

rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REPORT



6TH JUNE 2023



16:30 TO 20:00



8TH JUNE 2023



11:00 TO 13:00



DURBAN INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION CENTER
SOUTH AFRICA



Acronyms

AFAAS	African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CCARDESA	Center for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa
CORAF	West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DALRRD	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development
DAR	Department of Agricultural Research
EU	European Union
FANR	Food Agriculture and Natural Resources
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
GA	General Assembly
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
MS	Member States
MTOP	Medium-term Operational Plan
R&D	Research and Development
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SRO	Sub-regional Organisation
ToR	Terms of Reference

Contents

Acronyms.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	v
Executive Summary	vi
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 SESSION 1: OFFICIAL OPENING	2
2.1 Welcome remarks by CCARDESA Board Chairperson.....	2
2.2 Remarks by CCARDESA General Assembly Chairperson.....	2
2.2 Remarks by a Representative of Development Partners	3
2.3 Official Opening by the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development of the Republic of South Africa	4
3 SESSION 2: GENERAL ASSEMBLY	4
3.1 Background to the CCARDESA General Assembly	4
3.2 Election of new Chairperson of the General Assembly	5
3.3 Recommendations.....	6
4 SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING – PAPER 1	6
4.1 Decisions.....	7
5. REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS FOR CCARDESA – PAPER 2	7
5.1 Report of the Chairperson of CCARDESA Board of Directors	7
5.2 Appointment of External Auditors.....	8
5.3 Decisions.....	8
6. PROPOSED AMENDEMENTS TO CCARDESA GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS – PAPER 3	8
6.1 Decisions.....	13
7. PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURES HANDBOOK – PAPER 4 ..	13
7.1 Decisions.....	13
8. CCARDESA’S STRATEGIC DIRECTION – PAPER 5.....	14
8.1 Decisions.....	14
9. NOMINATION OF FARA BOARD CHAIRPERSON	14
9.1 Decisions.....	15
10. CLOSING.....	15
10.1 Outgoing Chairperson.....	15
10.2 Incoming Chairperson.....	15
Annex 1 – 3rd CCARDESA GA Programme.....	16

**Annex 2 – Delegates Nominated by SADC Member States to constitute the CCARDESA
GA (GA membership register) 18**

Annex 3 - List of participants of the 3rd CCARDESA GA 22

List of tables

Table 1: List of Board Members whose appointment was approved by SADC Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security	7
Table 2: CCARDESA Governance Issues considered by the General Assembly	9

Acknowledgements

CCARDESA appreciates the support from ALL national, regional and global partners for their contributions to the work done by the organization and the delegates who participated in the third CCARDESA General Assembly. Without your presence and contributions, our discussions would not have been worthwhile.

Executive Summary

Article 10 of the Charter establishing the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) provides for four governance structures, one of which is the General Assembly (GA). The GA is the second highest governance structure after the States Parties Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security. The GA is responsible for providing broad guidance to the Board and ultimately make sure that CCARDESA programmes remain relevant to the region's agricultural research needs and priorities.

In compliance with Article 14 of the Charter, which stipulates that the GA shall hold an ordinary meeting once every two years, CCARDESA convened its third General Assembly (GA) on 6th June 2023 in Durban, South Africa. The meeting was officiated by Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) of the Republic of South Africa, Ms Thoko Didiza.

The event provided an opportunity for the CCARDESA Board of Directors to present to the GA: (i) Key achievements made by the organization since the 2021 General Assembly; (ii) the 2021 GA report; (iii) the report on the appointment of new Board Members by Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security and appointment of new auditors for CCARDESA; (iv) recommendations of amendments to CCARDESA governance documents; (v) GA draft rules of procedures handbook; and (vi) CCARDESA's strategic direction as informed by stakeholders since the endorsement by the GA of the organisation's Long-term Strategic Plan (2020-2029) and the second Medium Term Operational Plan (2021- 2025) in 2021.

The GA conducted elections for the new GA Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Dr Grace Kaudzu and Mrs Gaothobogwe Radikwata were duly elected as the new GA Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, respectively. The event was attended by CCARDESA GA Member States, CCARDESA Board Members, CCARDESA Secretariat and representatives of invited development partners.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The General Assembly (GA) is one of the governance structures of CCARDESA. It is composed of a wide range of stakeholders within the agricultural sector, predominantly from SADC Member States. This governance structure has specific roles to play, as outlined in Article 13 of the Charter establishing CCARDESA. The key responsibilities of the General Assembly are to: (i) Recommend to Ministers CCARDESA’s R&D priorities; (ii) approve, monitor and evaluate the CCARDESA strategic direction; (iii) appoint, renew or terminate the services of External Auditors for CCARDESA; and (iv) recommend to Ministers new members on CCARDESA Board identified by the sitting Board. In addition to the General Assembly, the Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security of countries that are party to the Charter receive reports of CCARDESA and perform functions of appointing Board Members as well as attending to other issues of long-term strategic nature. The Board of Directors of CCARDESA, composed of 13 voting members and two ex-officio members, provides oversight and guides the CCARDESA Secretariat on its general direction and programmes. Figure 1 shows the governance structure of CCARDESA and the functions of each structure.

