



Minutes from the National Committee for Astronomy 2018-05-14

Datum: Monday 2018-05-14, kl 10.00 – 15.00

Location: Hiorter's room (Å73101, house 7 floor 3), Ångström laboratory, Uppsala

Participants: Paul Barklem (UU), Yvonne Becherini (Linnéuniversitetet, via skype), Alexis Brandeker (SU), Sofia Feltzing (LU), Anders Johansen (LU), Dan Kiselman (SU), Per Magnusson (SNSA, adjoint, to item 5), Garrelt Mellema (SU), Hans Olofsson (CTH), Catarina Sahlberg (VR, adjoint, to item 5)

Not present:, John Conway (OSO), Susanne Höfner (UU), Mats Larsson (SU), Mark Pearce (KTH), Wouter Vlemmings (CTH), Jan-Erik Wahlund (UU), Eva Wirström (CTH), Göran Östlin (SU)

1. Acceptance of the agenda

The agenda is accepted as it is.

2. ESO

HO reports from ESO council meetings: Ireland will likely become a member state in 2018. Norway will not re-apply in 2018 but may try another form of association. Interim arrangements for Brazil suspended, may renegotiate in the future for Accession conditions. The ESO Supernova visitor centre opened in April (supernova.eso.org). **ALMA:** Sean Dougherty new director from February. Desire to increase high frequency and long baseline proposals. Backlog of undelivered data temporarily solved, but no sustainable solution yet. Band 5 production completed. **ELT:** site now connected to electricity grid. Dome construction schedule slip is currently 3 months. **La Silla/Paranal:** higher weather loss than regular years (up to 30%). Successful recoating of UT M1 (20% gain). UVES blue resolution back to 90000. First light with ESPRESSO with 4 UTs. MATISSE first fringes with ATs. NAOMI and CRIRES+ commissioned 2018. **APEX:** Lars Nyman new station manager from January. New panels on dish installed. Accident while installing SEPIA results in no band 5 and 9 until August. **CTA:** Preparatory meeting between ESO and CTAO concluded. Negotiation between CTAO and Chile still ongoing. **Elections:** Willy Benz (CH) council president, Catarina Sahlberg (SE) council vice president, 6 new STC members (Kirsten Kraiberg Knudsen for SE). Bengt Gustafsson chair of OPC. Visiting committee 2018 is chaired by Hans-Walter Rix (DE), with Sofia Feltzing representing SE.

Principles for GTO (Guaranteed Time Observing) for MOSAIC and HIRES (ELT instruments):

In order for the two instruments to not slip to 2040, new ways of financing them has to be found. The three questions put forth to the committee were 1) Would an increase from 15% to 20% of observing time reserved for GTO be acceptable? 2) Would participation from non-member states be acceptable? 3) Is it feasible to use allocated GTO for public surveys? According to polls made by NC members, no objections were found to 1 and 3, while the answer to 2 was inconclusive.

3. Cooperation between Sweden and South Africa

CS reports that the Swedish Research Council is not allocating specific money for this. The Swedish Research Council is still looking into it in general.

4. Nordic Optical Telescope

CS: Current plan is to transfer telescope from NOTSA to a new entity, possibly managed by Aarhus University. Finland and Norway have decided for continued funding, Denmark not yet but likely, possibly also Iceland. If no resolution can be reached within the nearest time decommission will start

within 6 months.

5. News from the Swedish National Space Agency

PM: The SNSB changes name to SNSA (Swedish National Space Agency) to mitigate international confusion about their role. New director general will be Anna Rathsmann. Space activity strategies document published, representing the government's view on national space policy. No new funding or laws. Proposes stronger coordination between funding agencies (SNSA, Vinnova, Swedish Research Council, Formas, and Department of Defence). No decision yet for Esrange satellite capability upgrade, investigation ongoing. The national satellite programme is ongoing, current strategy is to continue with regular calls. Next call planned for 2019 with launch 2025. **ESA**: Günther Hasinger new director of science. ARIEL (characterisation of exoplanet atmospheres) was selected for M4 mission. For M5: EnVision (Venus orbiter), Spica (IR telescope), and Theseus (X-ray telescope) were selected for phase-A studies. F missions with a budget of 150 M€ will target multipoint science (projects using multiple smaller satellites). HEMERA is a H2020 research infrastructure funded by EU to make balloon facilities available to scientific teams in EU, Canada, and associated countries.

6. European Astronomical Society

SF presented the EAS (eas.unige.ch), an independent body to promote and advance astronomy in Europe. Every year it organises the European Week of Astronomy and Space Science (EWASS, 2019 in Lyon) and also presents several annual awards (Tycho Brahe Prize for instrumentation, MERAC prize for young astronomers, and the Lodewijk Woltjer lecture). A new activity is to have representation in Brussels, where Mike Bode currently is the EAS representative. EAS has many affiliated national societies of professional astronomers, something that is missing in Sweden. Individuals are welcome to apply for membership, see website for more information.

7. IAU

PB: Proposals for new IAU members have been received from the various astronomy departments and relayed to the IAU office. Dainis Dravins has agreed to represent the NC at the IAU general assembly. National Committee's views on any questions on the agenda to be established via email beforehand.

8. Preparing for the next National Committee

PB: A new NC will be elected for start in 2019. Hans Olofsson and Garrelt Mellema (chair) have agreed to serve as "valberedning". The proposal needs to reach class II in the KVA before the KVA class II meeting in September. Since no NC meeting will be scheduled before then, communications will be via email.

9. Astronomdagarna 2019

DK: Will take place in Stockholm, date will be decided before summer break (tentatively October).

10. CTA

YB: An MoU outlining details like what is meant by category 1 and 2 memberships has been signed by LU and SU, with no financial obligations. The document is not final and accepts feedback. CTA north is going well with well advanced construction and infrastructure. CTA south is delayed, the agreement for exploitation not yet signed. Both sites look for site managers.

11. European Solar Telescope

DK: In preparatory phase, the funding to preparatory project exists until 2022. The aim is for an ERIC in Spain. The Swedish in-kind contribution is a WF Wave Front Sensor installed at the SST, funded by VR.

12. Large Synoptic Survey Telescope

DK: No news.

13: SKA

HO, relaying email from JC: April SKA board meeting held in Gothenburg. No objections to

initialling the convention (detailing what to be agreed upon in negotiations but without commitments to their execution). Signing ceremony planned for September. A year later (September 2019), if there are at least 5 ratifications by national parliaments, the SKA observatory international organisation will come into existence and some elements of SKA construction can start soon after. A proposal for Swedish participation in SKA construction/operation can be submitted to VR in March 2019. If positively evaluated, Sweden can join by end 2019.

14 Other items

None

15 Next meeting

Tentatively November in Växjö, PB will initiate a doodle poll.

Minutes taken by

Approved by

Alexis Brandeker (secretary)

Paul Barklem (chair)