note on GHG metrics is underway, and guidelines outlining roles, responsibilities, and review procedures have been developed and shared with participants ahead of the meeting for comments and input.

Discussion

143. The group discussed the proposed approval process for GRA Communication Notes.

144. The Secretariat and Special Representative clarified that the notes are not intended to be formally approved by the full Council, but rather reviewed by an Advisory Group, with final sign-off by the Council Chair. This approach aims to streamline the process while maintaining scientific rigour.

145. A question arose regarding the final review and sign off from the Chair before the Communication Note was published.

146. Would it be more appropriate to have a wider review? The IPCC has an open review process, which could be adopted here, giving an opportunity for any Council member to consider and address questions to the Advisory Group or Lead Authors.

147. New Zealand emphasised the importance of a consultation period for Council members to provide input. Canada and GMH suggested empowering the Advisory Group to brief the Chair and provide context on the received comments.

148. The Council Chair could look at the comments and how these have been addressed before approving the Communication Note.

149. The need to ensure that authors were appropriately financed and supported to undertake the work was noted by the Council. New Zealand confirmed that they were supporting this pilot Communication Note, as part of its resource for the Secretariat, but that other funding would need to be identified for future Communication Notes.

150. It was also noted that the process developed for Communication Notes could serve as a useful model for developing the Strategic Research Agenda.

Actions

151. Update the guidelines to include a period of consultation for members to review and comment on the near final Communication Note.

152. Note that comments will not be individually responded to.

153. Note that each Communication Note is developed with an Advisory Group.

154. The Advisory Group will review comments and ensure the note aligns with GRA processes and Charter.

155. The Council Chair will approve the note based on this review, with discretion to escalate to full Council if needed.

156. The process will be piloted with the GHG metrics note and refined as needed.

Part Two – Metrics Paper and Advisory Group Formation

Background

157. The Special Representative presented the outline for the pilot Communications Note on GHG metrics.

158. Most of agricultural emissions are non-CO2, making it essential to understand how the warming effects of these gases compare to those of CO2. GHG metrics are devised to enable such comparisons. But the challenge lies in the fact that there are multiple metrics available, and no single metric captures all dimensions. GWP100 is the metric mandated by UNFCCC and Paris Accord but there are other metrics too and they can yield significantly different results, particularly for short-lived gases like methane. This variability causes confusion and makes the choice of metric a contested issue, forming the starting point for our analysis.

159. The Communication Note then explains what the different metrics are, how they vary, and why those differences matter. The choice of metric depends on policy objectives, particularly when prioritising mitigation across different gases. It's important to clarify that metrics do not prescribe policy actions—they are tools, not directives. Our aim is to identify which metrics are most appropriate for specific policy contexts. Given their significant policy implications, we believe this will be a valuable and timely product for the GRA. We have a draft outline, and writing is already underway.

160. It will clarify that metrics do not prescribe policy actions but do help inform policy decisions based on context.

Discussion

161. The group supported the proposed outline and approach.

162. GMH emphasised the need to clarify the UNFCCC guidance on GWP100 and the option for parties to report using additional metrics as well as the fact that metrics are only needed when comparing gases to CO2.

163. The Chair confirmed that the communications note process agreed in Part One would apply to the metrics paper.

Actions

164. The Council endorsed the outline of the metrics paper.

165. An Advisory Group will be established to oversee the development of the note, with its term concluding upon the completion of the metrics note.

166. The group will be led by the GRA Vice Chair (Costa Rica), supported by the Special Representative.

167. Membership will include at least three Council members and one to two Research Group representatives.

168. Tentative expressions of interest were received from Australia, Ireland, and New Zealand.

169. A formal request for participation will be included in the meeting report, with a deadline for nominations.

CAPABILITY UPDATES

Updates from FONTAGRO

170. The regional fund for agricultural technology, known as FONTAGRO is an annual trust fund constituted by 15 member countries (Spain is the only member outside of the region) that support a call for proposals - currently supporting 20 different initiatives. FONTAGRO and the GRA have been working together for 15 years.

171. FONTAGRO 2025-2030 strategy has six flagship programmes:

- Future of crop transformation systems
- Livestock transformation systems
- Extension services (how we can deliver better knowledge to famers) and technology transfer (how we can help scientists to move from the lab to the market)
- 4 projects focused on Robotics and AI
- Future food basket - developing new food and nutrients
- Policy – to help scientists create information that supports policy makers

172. FONTAGRO have been working with 7 universities in The U.S. that have an interest in working in Latin America through FONTAGRO to place early career scientists in different national research institutes – Costa Rica is one of the host countries and FONTAGRO has also been in contact with Waikato University in New Zealand.