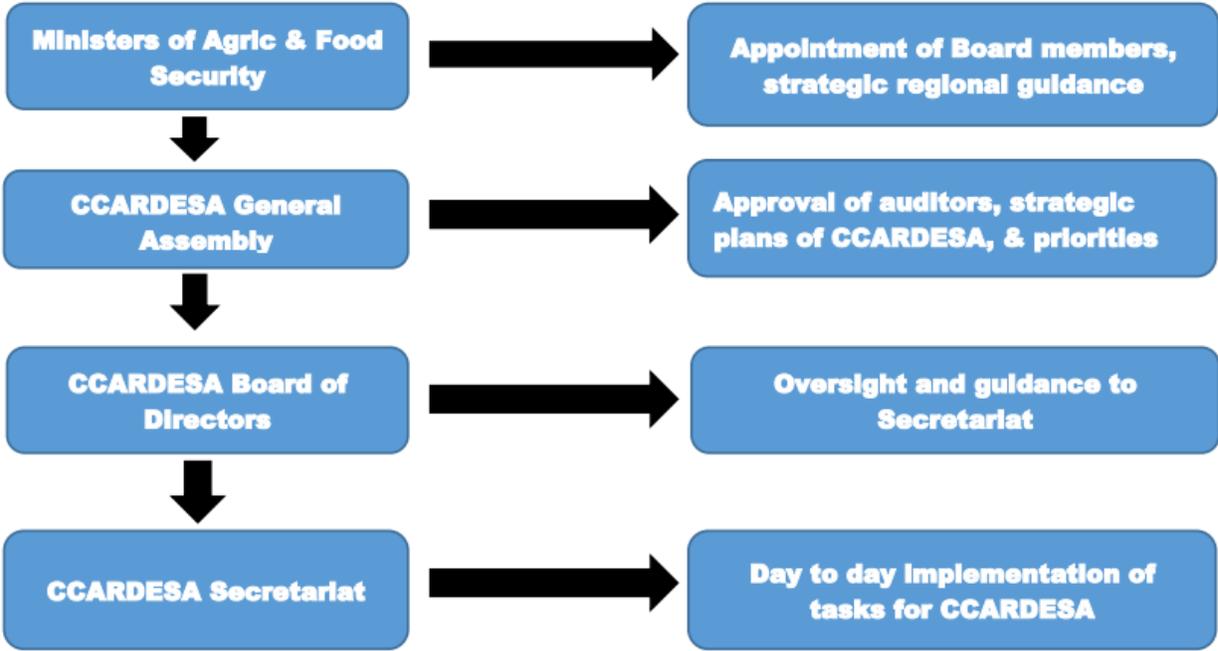


Figure 1: CCARDESA governance structure

The Charter establishing CCARDESA stipulates that the General Assembly shall be held every two years. The first GA of CCARDESA was held in May 2014 in Gaborone. At the first GA meeting, the Medium-Term Operational Plan (MTO) for CCARDESA was approved, the composition of the Board was endorsed, and the Auditors were approved. The second GA was scheduled for 2016. However, this did not take place due to challenges the organisation was facing at that time. Focus was put on addressing these challenges and stabilising the organisation. With that achieved, CCARDESA convened

its second GA on 10th June 2021. The objective of the second GA was to provide a platform for this governance structure of CCARDESA to perform its mandate as provided for in the Charter. Some key achievements of the 2nd GA were the endorsement of the CCARDESA Long-term Strategic Plan (2020 – 2029) and Medium-Term Operational Plan (2020 – 2025).

The third CCARDESA General Assembly (GA) was convened on the 6th of June 2023 in Durban, South Africa and was officiated by the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) of the Republic of South Africa, Honorable Thoko Didiza. The proceedings were chaired by Dr. Lefulesele Lebesa, the Director of Agricultural Research (DAR), Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, of the Kingdom of Lesotho in her capacity as the CCARDESA GA Chairperson.

