

COMENTÁRIO AO RELATÓRIO DE AVALIAÇÃO DO CFTC

We were very happy with the panel's comments that support our idea, that a research unit is more than a mere collection of independent groups without strategy or leadership. This was indeed the impression given by the panel during the visit and the text of the report fully confirms it.

The grade of very good is also understandable if the evaluation process is to be taken seriously. It is not enough to believe that a new concept is excellent, the panel has to be shown that it also works. Our scientific production, that compares favourably with most very good (or even excellent) centres, has to reflect this through *new* horizontal and interdisciplinary collaborations, organization of conferences and visiting programmes, working seminars, outreach programmes, training courses (undergraduate, graduate and teacher's training) with emphasis on our stated priority, the (computational) physics of complex systems.

We have a couple of years to implement such a programme and by then the new unit is bound to be recognized as excellent, at least at the national level.

Assuming that the panel's task is to grade the scientific production and competitiveness of the units by evaluating their *global* performance, it is obvious that *new* units should be graded differently from 'well established' ones. But, for the evaluation process to maintain its credibility, this has to be

i) know in advance and applied to all units, irrespective of the scientific panel

Unfortunately this is not what happened. In fact, two *new* units (one in chemistry and one in biology) were graded excellent, in the current evaluation exercise. One also expects the reports of *all* excellent units to acknowledge and validate the unit's *global* performance and scientific leadership. Otherwise, the CFTC should be (up?) graded based on the individual track records of its members.

ii) compatible with an adequate level of funding, so that promising new units such as ours are given a fair chance to compete and achieve their goals in the course of the next evaluation period

The latter requires individual funding negotiations with these units and it is essential to maintain the community's trust in the current funding system, and thus prevent a dramatic setback in the development of Portuguese Science. In addition, it is also necessary to implement the recommended changes, consolidating the evaluation process that appears to run the risk of becoming an expensive, money saving and personality ranking, operation.