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 Meakins, S. & Grothkopf, U. 2012, *ADASS XXI*,
 Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP), in print

Links

- ¹ ESO Telescope Bibliography: <http://telbib.eso.org/>
- ² Astrophysics Data System (ADS): <http://adsabs.harvard.edu>
- ³ Some telbib statistics: <http://www.eso.org/libraries/edocs/ESO/ESOstats.pdf>
- ⁴ On-line help for telbib: <http://telbib.eso.org/help.html>
- ⁵ ESO libraries RSS feed: <http://www.eso.org/sci/libraries/rss.php>

Greetings from the ESO Council

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I am a research professor on the Spanish Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) and was recently elected President of ESO Council, a very high honour and a great challenge for me. I am originally Catalanian, and have been based in Cantabria (in the north of Spain) for most of the last 30 years. My astronomical research is conducted mostly at X-ray wavelengths. Active galactic nuclei, as the signposts of growing supermassive black holes, are my pet objects. I am deeply involved in ESA's X-ray observatory Athena candidate mission, now competing for a launch slot in 2022, and am chair of its science working group. My research activity has slowed down during the last decade as I have been advising the Spanish Government on astronomy matters. On a more personal level, I enjoy sharing experiences with my family (wife Mar, son David and daughter Sara) and long-range mountain biking (e.g., along the Saint James's Way). And yes, I also love watching FC Barcelona play delightful football.

I started to travel frequently to ESO Garching in 2004 when I was asked to negotiate the in-kind deliverables to



Figure 1. Xavier Barcons pictured in the Council Room at ESO Headquarters.

cover a part of Spain's special contribution to ESO. Spain joined ESO with effect July 2006 (Barcons, 2007) and I was appointed first observer and later government representative on the ESO Council. At ESO I have served in the Observing Programmes Committee, Scientific Strategy Working Group, New Member States Working Group, the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA) Board, the ALMA Budget Committee and the ALMA Personnel Committee.

At ESO every year is exciting, but maybe not all are equally exciting. In particular 2012 is bound to be an incredibly exciting year for at least three reasons. The first is that we will see the first scientific results from ALMA, now that Early Science observations are underway. It has been very reassuring to see how astronomers in the ESO Member States have massively requested science observations in this first phase of ALMA operations and this will lead no doubt to substantial scientific progress.

Secondly, it is expected that during 2012 the construction of the European Extremely Large Telescope (EELT), “the world’s biggest eye on the sky”, can be submitted to ESO Council for approval. The Member State delegations are working hard to obtain the funding and approval from their governments for this challenging but captivating project. We are all glad to see that, even in the current difficult economic circumstances, a number of Member States are already prepared to commit funding.

Finally, this is a very special year since ESO is celebrating its 50th anniversary. I recommend reading the preamble of the ESO Convention in order to appreciate the enormous progress achieved in the five decades of ESO’s existence. We should take this opportunity to convey to the governments and the full population of our Member States our pride in being able to build the most powerful and productive ground-based astronomical observatories in the world. This achievement is the result of sustained

cooperation, a lively community, an enthusiastic staff and a careful balance between operations of world-class facilities and construction of new ones for the benefit of ESO Member States.

References

Barcons, X. 2007, *The Messenger*, 127, 2

Report on the
ESO Fellows Days in Chile 2011

held at the ESO Offices in Santiago, Chile, 21–25 November 2011

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The 2011 ESO Fellows Days were held in Chile and brought together over 30 ESO Fellows from Garching and Chile. As well as presentations of research and social activities, the Fellows Days included a visit to San Pedro de Atacama and the ALMA site.

The ESO Fellows Days were held in Chile from 21–25 November 2011 and brought together more than 30 ESO Fellows from Garching and Chile, as well as the two Heads of the Offices for Science. The purpose of these gatherings is to learn more about the exciting research being done by the impressive group of ESO Fellows in Vitacura and Garching and hopefully to stimulate new scientific collaborations.

ESO Director General Tim de Zeeuw kicked off the meeting with warm words

of welcome to the Fellows, reminding them of the importance that ESO places on its Fellowship programme and its value in the development of their careers.

The first three days of the meeting were devoted to short presentations about each Fellow’s current research activities. ESO Chile astronomers and students in Vitacura also attended many of the talks.

Figure 1. Social activities on the Fellows Days included lunch and a tour of the Casa del Bosque winery near Santiago.