2.0 SESSION 1: OFFICIAL OPENING

2.1 Welcome remarks by CCARDESA Board Chairperson

The CCARDESA Board Chairperson, Professor Lala Razafinjara, welcomed all delegates to the 2023 GA and acknowledged the dignitaries and Guest of Honour, the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) of the Republic of South Africa, Honorable Thoko Didiza. In his remarks, Prof. Razafinjara mentioned that the Board was gratified that CCARDESA was able to hold the GA in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, which stipulates that the GA shall hold an ordinary meeting once every two years. Prof. Razafinjara reminded delegates that the last GA (held virtually in 2021) approved the CCARDESA's Strategic Plan (2020-2029) and the CCARDESA Medium Term Operational Plan (2021-2025). However, from technical and statutory meetings that CCARDESA has held through various structures since the last GA, stakeholders had identified some key elements which were missing in CCARDESA's programme coverage. Hence, the Board has found it necessary to recommend to the GA, a revision of the two key CCARDESA governance documents, the Charter and Governance Manual. Prof. Razafinjara concluded by thanking the Government of the Republic of South Africa for hosting the third CCARDESA GA and the Hon. Minister Thoko Didiza for finding time to officiate in this regional event. He also thanked the CCARDESA Secretariat for organizing the GA.

2.2 Remarks by CCARDESA General Assembly Chairperson

Dr. Lefulesele Lebesa, the CCARDESA GA Chairperson, expressed special appreciation to the Minister of DALRRD, Hon. Thoko Didiza for availing herself with her team to officiate at the CCARDESA GA. On behalf of CCARDESA, the Chairperson apologized for the confusion caused by invitations sent to countries for the CCARDESA GA and the

Science week, which were held in the same venue. She thanked the CCARDESA Secretariat for resolving this on time and assured delegates that such would not happen again.

Dr Lebesa indicated that the 3rd CCARDESA GA was held at a time when the region's priority initiatives were being accelerated, key among them being the implementation of the SADC Regional Climate Change Strategy. She highlighted that Agricultural Research and Development remains important for driving SADC's priority initiatives, including the quest to transform national economies through resilient agricultural programmes, which require sustainable interventions in the face of climate change.

In relation to the proposed revision of CCARDESA's long-term strategy and mid-term operational plan, the GA Chairperson invited delegates to candidly consider the proposed revisions, and in so doing, provide practical guidance on how the GA could improve in executing its obligations.

In concluding her remarks, the GA Chairperson requested delegates to observe a moment of silence for the former Vice Chairperson, Mr Similo Mavimbela of the Kingdom of Eswatini, who passed away a few months after the 2nd CCARDESA GA in 2021.

2.2 Remarks by a Representative of Development Partners

Mr Amine Belhamissi, on behalf of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), conveyed IFAD's solidarity and desire to continue working with SADC countries and institutions to address global commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the continental ones such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). IFAD acknowledged the opportunity of working with Africa's sub-regional and supra national research organisations namely CCARDESA, ASARECA, CORAF, AFAAS and FARA to implement the CAADP-XP4 programme that is funded by the European Union and administered by IFAD.

He observed that through the CAADP-XP4 programme, IFAD had overseen a process of strengthening these supra and sub regional agricultural organisations to work collaboratively to deliver on their respective mandates. This allowed them to pool together resources and efforts and leveraged on their respective strengths to deliver on their similar mandates. This also enabled the institutions to attain better impact and have a common voice in continental and global platforms.

Mr Belhamissi implored stakeholders to support these organisations so that the little investment that the EU and IFAD have made may be sustained to foster the much-needed collaboration at various levels. He appealed for more support to be accorded to agricultural research given its strong potential towards improving agricultural development and livelihoods in the region.

2.3 Official Opening by the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development of the Republic of South Africa

The Honorable Minister expressed her gratitude on behalf of the government of the Republic of South Africa for hosting the third CCARDESA GA. She reminded delegates of the impact of Covid-19 on the Agricultural sector before thanking different stakeholders for playing their different roles in containing the pandemic.

The Honorable Minister noted the rare opportunity provided by regional platforms such as the CCARDESA General Assembly (GA) to deliberate on agricultural research and development issues amidst persistent food and nutrition insecurity caused by climate change and natural calamities in the region. She stated that in the recent meeting of Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food security, it was noted that improving resilience to emerging agricultural risks is a key area that SRO's like CCARDESA should continue to focus on in their mid to long-term programming.

Minister Didiza requested Member States (MS) to step-up their efforts to support CCARDESA's initiatives and the GA to critically review progress and achievements made in the regional priority areas, as well as challenges and lessons learned. She called for delegates to deliberate on early warning systems and approaches to support MS, particularly those at high risk and come up with pragmatic preparedness and response strategies.

