

A plea for properly managed withdrawal & joined-up thinking

Necessary to

- Exploit recent investment – both STFC and external
- Exploit ESA subscription
- Maintain/build scientific and technical expertise
- Maintain/salvage international reputation
- Avoid scaring away young talent

Example 1: UKIRT



Potential withdrawal from Hawaii in 2012 on the radar for some time. But sudden change of plan to close UKIRT in 2010 makes little sense.

- UKIRT is unique – only northern IR survey telescope + best site
- Already efficient and slimmed down – WFCAM only
- UKIDSS replanning for 2012 finish only just completed in Nov
- UKIRT essential for exploitation/leverage of Herschel & SCUBA2
- Savings reduced by JACH commitment to 2012
- **Swapping UKIRT time may offer best/only route to northern 8-m access**



Example 2: LOFAR - UK

LOFAR is a key step on the pathway to the Square Kilometer Array (SKA).

- the only SKA pathfinder at low frequencies
- the only SKA pathfinder in Europe
- opportunity for direct SKA-related scientific & technical experience

LOFAR-UK, has raised **£1.2M** to buy/install a LOFAR station in the UK
– now purchased and part-delivered to Chilbolton

LOFAR-UK requires just **~£200k/yr** for 5 years of operations, allowing UK to **access/lead over 40%** of the science from a **200M€** facility. Otherwise the whole UK investment to date may be wasted.

GBFR rated LOFAR **most important facility** over the next 10 years after ESO and SKA. FUAP and NUAP also rated it extremely highly.

Urge STFC to work with university community to ensure undeniably world-leading facilities are not thrown on the scrapheap for modest savings.

Should be properly exploited + wound down on a sensible time-scale

Would be a tragic waste if in 2010 we saw:

- UKIRT padlocked and rusting on Mauna Kea
- LOFAR UK station in packing cases and shipped across channel