Global Astronomy Survey: Nicaragua

First Submission: Humberto Garcia Montano [see human resources section] 22 April 2009

SPoC Approved : No

1. Professional (Research) Astronomy:

(i) Number of universities offering Astronomy (and their names)

UNAN-Managua (National University Autonomous of Nicaragua) has a profile on Astrophysics on the career of Physics.

(ii) Number of universities offering Physics (and their names)

1. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNAN-Managua)

(National University Autonomous of Nicaragua)
(iii) Number of academics who have been trained in Astronomy (ideally with their names and levels of qualification)


2. MSc. Ligia Areas Sabala. Master on Astronomy in Astronomical Observatory of Suyapa, Honduras.


(iv) Number of astronomical facilities (observatories, telescopes, etc) and as much detail
about each as possible (websites/contact details)

1. Observatorio Astronomico de la UNAN-Managua

(www.unan.edu.ni/oaunan/oaunan.php) Astronomical Observatory of UNAN-Managua to own this equipment: one MEADE LX 90, Camera CCD SBIG ST-237 A, Deep Sky Camera MEADE DSI II, Set of filters and two computers with computer programs like LINUX with IRAF.

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your country in terms of Professional Astronomy? Please include any other relevant information to motivate your choice.)

We are beginning to develop this area in our country, reason why there are only a masters in astrophysics and special ones in astronomical instruments.
2. Public Understanding of Astronomy:

i. What governmental astronomy/science outreach programmes for the public take place (co-ordinated either by government departments or national facilities).

Actually we don’t have an official governmental program but exist connections with Nicaraguan Council of Science and Technology (CONICYT) and UNESCO. In fact they are supporting activities at International year of Astronomy Astronomical Organizations connected are
Astronomical Observatory of UNAN-Managua, ASTRONIC and ANASA.

ii. What non-governmental astronomy/science outreach programmes for the public take place (NGO activities or international programmes that your country is involved in).

There is no NGO that this developing programs of astronomy. At the moment this working at professional level and investigations the Astronomical Observatory of the UNAN-MANAGUA and in the area of spreading two associations that are: Asociación Nicaraguense de Astrónomos Aficionados (ANASA) and Asociación Científica de Astrónomos y Astrofísicos Nicaraguenses (ASTRONIC).
iii. Comment on the presence of astronomy in the media (TV, radio, newspapers). Is it very prominent? Are there specific programmes on astronomy? Is the media generally willing to publish news on astronomy?

It doesn't exist any program in the media (TV, radio, newspapers) but when occur Astronomical event coverage by some media of communication.

iv. Comment on the presence of astronomy/science in the general culture of the people. Are there any specific challenges or setbacks? Is astronomy a welcome subject of conversation?

Astronomy catches acceptance in certain levels of education and public in general, in fact when we have activities about Astronomy, some people come to the activities but they don't have a culture on Astronomy. Media has
disinformation about Astronomy. There are many challenges among them to explain the knowledge of basic of astronomy, the life in other worlds, the observation of the sky nocturne. Furthermore, astronomy is good subject of conversation in all the educative levels and I publish generally.

v. Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your country in terms of Public Understanding of Astronomy? Please include any other relevant information to motivate your choice.)

It is limited because we don’t have the appropriate education on Astronomy. But, I publish is very kind to astronomy subjects, treat all the possible one to include/understand for example: the Stellar Evolution, the
space distance and trips. This causes that debates, groups of commentaries, discussions are generated and much more. You accustom is very difficult to explain phenomena outside its imagination, for example the beliefs of extraterrestrial, big bang and the religion, etc.

3. Astronomy in Schools:

(i) What governmental astronomy/science education and outreach programmes for schools take place (co-ordinated either by government departments or national facilities)

At the moment, the Ministry of Education this delivering an attack to include subjects of astronomy in the pensum in the levels of primary and secondary
education, even, the Independent National University of Nicaragua this including in the pensum of the race of Degree in Physics the profile of Astrophysics.

(ii) What non-governmental astronomy/science education and outreach programmes for schools take place (NGO activities or international programmes that your country is involved in)

At the moment the Ministry of Educación (MINED) has approved a new transformation to currivular to the primary and secondary pensum of introducing a great amount of astronomy subjects. We hope like observatory to enable most of to professors of primary and secondary of all the country in these subjects, because they did not receive these subject in their professional training.
(iii) Comment on the presence of astronomy in the school curriculum. Is it part of the school curriculum? Is it very prominent? What age groups?

Program of elementary school refer to 8% of time for natural sciences are dedicated to Astronomy covering the Solar System, In High School Kepler’s Laws and Universal Gravitation Law, actually we are working on a new transformation covering more topics. Principal Challenge is prepare to the teachers from Elementary School and High School in Astronomical topics.

1- Elementary School (7 years old)

2- High School (13 years old)

(iv) Comment on the status of astronomy/science in schools. Are there any specific
challenges or setbacks? Sufficient number of students studying maths and science?

General interest in maths/science/astronomy in schools?

There is great Natural and Social challenges so that there is to enable to all the

professors of all the country of Science, Biology and Physics in astronomy subjects.

Furthermore, there is few students of Ciencias in Mathematics and Physics with

interest in astronomy, but, a great interest by this subject.

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your

country in terms of Astronomy in Schools? Please include any other relevant

information to motivate your choice.)

It is limited on topics of Astronomy, All the professors of the country this very

poor in topical of astronomy, for that we are working the Astronomical
Nicaragua

Observatory (www.una.edu.ni/oahunan/oahunan.php) UNAN of it, ANASA

(http://www.anasa.org.ni/) and ASTRONIC (http://www.astronic.es.tl/)