The Honorable Minister concluded her remarks by thanking the CCARDESA Board and Secretariat as well as DALRRD Senior officials for their commendable efforts in ensuring a successful GA.

3 SESSION 2: GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This session was chaired by Dr Lebesa, the CCARDESA GA Chairperson. After introducing the Agenda to the delegates for adoption, the CCARDESA Board of Directors requested to add one item after the discussion on CCARDESA's strategic direction. The Board sought to brief the GA on developments regarding the nomination of the new Chairperson of the FARA Board of Directors who is expected to come from the CCARDESA sub-region. With this addition, the agenda was adopted.

3.1 Background to the CCARDESA General Assembly

The Executive Director of CCARDESA, Professor Cliff Dlamini, presented the background to the General Assembly and updated the delegates of key issues discussed in the last GA. He noted that convening the past two GAs had not been consistent with the provisions of the Charter establishing CCARDESA due to several factors including lack of financial resources and the Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in the last GA being held virtually.

For the benefit of new delegates, the ED in his presentation, highlighted the functions of GA as follows: i) Recommend to Ministers CCARDESA's R&D priorities; ii) Approve, Monitor and Evaluate the CCARDESA strategic direction; iii) Appoint, renew or terminate the services of External Auditors for CCARDESA; iv) Recommend to Ministers new members on CCARDESA Board identified by the sitting Board; and v) Form its own committees as necessary.

3.2 Election of new Chairperson of the General Assembly

The election process was presided over by the GA Chairperson who explained to the delegates the procedure for electing the new GA chairperson and vice as reflected in the Governance Manual. CCARDESA staff, Board members and representatives of cooperating partners were not eligible to vote. The voting process was conducted as follows:

- (i) A total of 12 Member States (Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe) nominated a list of 3-6 delegates to represent each respective State Party in the CCARDESA GA.
- (ii) Only Countries that were eligible and had nominated candidates were allowed to compete for the position of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.
- (iii) Only delegates that were nominated by their countries to vote in the GA were allowed to participate in the voting.
- (iv) Three Countries responded to the call for nominations for the position of GA Chairperson as follows: Botswana (Mrs Gaothobogwe Radikwata), Namibia (Mr Phillip Clemens Khaiseb), and Malawi (Dr. Grace Kaudzu).
- (v) Biographies that had been submitted to the CCARDESA Secretariat together with the nomination of candidates were read out to the delegates before voting.
- (vi) Secret voting, using ballot boxes was used to elect the new Chairperson.
- (vii) Two transparent boxes were set at the front in the meeting room and election officers were nominated to assist with vote verification and counting.
- (viii) As per the Governance manual, the candidate with the highest number of votes became the Chairperson while the follow-up candidate assumed the position of Vice Chairperson.

After counting, Dr. Grace Kaudzu from Malawi was elected the new Chair of the GA (with 20 votes), Mrs Gaothobogwe Radikwata, the new Vice Chairperson with 11 votes, while Mr Phillip Clemens Khaiseb got 9 votes.

The Governance manual stipulates that the election of the GA Chair should be done at the beginning of the GA, and after the elections are done, the new Chair is expected to Chair the rest of the GA proceedings. Delegates noted that this was an anomaly and resolved to allow the current Chairperson to chair the GA and do an official handover at the end of proceedings. It was strongly felt that it would be remiss of the incoming

Chairperson to preside over matters she had not been part of. This is one area the Board and the Secretariat were advised to review.

3.3 Recommendations

3.3.1 The Board and the Secretariat were advised to review the Governance Manual to allow the substantive GA Chairperson to preside over the GA to give account for his/her period of tenure and only handover to the incoming Chairperson at the end of the GA session.

4 SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING – PAPER 1

The report of the second GA was presented by Dr Lebesa. Delegates noted that the second GA was held virtually on 12th June 2021 and achieved the following outputs: (i) Report by CCARDESA Board Chairperson was endorsed; (ii) CCARDESA Strategic Plan was endorsed; (iii) CCARDESA Medium Term Operational Plan endorsed; (iv) CCARDESA External auditors formally appointed; and (v) Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the General Assembly were elected.

The GA was also notified that there were no matters arising from the 2nd GA. However, there was need to reflect on some past decisions of the 1st GA that were still not fully addressed. These relate to the stakeholder database and constitution of the CCARDESA General Assembly, membership fees, and proposed amendments to the CCARDESA governance documents.

