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Conference:
**Research Infrastructures and the
Regional Dimension of ERA**
Prague Congress Center
24 – 25 March 2009

“The evaluation of impacts from RIs at regional level”

Mr Campbell WARDEN, IAC



“The evaluation of impacts from RIs at regional level”
Mr Campbell Warden, IAC



Can the Socio-Economic impacts of RIs
at regional level really be evaluated?

Should such impacts play an important role in
the strategic decision making process of where
to site Europe's major new RIs?



- Example of “good practice”:

- Propoposal to further develop the methods used to evaluate their socio-economic impact,
- and incorporate some techniques used in Technology Foresight to maximise their positive impacts and minimise their potential negative impacts.

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Where is the Roque de los Muchachos Observatory?



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**The Roque de los Muchachos Observatory
La Palma – Canary Islands**

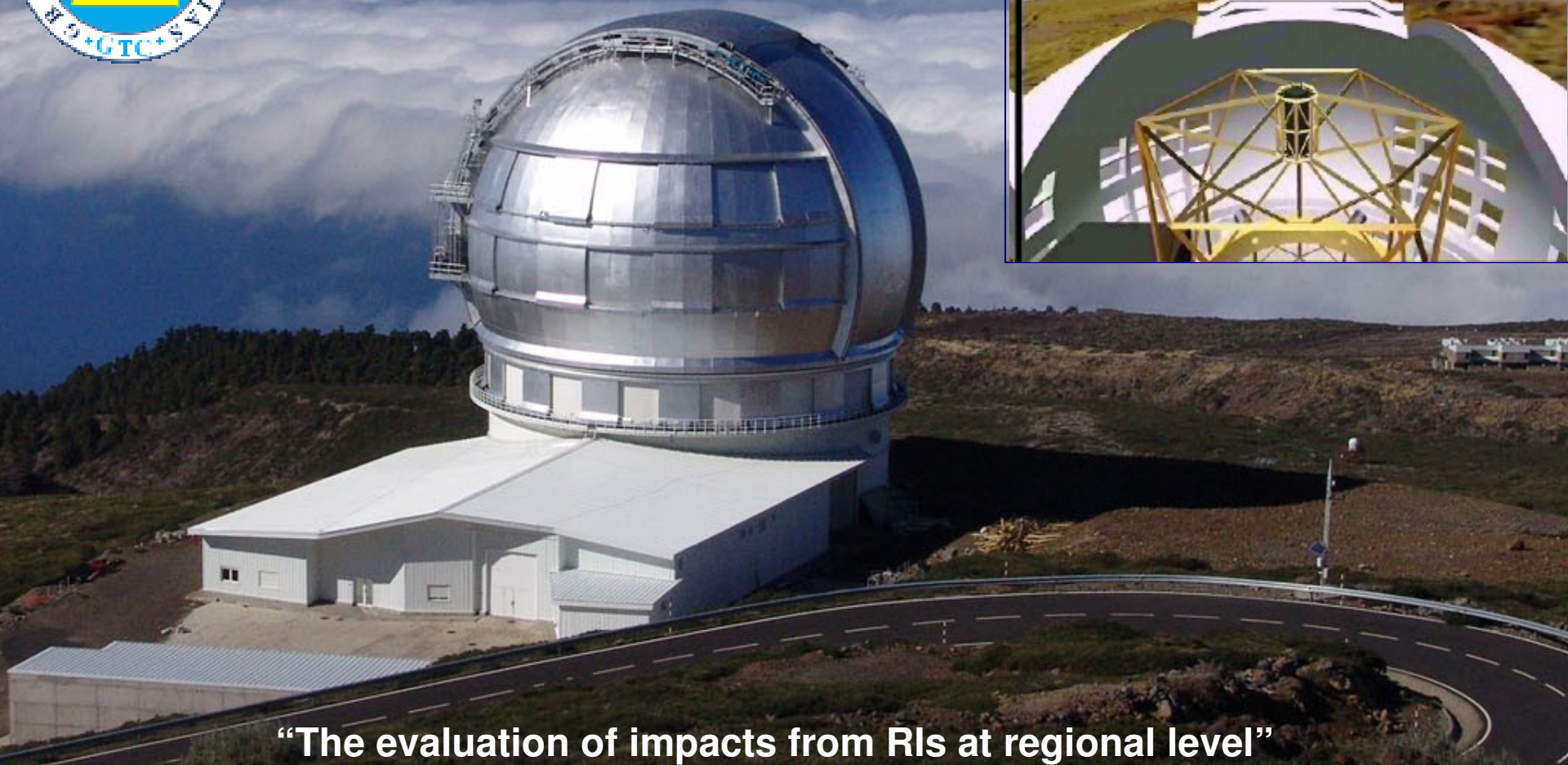
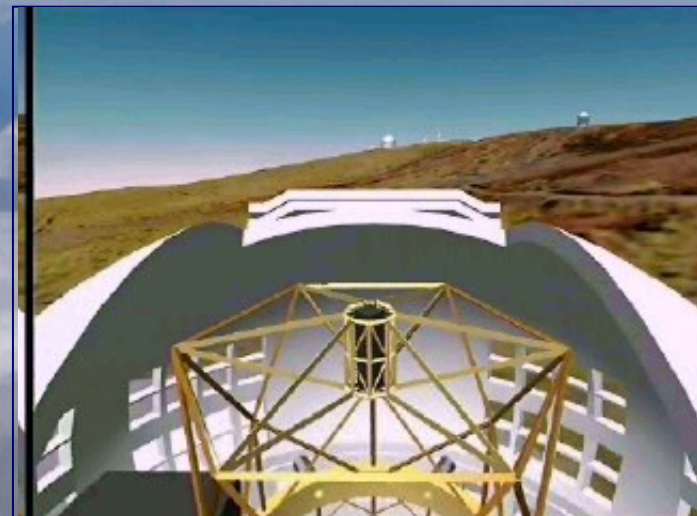
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Gran Telescopio Canarias



