

Press Release

28 February 2019

PR037-2019

CNES Science Programmes Committee meets String of successes in Universe and Earth sciences

Thursday 28 February, CNES's Science Programmes Committee (CPS) met at the agency's Head Office in Paris Les Halles. The CPS advises the CNES Board of Directors on matters relating to space science research and helps it to shape the agency's science priorities. Kicking off today's meeting, Gilles Rabin, Director of Innovation, Applications and Science, reviewed the stellar successes of 2018 and underlined the French scientific community's key role in accomplishing them.

These successes came in the field of Universe science:

- The InSight mission set down the French SEIS seismometer on the surface of Mars; the first measurements from the instrument are proving to be very good quality.
- NASA's Parker Solar Probe mission, for which France is the only European country to have supplied experiments.
- JAXA's Hayabusa2-MASCOT mission, which successfully collected samples from asteroid Ryugu on 22 February.
- The BepiColombo mission launched on 19 October 2018 has begun its long cruise to Mercury, which it will explore in 2025.
- The delivery in May 2019 of the French SuperCam instrument for the United States' Mars 2020 rover set to land on the red planet in February 2021.
- Planning of future joint endeavours with the United States after InSight-SEIS and with China on the future of the SVOM mission.

And in the field of Earth science:

- The roll-out of the Space Climate Observatory (SCO), which is attracting a steadily increasing number of partners.
- The French-Chinese CFOSat oceanography mission orbited on 29 October 2018, which acquired its first wave spectra just four days after launch.

More broadly, the CPS also addressed work underway in the domains of Universe and Earth sciences to ready for the ESA Ministerial Conference and the Science Survey Seminar at the end of the year. Several working groups have been formed on scientific exploration, focusing on small celestial objects, Mars, ice giant planets and the Moon. And in the field of Earth observation, two flagship programmes—Copernicus CSC4 and FutureEO—will be discussed at the ESA ministerial meeting.

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