

## Fifth Euro-VO SAC meeting, CDS Strasbourg, December 11-12 2008

### Participants:

N. Walton (NC), M. Allen (MA), F. Genova (FG), D. Baines (DB), R. Kennicutt (RK), P. Padovani (PP), L. Colina (LC), R. Peletier (RP), C. Soubiran (CS), D. DeYoung (DD), E. Roueff (ER), F. Kerber (FK), T. Prusti (TP), E. Hatziminaoglou (EH)

### Agenda:

Day 1, Thursday, December 11

12.30 Lunch provided  
14:00 Welcome  
14:10 Updates on Euro-VO programs [FG]  
14:30 Facility Report [EH/DB/PP]  
16:00 SAC Renewal + VO up-take All  
17:00 Close

Day 2, Friday, December 12

09:00 Technology Report [NW]  
09:30 DCA Report [MA]  
10:00 SAC renewal and VO up-take  
12:30 Close

Day 1, Thursday, December 11

Logistics [MA]

Welcome [TP]

EURO-VO Status [FG]

#### **Astrophysical Software Laboratory:**

[PP] (answering a question from TP): the idea for an Astrophysical Software Laboratory came up in the VO & theory panel, F. Combes suggested it, as an effort to coordinate the people that develop software

[RK] software people looked at the way the issue with data has been handled and want to coordinate similarly

#### **AstroNet:**

[PP] contact Bob Fosbury for a printed copy of the AstroNet roadmap

[RK] success for the VO getting such a prominent place in the AstroNet roadmap; The tendency in the UK, however, is the opposite; "EURO-VO has a tremendous challenge ahead"

[FG] We should try to include the VO in "everyday life"; in most countries it depends mostly on getting the specific funding; people understood the VO it's important but they also have to understand what it means

[FG] (on funding issues): since Brussels triggers projects but they do not ensure sustainability, we should try to apply to the EU for coordination money; (answering a question from RP): IAU can not fund efforts such as the VO; e.g. people working in FITS are payed by their institutes

[NW] what is the NVO approach? making the VO a virtual telescope or making the use of telescopes easier?

[DD] the second + everybody can access all this data

[FG] efficient multi-wavelength astronomy because all these data were available

Facility Report [[EH/DB/PP](#)]

### **AIDA Research Initiative:**

[TP] what did the VO gain from the research initiative?

[LC] what happened to the spectroscopy proposal (PI Fathi)? - spectra not available in the VO

### **Multi-wavelength study of Spitzer sources:**

[DD] there is little astrophysical content in the project

[DB] (answering question from FK): days-worth effort has already been invested in this project

[PP] the project as it is now is very different from what reviewed by the SAC

[TP] the functionalities that would have been implemented for this project will in any case be implemented for the other supported projects

*Conclusion:* inform the PI that it's the SAC's decision to no longer support the project; suggest he may resubmit with a better case next year

### **Multi-wavelength workshop:**

*Discussion:* on a single entry point for the VO, is this what the community wants?

[FG] responsibility mostly falls on the data centres ("why do people not produce VO papers?")

[NW] we have a lot of tools that half work, better focus on few tools that work well

[FG] tools are there but people still not know about them

*Discussion:* do Surveys need the VO or at least some VO tools?

[LC] the community seems to raise issues mostly about the data (lack of data, lack of metadata, dubious quality, ...)

### **Upcoming AIDA workshops:**

[DD] suggests Tom McGlynn to be member of the AIDA School SOC

[FG] surveys seem to be a favoured topic for the next Community workshop, however there was already a dedicated conference in 2008 (Ringberg Castle)

[NW] relate the workshop to the VISTA/VST surveys

[FG] it should not be about specific surveys but rather about surveys in the VO

### **[Technology report](#) [NW]**

[TP] SAC to provide a support letter for VOTC (AI to TP)

[DD] NVO is working on the release of the new NVO portal

[RK] how important is it that Europe develop its own VO portal? Is there any risk of duplicating efforts with the U.S.? we risk to end up with two VOs