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- **Period up to 2005**
- **Period since 2005: Construction and operation of the GTC**

- **Economic contribution of the ORM to the La Palma Economy**
- **Indirect effects at the local level**

- **Development of national technological expertise - excellent preparation for future tendering processes!**

- **Direct impacts**
- **Derived impacts**

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Distribution of major RIs

- Pan-European or International Organisations
- Many are located in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom, followed by Switzerland.

In a future-oriented context

- South-West, East, and South-East Europe do not yet play a significant role as host countries. This neither reflects, nor corresponds to, either their capacity or their potential.
- The extra-peripheral regions (despite polite words) are not significant contenders for most ESFRI Projects.
- Moreover, the EU's enlargement has exacerbated economic and social disparities across the MS.



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Policy issues:

The Key Issues paper, *Turning Challenges into Opportunities* also emphasises the role of RIs of pan-European interest, taking into account the need for capacity building throughout Europe.

Member States have been invited to develop their national strategies and plans for developing RIs, including identifying in which of the ESFRI Roadmap projects they intend to participate.

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Policy issues:

At the European Conference on Research Infrastructures in Slovenia in 2007, the call was made for Europe to “*walk the walk and not only talk the talk*” when it comes to taking into consideration the opportunity to place major new RIs in the New Member States and other regions rather than continuing with their present concentration.

This issue was again addressed at the ECRI in Versailles last December.

This Session, “***Regions, evaluation, governance and financial tools***” has helped us to address some policy & managerial issues **but we also face**

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The challenge:

Merely constructing a major new RI in a particular region does not guarantee the maximum positive Socio-Economic impact. In fact it could even have many negative impacts.

Therefore the project RIFI (Research Infrastructures: Foresight & Impacts), funded by the Capacities Programme, will address the need to develop an integrated framework for the identification of RI investment opportunities and methods for the Socio-Economic impact assessment of new RIs.

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Three distinct objectives will be pursued that contribute to this goal:

- **Developing RIAM (the Research infrastructure Impact Assessment Methodology and measurement criteria) for the Socio-Economic impact assessment of new RIs;**
- **Testing and improving the elaborated methodology by means of Case Studies and Workshops;**
- **Elaborating a Foresight Framework to maximise the positive impacts of RI investment opportunities.**

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Points for discussion:

- **At what EC or EU level should the relevance of constructing and operating major new RIs in “convergence regions” be discussed?**
- **What are the key factors in ensuring the optimum balance of positive V negative socio-economic impacts of ESFRI projects?**
- **Should the EU make additional funds available to those ESFRI projects that are sited in the “convergence regions”?**

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Points for discussion

- **At what level should the hosting issue be decided?**
- **Why strong and unified analyses is missing for the RI yet, including the feedback from MS's?**
- **How much the operation of a certain RI will be dependant on the results obtained?**
- **What will be the intensity of updating of the ESFRI roadmap, and will there be a possibility for drop-outs?**
- **How to evaluate the side-effects of construction of RI in “convergence regions” for the trans-regional development?**

AND ANOTHER POINT:

- **Would it be appropriate to develop a policy whereby part of the Convergence Funds are only made available for the construction of RI as a transnational initiative?**



