

ESO Presence at the Astronomical Society of Brazil Annual Meeting

Jochen Liske¹

¹ ESO

The 36th annual meeting of the Astronomical Society of Brazil (Sociedade Astronômica Brasileira SAB¹) was the first meeting since Brazil's notice of accession to ESO at the end of 2010. The organisers of this event took the opportunity to offer their community a wide-ranging overview of ESO by inviting four speakers to present high-level synopses of key ESO activities. The meeting was held from 4–8 September 2011 in the beautiful setting of the holiday resort town of Aguas de Lindoia, about 180 kilometres from Sao Paulo.

The importance of Brazil's joining ESO was underlined by the Director General, Tim de Zeeuw, opening the proceedings on the first night of the meeting with an overview of ESO's facilities and activities.

On the third day of the conference, the estimated 300 participants, the vast majority of whom represented the future of Brazilian astronomy, were treated to a special session dedicated to ESO. To begin with, Wolfgang Wild provided an excellent description of the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA), its science goals and the project status. The equivalent overview for the

Rafael Santucci, IAG/USP



Figure 1. The ESO Director General Tim de Zeeuw fielding questions after his inaugural address to the Astronomical Society of Brazil.

European Extremely large Telescope (E-ELT) was presented by Jochen Liske. Simon Lilly from ETH, Zurich, then supplied a review of ESO from the perspective of a community member and telescope user. He related his own experiences in engaging with ESO, both as a committee member and as PI (Principal Investigator) of a Large Programme at the VLT, and encouraged the audience to get involved in ESO's decision-making processes. This was followed by a thorough review of ESO's Public Surveys and the Science Archive Facility by Thomas Szeifert. Last, but by no means least, Luca Pasquini reviewed the VLT and La Silla instrumentation programmes, highlighting opportunities for the Brazilian community.

In addition to these dedicated ESO presentations, Francois Hammer presented an instrument concept for the E-ELT, while other speakers reported on recent results from the VLT, including Rodolfo Smiljanic, a Brazilian ESO Fellow. These ESO-related presentations were received with a high level of interest getting the astronomical relations between Brazil and ESO off to a great start.

Links

¹ Sociedade Astronômica Brasileira webpage: <http://www.sab-astro.org.br/>

First ESO Public Release of Data Products from the VISTA Public Surveys

Magda Arnaboldi¹

Jörg Retzlaff¹

on behalf of the ESO Archive Science Group

¹ ESO

The ESO Science Archive Facility now provides community access to the first release of data products from the near-infrared 4-metre Visual and Infrared Sur-

vey Telescope for Astronomy (VISTA) public survey projects. Following one and a half years of successful scientific operations of the VISTA telescope, the VISTA public surveys have returned nearly 6 TB of reduced data products, which can be queried for and downloaded by the international community via dedicated query interfaces.

The survey programmes on VISTA are a suite of well-coordinated and challenging scientific projects that range from a

pencil-beam survey with deep observations of extragalactic fields to whole hemisphere surveys (Arnaboldi et al., 2007). These survey projects were approved during the 79th ESO Observing Programme Committee meeting in November 2007 and effectively started surveying the southern sky in April 2010, following the successful commissioning of the VISTA telescope at the La Silla Paranal Observatory. A summary of the scientific goals and observing strategies of these surveys is available on the ESO web pages¹.