plans to further focus on unravelling the spiral and central bar pattern of the Milky Way, thereby continuing the scientific restlessness that already drove him well before enrolling at university.

Preben was one of ESO's first postdoctoral fellows and for one year (1979/1980) was still based in Geneva, where ESO was hosted by CERN. He has been Head of the Image Processing Group, the Science Data Analysis Group, and the Data Pipeline Group. For several years, he was Deputy Head of the Data Management Division, and eventually even moved to submillimetre wavelengths and the ALMA Division in Garching. He chaired the OPTICON Network 3.6 on Future Astronomical Software Environments and the IAU FITS Working Group. Preben was a member of numerous ESO internal working groups, often as chair, always as one of the most active and knowledgeable players: the Computer Coordination Group, VLT User Software Advisory Group, VLT Data Flow System Working Group, Data Interface Control Board to name just a few that have laid the foundation for ESO's leading position today in supporting users of complex ground-based observing facilities.

As a highlight, he was one of the recipients of the 21st Century Achievement Award from the Computerworld Honors Program presented to ESO (2005). Preben also showed remarkable judgment in anticipating major technological developments in the IT markets: data-base systems, operating systems and hardware for astronomical data processing. His pioneering efforts to introduce new working concepts such as configuration control, object-oriented programming, software modelling tools, etc. further consolidated the results. Although Preben's knowledge in these matters was hardly rivalled, he always approached new themes in a team-based fashion and in an open and cooperative spirit. This combination earned him the deep respect of everyone working with him and made him an effective leader.

As in the instrumentation area (D'Odorico et al., 1991), Preben was one of the first to realise that ESO would maximise its efficiency not by doing everything in-house but by serving as a catalyst and focus of community-based efforts. Among other initiatives, this was achieved through a series of well-attended ESO/ST-ECF Data Analysis Workshops and the infrastructure enabling VLT/I instrument consortia to deliver software modules suitable for integration with ESO's data flow system, which ultimately aims at the delivery of science-ready data products.

A farewell party was held at ESO Headquarters on 30 October 2012, where, on the one hand, many people expressed their regret at Preben's departure but, on the other, convinced themselves that he is leaving full of energy for new undertakings, not just scientific and technical ones. Many words of warm personal and professional appreciation accompany Preben Grosbøl.

References

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Announcement of the

ESO Public Survey Catalogue for Ultra-VISTA available from the Science Archive Facility

The Ultra-VISTA[1] survey, targeting a sub-area of the COSMOS field, represents the deepest of the six near-infrared ESO public imaging surveys, which are currently being executed at the Visible and Infrared Survey Telescope for Astronomy (VISTA). The first release of the new infrared source catalogue in the COSMOS field is now accessible from the ESO Science Archive Facility through a new powerful user interface for querying and data download.

The Ultra-VISTA *Ks*-selected [5σ limit *Ks* = 23.7 AB mag] matched source catalogue contains 331 077 sources observed in *Y*-, *J*-, *H*- and *Ks*-bands over the full "deep" survey area of 1.8 square degrees, with narrow-band NB118 observations covering the "ultra-deep stripes" area.

The catalogue was prepared by the Ultra-VISTA team for the first catalogue release (DR1) and delivered through the ESO Phase 3 system[2] for publication to the ESO community. It is now accessible from the Science Archive Facility through a new dedicated user interface with powerful search options and download capabilities[3]. The ESO Catalogue Facility complements the existing functionality by adding the possibility to query catalogues by content using positional and non-positional constraints. To this end the catalogue data is stored in a dedicated data-base system from which the data are extracted on request, according to the constraints and output format specified by the user.

Additional Phase 3 catalogue data, which are being submitted by VISTA public survey teams, will soon be made available through the ESO Catalogue Facility.

Links

[1] Ultra-VISTA survey homepage: http://www.ultravista.org/
[2] ESO Phase 3 data releases: http://www.eso.org/sci/observing/phase3/data_releases.html
[3] ESO catalogue facility query interface: http://www.eso.org/qi