173. **Opportunities:**

- FONTAGRO would like to enhance their regional activities and focus on engaging with more partners working in Latin America through joint calls or initiatives with other funders and donors.
- GRA members and partners are invited to attend FONTAGRO's annual technical meeting – the next one will be in Costa Rica, 2026.
- FONTAGRO have committed their support for Costa Rica in hosting the next GRA Council meeting in 2026.

Updates from Germany

174. Germany updated on two projects they have been supporting as part of their contribution to the GRA including the Food Loss and Waste programme and Qinisia.

175. **The Food Loss and Waste programme**, started in 2015 as part of the MACS G20:

- Germany has taken the lead and organised its first workshop held in Berlin, 2017 to identify food loss and waste needs. The main realisation from this workshop is that many topics effect all countries, but the solutions differed from region to region, so they decided to establish annual regional conferences.
- There have been 8 workshops held so far, involving FAO, WWF, and other institutions.
- They want to develop an expert network in each region and identify additional funding needed to continue activities.

176. **The Qinisa Initiative** – based at the University of Pretoria, South Africa:

- Qinisia is part of the bilateral relationship between New Zealand and Germany, it started in 2024 and is funded by New Zealand.
- The aim is to bring together an established network for stakeholder on agricultural climate protection and a focus is on GHG accounting.
- Qinisia held its first workshop in South Africa, June 2025. There were four working groups on croplands, livestock, carbon-sequestration and climate smart landscapes. Germany and NZ are leading one of these working groups.

177. **Opportunities:**

- Germany has invited the GRA members and partners to attend the next Food loss and Waste programme workshops - NZ is supporting this programme by funding the next workshop in South Africa in October 2025. Then the U.S. will host in 2026.
- Germany has invited the GRA members and partners to support future workshops for the Food Loss and Waste programme and Qinisia.

Updates from New Zealand

178. **CLIFF-GRADS:**

- New Zealand highlighted the value of the CLIFF-GRADS Programme, describing it as a significant opportunity to support the development of the next generation of scientific experts.
- New Zealand have confirmed their continued support of the CLIFF-GRADS programme and announced that the Global Methane Hub is now also supporting this programme.

179. **GRAIT Programme:**

- New Zealand supports the GRAIT programme focused on inventory training and capability building, including supporting programmes with Partners in ASEAN, Africa and Pacific.
- GRAIT helps developing countries to improve their agricultural inventory from a Tier 1 to a Tier 2 inventory.
- GRAIT unlocks the ability to access green finance, to recognise changes in farming practices, and animal health in the adoption of mitigation activities.
- This programme builds capability and enables other activities to occur.

180. **Opportunities:**

- Further develop the GRAIT programme to expand beyond inventory and include farm level reporting and capability.
- New Zealand is inviting GRA members and partners to participate in the GRAIT programme and support a relaunch to the programme.

Updates from Global Methane Hub

181. The Global Methane Hub (GMH) has developed a grant to support 20 countries to improve their waste and agricultural methane GHG inventories:

- The grant's focus will be to institutionalise the activities that generate great data that is not always included in the reports.
- The GMH will be partnering with UNFCCC GHG support unit within the transparency division – this group works with countries who request quality assessments where a group of experts visit countries to evaluate their GHG inventories and make recommendations for areas of improvement. There are not often resources to follow up on these recommendations so this grant will support the following progression toward improvements.

182. Additionally, the GMH has approved a contribution of USD 0.5 million to support approximately 30 CLIFF-GRADS students, with a focus on research related to enteric fermentation. The initiative will be coordinated in collaboration with the GRA Secretariat and represents a significant investment in early-career capacity building.

183. **Opportunities:**

- GMH will keep the GRA updated on this grant and initiative as it is relevant to food loss and waste.

