

REPORT OF THE CCM ADVISING COMMITTEE

3-5 October 2012

PREAMBLE

- 1. The CCM has international prestige on the basis of long multinational activities. This status and the creation of a real scientific environment with many activities resulted from a large investment in personal efforts as well as local and international resources. Small but scientifically active centers like the CCM should be supported and encouraged, mostly when they are essential to maintain the quality and development of institutions in peripheral regions**
- 2. To create a research environment is not trivial and needs time, energy and enthusiastic actions by young people. On this basis it is very hard to assume that Madeira University would want to waste these achievements.**
- 3. The CCM environment has proved in the past to be a local of choice for international gatherings, workshops and scientific collaboration. This unique potential should be emphasized and used to promote the advancement of scientific collaborations benefiting both the local, national and international communities.**

ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

- 1. The CCM suffers the blocking effects of the administrative structure of the University. In particular the use of research funds should only be subjected to the constraints imposed by FCT or other financing agencies, not by additional local rules.**
- 2. The CCM staff invests a large part of his energy in administrative issues that should instead be solved and**

transparent under the support of the University Administration.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- 1. A part of the overheads of research funds should correspond to real service provided by the University administrative structure (for example assigning secretarial staff to the service of the Center). Also, a relevant part of the overheads of the projects should be made directly available to the control of the Principal Investigators of the projects. In the end, that could not only benefit the good implementation of the projects' aims, but also provide stimuli to get more external funding for the University. The University cannot give the same consideration from the administrative point of view to the professors that obtain projects as to those that only teach.**
- 2. The research activity implies bureaucratic actions which need administrative support at the level of CCM. Moreover they need people with different language knowledge due to its international dimension.**
- 3. We have to keep in mind that to do teaching, research and administrative activities, all at the same time, is not possible for a long time.**
- 4. The activity and expertise of CCM should be made to be known at the Regional level as a constructive instrument to create new scenarios of innovation in the present situation of general crisis. We suggest, in particular, an information effort directed towards the local political authorities.**
- 5. As in other countries, it might be fruitful to launch joint teaching and research activities with the armed forces located**

in Madeira. For example, ocean dynamics with the Navy, geophysical and communications with the Army and Air Force.

6. During the presentations of some of the excellent research done at CCM, both in mathematics and physics, it became clear that it would be possible to improve the interaction of the diverse expertise of the CCM members. A regular Center seminar could be a smooth way to achieve this goal.

7. Many of the good research achievements of CCM have benefited from interaction with members of the world scientific community. Without this interaction the ill effects of isolation would take its toll. Therefore it is important that material and administrative conditions be improved to insure the appropriate mobility of the researchers.

8. In the past the CCM Center was evaluated by the FCT panel as "excellent", which insured an adequate financing for its activities. Then, without any real change in the scientific potential, as we found out, the classification of CCM was downgraded two levels. It is imperative that the situation be corrected in the next FCT evaluation.

9. The long and fruitful experience of CCM as an international center for international collaboration could be used as a seed to launch in Madeira an International Institute for Science and Technology along the lines of, for example, the SantaFe Institute in the USA. The scientific background provided by CCM and other centers as well as the geographical privileged conditions of the island environment, would make this initiative a very probable success.



Philippe Blanchard (University of Bielefeld)



Luis Vazquez (Universidad Complutense, Madrid)



Rui Vilela Mendes (CMAF, UL and IPFN, IST)