- (i) Stakeholder database and constitution of the CCARDESA General Assembly – The GA commended the CCARDESA Secretariat for complying with the provisions of the Charter by engaging Member States to identify members of the GA who are representatives of the institutions stipulated in Article 12 of the Charter.
- (ii) Membership fees – The GA did not approve for membership fees to be paid by individuals constituting the GA but recommended that State Parties should be responsible for the payment. Despite not agreeing on a particular figure during the discussions, delegates felt it may be a tall order for some countries to pay GA membership fees while they are still struggling to honor their commitment of once-off and annual Member States contributions to CCARDESA. Therefore, a nominal fee should be determined by the Secretariat to ensure that countries are not unduly prevented from participating in the GA.
- (iii) Proposed amendments to the governance documents – these were discussed under Paper 3 (below).

4.1 Decisions

- 4.1.1 The GA tasked the Secretariat to propose a nominal membership fee to be paid by Member States to participate in the CCARDESA General Assembly.
- 4.1.2 The GA endorsed the list of delegates nominated by each State Party as the GA Membership register
- 4.1.3 The second GA report was adopted following a move by Zambia, seconded by Eswatini.

5. REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS FOR CCARDESA – PAPER 2

5.1 Report of the Chairperson of CCARDESA Board of Directors

The Governance report was presented by the Board Chairperson, Professor Lala Razafinjara. His presentation provided an update on appointment and retirement of members of the CCARDESA Board as provided for under Article 13(5) of the Charter establishing CCARDESA, which outlines the functions of the General Assembly in recommending to States Parties Ministers the new members on CCARDESA Board, identified by the sitting Board (self-generating Board). The GA noted that the Joint Meeting of SADC Ministers Responsible for Agriculture and Food Security approved the appointment of six members of the Board during their meeting of 13th May 2022 as listed in Table 1.

Table 1: List of Board Members whose appointment was approved by SADC Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security

No.	Name	Position	Nationality
1	Prof Aimé Lala Razafinjara	Chairperson	Republic of Madagascar
2	Mr. Clemence T. Bwenje	Public Sector	Republic of Zimbabwe
3	Dr Frank M. Kayula	Farmers' Representative	Republic of Zambia
4	Ms. Amanda N. Chembezi	Civil Society	Republic of Botswana
5	Dr Relebohile Lepheana	Agricultural Research Expert	Kingdom of Lesotho
6	Ms Rendani Sadiki	Finance Expert	Republic South Africa

The Board Members were appointed for a term of three years, except for Ms Rendani Sadiki who was appointed until the expiry of tenure for South Africa on the Board, which ended on 31 May 2023.

It was further explained that the SADC Secretariat has a Permanent Seat on the Board, represented by the Director of Food Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR), Mr. Domingos Gove. The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) is an ex-officio

member, represented by the Executive Director, Dr. Yemi Akinbamiyo. The Board Chairperson also noted that at the time of reporting, the positions of Vice Chairperson, Legal Expert, Finance Expert, Agribusiness Expert, and Higher Education Expert were vacant and that the Republics of Angola, Malawi, Seychelles, and the Democratic Republic of Congo were eligible to make nominations to fill these positions. The Secretariat had sent communications to these countries, requesting them to send nominations for these positions.

5.2 Appointment of External Auditors

The GA noted a misalignment on the recruitment of auditors which did not coincide with the tenure of the GA, yet according to Article 13 (5) of the Charter, it is the mandate of the GA to appoint, renew or terminate the services of external auditors for CCARDESA. This challenge could be rectified if the Charter establishing CCARDESA is amended to allow the GA to convene on an annual basis.

Delegates were notified that the 2023 external audit for the financial year that ended 31st December 2022 was expected to be completed in the first half of 2023 and that this would mark the completion of the term of the current external auditors. The search for new external auditors would commence thereafter.

5.3 Decisions

5.3.1 It was recommended that Member States should include youth representatives when nominating candidates for the Board. In the current CCARDESA Board, two members fall within the youth bracket and their countries were applauded for making such a decision.

5.3.2 The report of the Chairperson of the CCARDESA Board of Directors and appointment of external auditors was adopted following a proposal by Malawi, seconded by Namibia.

6. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CCARDESA GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS – PAPER 3

Some key issues were highlighted by the Board in the CCARDESA governance documents (the Charter and Governance Manual) that needed the attention of the General Assembly. The GA was requested to consider the highlighted points and provide guidance on amendments to the Charter and Governance Manual. The detailed discussion points are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 2: CCARDESA Governance Issues considered by the General Assembly

