

2nd SA SKA Partner Countries HCD
Workshop, Cape-Town, 11-14 Sept 2012

**Progress & Future Plans to enhance
Human Capital Development
in MAURITIUS
in the context of the SKA**

Assoc. Prof Nalini Heeralall-Issur
University of Mauritius

Progress & Future Plans to enhance Human Capital Development in MAURITIUS in the context of the SKA

- The MRT legacy
- MITRA (to be presented by Dr G K Beeharry)
- Govt Support towards Astronomy & the SKA
- Towards an AVN Dish in Mauritius.
- BSc/MSc Courses
- Research Collaborations

The MRT Legacy



- Built 1988-92 in collab. with India.
- 24h/24 continuum obs for 5 yrs to survey 150MHz Sky
- Pulsar Work
- 8 PhDs + 2 MPhil
- Student Projects
- Trainee Technicians and Engineers

Mauritian Government Support towards Astronomy & the SKA

- Mauritian Govt. officially supported the SA SKA bid. Relevant Ministries - Tertiary Education, Science and Research + Foreign Affairs.
- Following 25 May 2012, looking forward to active participation of Mauritian Scientists to have a dish in Mauritius as part of AVN & other VLBI networks.
- Govt also encouraging installation of a small optical observatory at the MRT site.

Towards an AVN Dish in Mauritius

- Visit of organisations which use parabolic antennas (Telecoms, MBC, MCML e.t.c)
- Two B.Sc Physics students (2011-12) projects related to the above

AIMS

- Understanding dish technology
- Take stock of the largest dishes in Mauritius and
- Extent of expertise available locally

The Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) at Reduit



- Diameters between 2.4m and 7.2 m
- Different mounts

The Largest Dish (15.2 m) at Mauritius Telecoms



Other Concrete Actions

- Scientific Proposal for a dish propelled by Mauritian Scientists & Collaborators
- Last week (16 Sept), pre-Brainstorming Meeting between UoM Radioastronomers and relevant local organisations. (*Jacotet Bay Dish*)
- Next week (21-22 Sept), Brainstorming between resource persons from SA, UoM Radioastronomers and relevant local organisations.
- Planning RFI testing. (Ongoing B.Sc project)

B.Sc & M.Sc Courses

- B.Sc Physics courses include Astrophysics & Astronomical Techniques modules (more in revised syll.)
- B.Sc final year projects in Astronomy and also in practical aspects of Astronomy
- Astrophysics courses given in Reunion (in French)
- M.Sc Physics with Astrophysics (run a few times).
- New M.Sc Astroph. With radioastronomy.
 - need more students from Africa
 - .- would benefit from collaboration with SA

SKA & other Bursaries

Presently

- Mauritian student doing NAPS Prog.
- Honours level to Mphil/PhD

- Previously Post-Doc (Dr Nadeem Ozeer)
now in SA SKA team

Research Collaborations

- Mauritius JEDI, Nov 2011
- Next year, SuperJEDI (2013)

More collaborations welcomed !

- Joint P.hD Supervision
- Academic Sabbaticals to/from Mauritius