

ESO, the European Southern Observatory, was created in 1962 to "... establish and operate an astronomical observatory in the southern hemisphere, equipped with powerful instruments, with the aim of furthering and organising collaboration in astronomy..." It is supported by ten countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. ESO operates at two sites in the Atacama desert region of Chile. The new Very Large Telescope (VLT), the largest in the world, is located on Paranal, a 2,600 m high mountain approximately 130 km south of Antofagasta, in the driest part of the Atacama desert where the conditions are excellent for astronomical observations. The VLT consists of four 8.2-metre diameter telescopes. These telescopes can be used separately, or in combination as a giant interferometer (VLTI). At La Silla, 600 km north of Santiago de Chile at 2,400 m altitude, ESO operates several optical telescopes with diameters up to 3.6 m and a submillimetre radio telescope (SEST). Over 1300 proposals are made each year for the use of the ESO telescopes. The ESO headquarters are located in Garching, near Munich, Germany. This is the scientific, technical and administrative centre of ESO where technical development programmes are carried out to provide the Paranal and La Silla observatories with the most advanced instruments. There are also extensive astronomical data facilities. ESO employs about 320 international staff members, Fellows and Associates in Europe and Chile, and about 160 local staff members in Chile.

The ESO MESSENGER is published four times a year: normally in March, June, September and December. ESO also publishes Conference Proceedings, Preprints, Technical Notes and other material connected to its activities. Press Releases inform the media about particular events. For further information, contact the ESO Education and Public Relations Department at the following address:

EUROPEAN
SOUTHERN OBSERVATORY
Karl-Schwarzschild-Str. 2
D-85748 Garching bei München
Germany
Tel. (089) 320 06-0
Telefax (089) 3202362
ips@eso.org (internet)
URL: <http://www.eso.org>
<http://www.eso.org/gen-fac/pubs/messenger/>

The ESO Messenger:
Editor: Peter Shaver
Technical editor: Henri Boffin

Printed by
Universitätsdruckerei
WOLF & SOHN
Heidemannstr. 166
D-80939 München
Germany

ISSN 0722-6691

ESO Workshop on Large Programmes and Surveys

S. WAGNER (OPC) and B. LEIBUNDGUT (ESO)

On 19 to 21 May, 2003, the scientific impact of Large Programmes was assessed at a workshop in Garching. Several members of the OPC and STC actively participated in the workshop.

Every PI of a Large Programme (LP) approved up to ESO Period 69 was invited to present the results of their project. All LPs but one were presented in half-hour talks. A two-hour discussion session was held to assess whether the current scheme of LPs is adequate or should be adjusted.

The general impression was that most LPs have produced excellent results and unique science, which would have been unachievable through regular programmes. They allowed European astronomers to directly compete with the best American groups, some of whom profit from significant access to large telescopes. The LPs have

had the effect of unifying the community in certain astronomical fields.

The effectiveness of the restriction of LPs to two years duration was cited as a good incentive to produce important results quickly, one major reason to originally introduce the LPs.

Overall the LPs are considered a success and should be continued. They provide European astronomers with the opportunity to achieve important results in a competitive and timely fashion.

The OPC discussed the outcome of the workshop at its meeting on June 2 and decided to continue with Large Programmes with P73. ESO will accept Large Programmes for this period again.

An article on the workshop providing more details will appear in the next issue of *The Messenger*.

Contents

TELESCOPES AND INSTRUMENTATION

C. Cesarsky: Progress with the Atacama Large Millimeter Array	2
F. Primas: The Science Verification of FLAMES	3
R. Arsenault et al.: MACAO-VLTI First Light: Adaptive Optics at the Service of Interferometry	7
Ch. Leinert et al.: MIDI Combines Light from the VLT: the Start of 10 μ m Interferometry at ESO	13
L. Germany: News from La Silla	18

REPORTS FROM OBSERVERS

G. Rudnick et al.: Studying High Redshift Galaxy Clusters with the ESO Distant Cluster Survey	19
R. Napiwotzki et al.: SPY — The ESO Supernovae Type Ia Progenitor Survey	25
R.G. Gratton et al.: Abundances in Globular Cluster Dwarfs	31
M. Arnaboldi et al.: Intracluster Planetary Nebulae in the Virgo Cluster: Tracers of Diffuse Light	37
F. Barrientos et al.: The Red-Sequence Cluster Survey	40
M. Rejkuba et al.: Long Period Variables in the Giant Elliptical Galaxy NGC 5128: the Mira P-L Relation at 4 Mpc	43
H. Dejonghe et al.: The Dynamics of Dwarf Elliptical Galaxies	47

OTHER ASTRONOMICAL NEWS

U. Grothkopf: From Books to Bytes: Changes in the ESO Libraries over the Past Decade	51
O. Hainaut: International Workshop on "First Decadal Review of the Edgeworth-Kuiper Belt: Toward New Frontiers"	53
Fellows at ESO: Stefano Etori, Lisa Germany, Linda Schmidtobreick and Manuela Zoccali	55
R. West: High Honour to Ray Wilson	56
H. Boffin and R. West: The May 7 Mercury Transit	57

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ESO Fellowship Programme 2003/2004	57
Call for Proposals for a Third Generation Instrument for the NTT	58
R. West: Kurt Kjær retires from ESO	58
ESO Vacancy: Head of the Instrumentation Division	59
Personnel Movements	59
ESO Workshop on Large Programmes and Surveys	60