[NW] NVO and EURO-VO exist because there are different approaches

[FG] there are various ways of accessing the VO; among the major step were the Aladin plug-ins, and the communication protocols SAMP & PLASTIC

## [DCA report](#) [MA]

### **DCA Census:**

*Discussion:* the information provided in the Census report about archives' contents is misleading, especially the part of the science ready data being the largest content fraction in the archives; which data centres actually answered? in France the response seems to have been overwhelming but what about e.g. UK or the Netherlands? Only 7 and 2 data centres, respectively? ESO on the other hand answered with one DB per instruments; but all the above does not correctly reflected the real number of data centres

### **SAC renewal:**

SAC: Small vs big; Short term vs long

[PP] (answering a question from RK): the EURO-VO only reports to the SAC, and therefore their role is important

[TP] somebody needs to make sure the SAC members fulfill their obligations

[FG] SAC can discuss if there is enough motivation among the SAC members and what could be done to create this motivation; now EURO-VO has more experience

[PP] with the facility centre heavily loaded the EURO-VO now needs more input from the SAC

[TP] suggests SAC a bit smaller, 2-years, half-renewed

[PP] if SAC consists of 8 members and only 50% shows up in the meetings there'll be more VO scientists than SAC members

[FG] suggests to put in a written form that if a SAC member does not show in two consecutive meetings he/she might be replaced

[RK] make sure (in case of a 2-year term) to meet at least 4 times, because new members need at least one meeting to learn the ropes and raise issues that have been addressed in the past; otherwise three years is reasonable.

[CS] suggests three years, or there might not be enough time for new SAC members to learn about the VO, as they will be learning during the meetings

[LC] if SAC members are expected to be involved also in between the meetings, three years might be too long

[FG] it is very helpful for SAC members to participate in e.g. SOC's

[TP] comments coming from the various meetings can be seen as a sort of feedback from a "Users Committee" in the lack of such a committee

[FG] SAC should consist of young+older members; cover as many astronomy areas as possible; and have a representative from all EURO-VO partners

[PP] volunteers among the current SAC members are needed in order to ensure continuity from the current SAC to the new SAC

*Conclusions:* three-year term, with rotation and the possibility to substitute members in case of no show

### **Take-up:**

[MA, PP] VO is useful for science cases that can not be done (or are too hard to carry out) otherwise

[RP] VO has to show some stability, both in functionality and in time

[RP, FG] we need more science examples; TAP implementation crucial for public surveys: we can not ask ESO to provide VO catalogue interfaces while saying at the same time that TAP is not ready; data centers will not structure their data in a manner that requires the VO until standards such as TAP are in place

[RK] we need a more aggressive approach; attract PhD students and postdocs to schools, ask them to then spread the word in their own institute, we need a welcoming

web page where people can go and immediately do something, text books and tutorials, once it's known, we will not have to worry about it any more

[FG] now that tools are more mature, we should make more efforts on the national level (institutes, universities etc); the Spanish VO is a good example

### **SAC answers to:**

- \* Community workshop: Surveys is a possibility but needs looking into; Times Series was discussed but discarded; maybe 3D spec; Imaging probably not

- \* VO portal: something *\*must\** be done, since many many people asked for it

- \* There is a lot of duplication in the various VO portals. Those that maintain such sites should be realistic with the number of pages they want to maintain (e.g. list of VO papers, lists of software, science cases ...), especially since the EURO-VO pages make an effort of keeping these things up to speed

- \* Problems with large datasets: e.g data volume increases faster than data access speed; VOspace could be a solution but it never really materialised

- \* VO available data: not enough VO data available

- \* Diminishing resources: is a strict streamlining needed? other than the spectral tools, there doesn't seem to be much duplication within the EURO-VO

### **SAC closed session**

*Discussion:* SAC to provide a recommendation to ESO to publish Public Survey catalogues in VO format? [note added after the meeting: PP and TP agreed to drop this request]