ITEM NO.	ISSUE	CHALLENGE(S)	PROPOSAL TO CCARDESA GA
1)	<p>Section 7 of the Governance Manual indicates that <i>the Governance manual may be amended by majority decision of the Board of Directors.</i></p> <p>Governance Manual Section 5.2.2.1 Item (vi) states that <i>the General Assembly shall approve legal instruments, recommended by the Board of Directors for the smooth functioning of CCARDESA</i></p>	<p>The Governance Manual is a legal instrument for CCARDESA. Therefore, any adoption of recommended amendment by the CCARDESA Board needs the approval of the GA.</p>	<p>Propose necessary amendments to the Governance Manual.</p>
2)	<p>Section 5.2.2.2, Item (i) of the Governance Manual and Article 14 of the Charter prescribe that <i>Ordinary meetings of the General Assembly will be held biennially to review CCARDESA's Policies, and Programmes</i></p>	<p>Meeting every two years does not provide an opportunity for the GA to table issues to the Ministers' meeting in a timely manner (e.g. appointment of Board members). Why not have annual meetings just like the Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security? The prohibitive costs of convening physical meetings can be overcome through a blend of both physical and virtual annual meetings. If funds are not available, meetings can be convened virtually.</p>	<p>Recommend amendment to the Charter and the Governance Manual to allow for convening the GA annually making use of a blend of virtual and physical meetings.</p> <p>Virtual procedures will have to be recognised and mainstreamed into the governance documents.</p>
3)	<p>Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the GA Chair and Vice Chair are not explicitly stated in the Governance Manual</p>	<p>Roles for the GA Chair are not clear beyond the GA meetings and endorsing the filling of vacant positions within the Board of Directors.</p>	<p>Insert section in the Governance Manual to specify roles of GA Chair and Vice Chair. For example (i) to report GA recommendations to the Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security and (ii) to provide oversight of the Board in view of the importance of the GA as a 2nd tier structure of CCARDESA governance.</p>

ITEM NO.	ISSUE	CHALLENGE(S)	PROPOSAL TO CCARDESA GA
4)	<p>Last paragraph of Section 3 of the Governance Manual states <i>that CCARDESA was developed under the Subsidiarity Principle of SADC which gives the SRO <u>complete autonomy</u> to manage its human and financial resources with the SADC Secretariat providing overall strategic policy guidance to ensure that the regional R&D agenda and priorities are consistent with the SADC mandate on agriculture and food security.</i></p> <p>Article 6 Item 2 of the Charter states that: <i>CCARDESA shall operate as a <u>semi-autonomous institution</u> established under the principle of subsidiarity and shall focus on technical coordination and related harmonization functions of facilitation of the regional R&D agenda</i></p>	The use of <u>complete autonomy</u> in the Manual and <u>semi-autonomous</u> in the Charter creates confusion in interpretation of the CCARDESA relationship with the SADC Secretariat.	Propose the use of one word that CCARDESA is a semi-autonomous SADC subsidiary in both the CCARDESA Manual and the Charter to clear the unintended confusion on the level of autonomy.
5)	Section 5.2.3.4 Item (i) of the Governance Manual indicates that <i>each Board member will be required to sign a contract spelling out his/her responsibilities and obligations.</i>	The same Governance Manual does not specify who signs contracts with the Board Members. Is it the Board Chairperson or the GA Chairperson?	The Manual needs to be revised to indicate who the Board accounts to between the GA Chairperson and the Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security.
6)	According to Article 12 of the CCARDESA Charter, the GA consists of members from the <i>following 5 institutions from each State Party:</i>	Although it is understood that the Manual operationalizes the CCARDESA Charter and may have broadened the list of categories based on that understanding. However, this may introduce confusion in the nominations and voting for GA	Amend the Governance Manual to be consistent with the Charter.

ITEM NO.	ISSUE	CHALLENGE(S)	PROPOSAL TO CCARDESA GA
	<p>(a) Ministries responsible for Agriculture and Food Security; (b) Agro-industry; (c) Agricultural Education Institutions; (d) Farmer Organisations; and (e) Agricultural Civil Society Organisations.</p> <p>The CCARDESA Manual (Section 5.2.2) expands these categories to include institutional stakeholders from ALL agricultural sub-sectors, both public and private.</p>	<p>Leadership positions as the number of stakeholder categories prescribed in the Governance manual is indefinite.</p>	
7)	<p>Section 4.3 Item (ii) of the CCARDESA Governance Manual indicates <i>that CCARDESA shall maintain a membership register and update it from time to time.</i></p>	<p>There is currently no such register, hence it was difficult to identify CCARDESA members for the 3rd CCARDESA GA.</p>	<p>For the 3rd GA, Member States were invited to nominate delegates representing the 5 categories of stakeholders as prescribed in Article 12 of the CCARDESA Charter. The list of nominees submitted by Countries should be maintained as a register of GA members. If this is approved by the GA, there will be a need to decide on their term of office.</p>
8)	<p>According to Section 4.1 item (iii) and (iv) of the Governance Manual, <i>Subsequent to the inaugural General Assembly, only paid-up members shall participate in the General Assembly.</i></p>	<p>Some donors had reservations on membership fees which may hinder participation of resource poor groups/ stakeholders</p>	<p>If the GA decides to maintain membership fees as a pre-requisite for members to retain their seats, a nominal fee should be proposed to allow easy participation in the GA.</p>
9)	<p>TORs for Human Resources & Governance Committee of the CCARDESA Board as they appear under Section 5.2.4.3 of the Governance Manual appear</p>	<p>This is likely to bring confusion on the mandate of current committees.</p>	<p>The Board to streamline the ToRs of the Finance and HR and Governance Committees to delineate clearer roles for each based on the current situation.</p>

