



Message from the Outgoing Council Chair, Ireland

Dear GRA Members, Partners and Colleagues,

As Ireland concludes its term as Chair of the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA), I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the past eighteen months and to thank all Members, Partners, researchers, officials and stakeholders who have contributed to the Alliance's work during this period.

It has been a privilege for Ireland's Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to serve as Chair of this unique global partnership. At a time of significant global uncertainty, the GRA continues to provide something increasingly valuable: consistency, predictability and continuity in agricultural climate science. Through its global network of researchers, policymakers and institutions, the Alliance creates a trusted platform for collaboration and a demonstration of international cooperation founded on science, trust and shared purpose. This role is more important today than ever before.

Agriculture faces a challenge unlike any other sector. We must simultaneously reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to a changing climate, safeguard food security and support the livelihoods of farmers and rural communities. No single country, institution or research team can solve these challenges alone. The strength of the GRA lies in its ability to bring together expertise, data, infrastructure and experience from across the world, accelerating progress through collective action.

When Ireland assumed the Chair, our ambition was to strengthen the Alliance, support scientific excellence and position the GRA for the future. Looking back, I believe we can be proud of the progress we made together.

A major focus of our term was the development of the GRA Strategic Plan 2026–2030 and the comprehensive review of the Alliance's research and network structures. Through extensive consultation and the dedicated work of members, important decisions were reached which will help position the GRA for the years ahead. The endorsement of the Strategic Plan and the reorganisation of the Research Groups, Networks and Flagships at the Council Meeting in Dublin marked a significant moment in further developing the Alliance.

The Dublin Council Meeting in June 2025 remains a particular highlight of Ireland's role as Chair. Over several days, members and partners came together not only for Council deliberations but also for a major scientific and policy conference examining the role of agriculture in addressing climate change. Field visits showcased Irish farming systems, research infrastructure and innovation in practice. Most importantly, the meeting provided an opportunity for colleagues from across the world to engage directly with one another, strengthen relationships and collectively shape the future direction of the Alliance.

Perhaps the most important outcome of the past eighteen months has been the broader discussion initiated about the future value and role of the GRA itself. There is a growing recognition that it must continue to evolve in response to changing scientific, political and



societal expectations. The conversations during our Chair about how the GRA can maximise its impact, communicate its value, and remain relevant in a changing world have generated important momentum that will continue well beyond our term.

Ireland is pleased to be continuing its contribution through our leadership of the Strategic Research Agenda Working Group. The development of a Strategic Research Agenda represents a key commitment under the new Strategic Plan and will provide a framework for future research priorities across the Alliance. We look forward to sharing progress updates and facilitating discussions during the workshop at this Council Meeting in San José.

The progress achieved during Ireland's role as Chair would not have been possible without the dedication and professionalism of the GRA Secretariat. On behalf of Ireland, I extend our sincere thanks to the Secretariat team for their guidance, commitment and support. I also wish to acknowledge both the former and new Special Representatives for their leadership, advice and partnership.

I would like to thank all GRA Members and Partners for their engagement, collaboration and commitment during our term. The Alliance's greatest strength lies in its people, and the willingness of members to work together in pursuit of better outcomes for agriculture, climate and society. In this respect, it is particularly encouraging to welcome El Salvador as the latest member country of the GRA, following Pakistan's membership in 2025.

As Ireland concludes its term as Chair, I warmly welcome Costa Rica as the incoming Chair of the GRA Council. Costa Rica brings a strong record of leadership in sustainable agriculture and climate action, and I am confident that the Alliance will continue to thrive under its stewardship. We wish our Costa Rican colleagues every success and look forward to supporting them during their period as Chair.

Thank you.

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