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANTS LIST

Members	
Australia	Nicholas Blong, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Bangladesh	Nathu Sarker, Krishi Gobeshona Foundation (*online*)
Canada	Holly Mayer, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Alana Yuill, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
China	Xiaobo Qin, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences Yu'e Li, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences Hongmin Dong, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences
Costa Rica	Roberto Camacho Montero, INTA
Denmark	Bjarne Thompson, Agency for Green Transition and Aquatic Environment
France	Thierry Caquet, INRAE
Germany	Dorothea Schildt, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity Claudia Heidecke, Thunen Institute (online) Nina Grassnick, Thunen Institute (online)
Ireland	Bill Callanan, Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine Karl Walsh, Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine John Harrison, Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine Aidan Holohan, Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine Ellen Durkin, Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine Lucina Ho, Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine
Japan	Ayano Tanabe, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Yukari Haruna, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Lithuania	Živilė Šukytė-Kraskauskienė, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania Simona Bieliauskaite, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lituhania (*online*) Vygantas Katkevicius, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lituhania (*online*)
Netherlands	Sascha Bollerman, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
New Zealand	Stephanie Preston, Ministry for Primary Industries William Aitkenhead, Ministry for Primary Industries Matthew Johnson, Ministry for Primary Industries (*online*)
Peru	Alberto Apolinairo Cortez Farfan, Ministry of Agrarian Development and Irrigation (*online*)
South Africa	Tintswalo Angel Khumalo, Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (*online*) George Shole, Department of Agriculture *(online)* Michiel Scholtz, Agricultural Research Council *(online*) Georgette Pyoos, Agricultural Research Council *(online*)
Spain	Jose-Luis Alonso-Prados, INIA-CSIC Marisa Tello, INIA – CSIC
Viet Nam	Van Tuat Nguyen, Viet Nam Plant Protection Association (*online*)

Partners	
Environmental Defense Fund	John Tauzel, Senior Director, Global Agriculture Methane
Global Methane Hub	Hayden Montgomery, Agriculture Programme Director
Climate and Clean Air Coalition	James Morris, Programme Officer
European Commission, DG AGRI	Valerio Abbadessa, Research Programme Officer
FONATGRO	Eugenia Saini, Executive Secretary
Invited Experts	
William Burchill, University College Cork Lee Nelson, Ag Emissions Centre (*online*)	
Research Group Co-Chairs	
Sinead Leahy, LRG Co-Chair (New Zealand) Richard Dewhurst, LRG Co-Chair (United Kingdom) (*online*) Tommy Boland, LRG Co-Chair (Ireland) Yasuhito Shirato, PRRG Co-Chair (Japan) Jean-Francois Soussana, IRG Co-Chair (France) Tiffany Reed Marshall, IRG (Australia) Maria Rosa Mosquera-Losada, CRG Co-Chair (Spain) Francisco Javier Rodríguez Rigueiro, CRG (Spain) José Javier Santiago Freijanes, CRG (Spain)	
GRA Secretariat	
Deborah Knox, New Zealand Harry Clark, New Zealand Chista Keramati, New Zealand (*online*)	

APPENDIX 2 – LETTER FROM COSTA RICA

MINISTERIO DE AGRICULTURA Y GANADERÍA | GOBIERNO DE COSTA RICA

June 2, 2025
MAG-LETTER-DM-592-2025
Page 1 of 2

Dr Harry Clark
Special Representative
Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases

Subject: Expression of Interest – Chair of the GRA Council (2025-2026)

Dear Dr Clark:

The Republic of Costa Rica, through its Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, is honored to submit its formal expression of interest in assuming the role of Chair of the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA) Council upon the conclusion of Ireland's mandate.
Costa Rica has a long-standing commitment to sustainable agricultural development and climate action. We recognize the vital role that international cooperation plays in reducing agricultural greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Our interest in chairing the GRA Council for the 2025–2026 period is rooted in our dedication to:

- Supporting the alignment of research efforts with sustainable food systems and food security goals.
- Championing multilateral collaboration and knowledge sharing, especially with and among low- and middle-income countries.
- Building synergies with Costa Rica's broader international cooperation and climate commitments.
- Promoting inclusive capacity-building initiatives that empower researchers, policymakers, and producers—particularly in vulnerable regions.
- Encouraging innovation and the adoption of climate-smart technologies through participatory research and public-private partnerships.

As part of our proposal, Costa Rica would be honored to host the GRA Annual Council Meeting in 2026. The meeting would follow a similar format to the one being held this week, with proposed dates during the week of either March 16 or March 23, 2026. The program would run from Tuesday to Friday, featuring two full days of Council meetings, one day dedicated to an open technical workshop for knowledge exchange, and one field day to showcase local research, innovation, and sustainable agricultural practices.

Should we be entrusted with the Chair role, we will work to ensure the GRA remains inclusive, active, and impactful throughout our mandate. While Costa Rica, as a middle-income country, will not be able to provide financial support for the participation of

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representatives from other low- and middle-income countries, we remain fully committed to fostering inclusive dialogue, facilitating meetings of research groups, and representing the GRA at relevant international fora.

We look forward to presenting our interest to the broader GRA Council membership and to further contributing to this important global alliance.

Yours sincerely,

Víctor Julio Carvajal Porras
Minister of Agriculture and Livestock
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