ITEM NO.	ISSUE	CHALLENGE(S)	PROPOSAL TO CCARDESA GA
	misplaced under the Finance Committee.		
10)	Who determines the sitting allowances for the Board?	This issue arose during the Board induction in December 2022. An objective arrangement needs to be spelt out as the Board would be conflicted to rule on the matter.	The Board to make a suggestion in the Governance Manual for the GA to approve the sitting allowances for the Board members.

6.1 Decisions

- 6.1.1 The GA recommends for the Council of Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security to amend Article 14(1) of the Charter establishing CCARDESA to allow the GA to meet annually through a blend of both physical and virtual means.
- 6.1.2 The amendments to the CCARDESA Charter should give recognition to virtual meetings and this meeting format is to be mainstreamed into the CCARDESA governance documents.
- 6.1.3 The Secretariat, working with the Board, should facilitate the review and amendments of the Governance Manual as discussed, and the revised version should be presented in the next GA for consideration and endorsement.
- 6.1.4 The Secretariat will decide if there is a need for a task team with legal support to expedite the review and amendment to the CCARDESA Governance manual.

7. PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURES HANDBOOK – PAPER 4

Section 5.2.2.2 (iii) of the CCARDESA Governance manual indicates that *Procedures for conducting meetings of the General Assembly shall be specified in its Rules of Procedures Handbook. CCARDESA Secretariat shall draft the rules and procedures that will be approved and adopted by the General Assembly.* It was noted that the past two CCARDESA GAs were convened without this instrument, which the Secretariat developed for consideration in the third GA.

The objective of the rules and procedures handbook, which derives its legitimacy and validity from the Charter, is to regulate the conduct of the proceedings of all meetings of the General Assembly. The handbook consists of different Articles, including the Composition of the GA, Preparation and calling of the GA meetings, Proceedings of the GA meeting, duties, rights and powers of the GA, of the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretariat.

7.1 Decisions

- 7.1.1 The GA recommended that the current draft rules of procedures handbook be reviewed and amended such that the new Chairperson does not Chair the GA deliberations immediately after elections. The old Chairperson should be allowed an opportunity to preside over reports of the previous GA and make a proper handover at the end.
- 7.1.2 The GA conditionally approved the draft handbook pending incorporation of the above recommendations.

8. CCARDESA'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION – PAPER 5

The GA noted the strategic direction that CCARDESA is embarking on, which is necessitated by observed and agreed weaknesses in the current strategy that lacks elements of fisheries, aquaculture, agroforestry and forestry, livestock, and other sustainable livelihoods programmes under the six thematic areas.

Also noted by the GA, was the Secretariat's resource mobilisation efforts to address the current challenges of limited financial resources as well as initiatives to strengthen partnerships and collaboration to enhance the work that CCARDESA is doing in the region. These include leveraging on existing SADC platforms, strengthening ties with the SADC Secretariat, resuscitating the Committee of SADC Directors of Agricultural Research, Directors of Agricultural Extension and Deans of Faculties of Agriculture, among others. The GA commended CCARDESA's efforts to revise its long-term strategy to make it relevant to the organisation's overall mandate.

8.1 Decisions

8.1.1 Efforts to connect farmers to markets should remain central in the strategy.

8.1.2 The strategy should include means of strengthening research-extension-farmer linkages.

8.1.3 Promote investment in youth and women as key players in the generation and dissemination of improved agricultural technology.

8.1.4 The report was adopted after Lesotho moved for adoption, seconded by Namibia.

9. NOMINATION OF FARA BOARD CHAIRPERSON

The GA was notified that FARA had invited CCARDESA in November 2022 to submit three nominees from the CCARDESA sub-region that were considered most suitable to take on the responsibility of serving as the next FARA Board Chairperson for three years, effective June 2023. The nominees were adjudicated by the CCARDESA Board based on qualifications, eligibility criteria and duties of the FARA Chairperson, which were outlined in the communication from FARA. The CCARDESA Board duly submitted three shortlisted names to FARA with the candidates' CVs. However, the candidate who was eventually picked by FARA for the position did not feature in the CCARDESA submitted shortlist. In addition, FARA did not have the courtesy to engage CCARDESA on their decision to set aside CCARDESA's submission, which was compiled following FARA's own shortlisting guidelines.

The CCARDESA Board then resolved to dissociate themselves from the whole recruitment process and officially communicated to FARA that the CCARDESA sub-region is still waiting for its turn to nominate its own candidate for the position.

9.1 Decisions

9.1.1 The GA endorsed the position taken by the CCARDESA Board to dissociate itself from the nomination of a CCARDESA sub-region representative done by FARA which disregarded the recommendations from the CCARDESA Region.

9.1.2 The GA requested an update on the matter in the next GA sitting.

10. CLOSING

10.1 Outgoing Chairperson

The outgoing Chairperson, Dr Lefulesele Lebesa, thanked the GA delegates, CCARDESA Board of Directors, the Secretariat, and development partners for the support they accorded her during her tenure. She wished the new GA leadership well and pledged her support to the new Chairperson and her Vice to ensure that whatever decisions were made in the 3rd GA would be successfully put into action.

10.2 Incoming Chairperson

The new Chairperson, Dr Grace Kaudzu, first appreciated the support accorded to CCARDESA by SADC Member States. She thanked the Minister of DALRRD, Honourable Thoko Didiza, for officiating the GA, and the Republic of South Africa for hosting the event. Dr Kaudzu accepted the responsibility and pledged to support the strategic vision of CCARDESA in ensuring the region has appropriate technologies for addressing food and nutrition insecurity.

She acknowledged the contributions of delegates during the GA and encouraged them to support CCARDESA's resource mobilization strategy to ensure the organization continues to deliver on its regional mandate. Furthermore, she reiterated the need for expanding partnerships with like-minded regional and global institutions.

The Chairperson finally requested all delegates to be CCARDESA's ambassadors and promote the vision of the organization in their respective Countries.

Signed:

CCARDESA ED

CCARDESA GA Chairperson

CCARDESA
Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa



CCARDESA 3rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 6th June 2023

Durban International Convention Centre

SESSION 1: OFFICIAL OPENING Chairperson: Prof. L. A. Razafinjara		
TIME	AGENDA ITEM	RESPONSIBLE
1530-1535	Welcome Remarks	Prof. L. A. Razafinjara
1535-1545	Remarks by Chairperson of the CCARDESA GA	Dr L. Lebesa
1545-1600	Remarks by Representative of Development Partners	Mr A. Belhamissi
1600-1605	Invitation of Member of the Executive Council for Agriculture and Rural Development, Kwa Zulu Natal	MEC (Agric & Rural Development, KZN) Mr S. Zuma-RSA
1605-1620	Official opening by the Honourable Minister of Department of Agriculture, Land Reform Rural Development, Republic of South Africa	Hon. Minister T. Didiza
Session 2: CCARDESA GENERAL ASSEMBLY Chairperson: Dr Lefulesele Lebesa		
1620 -1625	Adoption of the CCARDESA GA Agenda	Dr. L. Lebesa
1625 -1640	Background to the CCARDESA General Assembly and Update from the last General Assembly	Prof. C. Dlamini, ED CCARDESA
1640 -1700	Election of new Chairperson of the General Assembly	Dr. L. Lebesa
1710 - 1730	1. Adoption of the 2 nd GA Report 2. Matters Arising from the 1 st & 2 nd GA (Paper No.1)	Dr L. Lebesa
1730 -1750	1. Report of the CCARDESA Board of Directors 2. Appointment of the Board & External Auditors (Paper No. 2)	Prof. L. A. Razafinjara
1750-1830	1. Proposed amendments to CCARDESA Governance Documents (Paper No. 3) 2. Draft Rules and Procedures Book (Paper No.4)	Dr R. Lepheana Chairperson of the HR & Governance Committee
1830-1850	CCARDESA's Strategic Direction (Paper No.5)	Dr F. Kayula Chair of the Board Programmes Committee
1850-1855	Remarks by Outgoing Chairperson of the GA	Dr L. Lebesa
1855-1900	Closing Remarks	New GA Chairperson

** On the first day, (6th June) the meeting covered the agenda items up to introducing amendments to Governance documents. Amendments and later items in the agenda were discussed to the 8th June.*

Annex 2 – Delegates Nominated by SADC Member States to constitute the CCARDESA GA (GA membership register)

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Annex 3 - List of participants of the 3rd CCARDESA GA

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE 3RD CCARDESA GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

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