



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **PHILIPPE LOGNONNÉ AND SYLVESTRE MAURICE LAUREATES OF FRENCH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES' CNES ASTROPHYSICS & SPACE SCIENCE PRIZE**

Tuesday 24 November, Philippe Lognonné, a professor at the University of Paris and geophysicist at the IPGP Earth sciences institute, and Sylvestre Maurice, an astronomer at the Midi-Pyrenees Observatory and planetologist at the IRAP astrophysics and planetology research institute, received the CNES Astrophysics & Space Science Prize awarded by the French Academy of Sciences.

In May 2018, CNES and the French Academy of Sciences renewed their partnership agreement signed in 2015 and created the new CNES Astrophysics & Space Science Prize. This award distinguishes a French or international research scientist or team for outstanding work in astrophysics at a French research laboratory, whether space technologies were used for the research or not. The winner receives €10,000. The CNES Astrophysics & Space Science Prize is judged through the same procedure for soliciting and presenting nominees as the other prizes awarded by the French Academy of Sciences and is included in the Universe Sciences category. The judging panel is made up of members of this section of the academy and chaired by the section's delegate or deputy delegate.

Philippe Lognonné is a professor at the University of Paris and geophysicist at the IPGP Earth sciences institute (University of Paris/CNRS). After focusing in his early career on Earth vibration theory, he turned his attention to external and planetary geophysics, formalizing the connection of earthquakes and tsunamis with Earth's ionosphere and developing with his team the sensors required to meet the challenges of planetary seismology. He is one of the instigators of the French-U.S. InSight mission and principal investigator for its SEIS seismometer, which has discovered quakes on Mars and imaged the structure of its surface crust. SEIS is pursuing its measurements to determine Mars' deep interior structure.

Sylvestre Maurice is an astronomer at the Midi-Pyrenees Observatory and planetologist at the IRAP astrophysics and planetology research institute (Toulouse III - Paul Sabatier University/CNRS/CNES). He has been involved with numerous solar system exploration missions, helping to discover water ice at the poles of the Moon (1998) and Mercury (2011), as well as on Mars (2004). He conceived and co-led the ChemCam instrument on NASA's Curiosity rover, has worked to demonstrate Mars' past habitability (2013) and is today co-principal investigator for the SuperCam instrument that will search for signs of life on NASA's Perseverance rover set to land on Mars in February 2021. He is also co-leading an instrument on ESA's ExoMars mission scheduled to launch in 2022 and is contributing to CNSA's Tianwen-1 mission also on its way to the red planet.

On the occasion of this award, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "The award of the CNES Astrophysics & Space Science Prize once again confirms the strong ties between CNES and the French Academy of Sciences. I would like to warmly congratulate the two laureates, Philippe Lognonné, whose SEIS seismometer on the InSight mission is regularly delivering data from the surface of Mars, and Sylvestre Maurice, who is closely involved in the SuperCam instrument on Perseverance that will be setting down on the red planet next February."



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Created by Colbert in 1666, the French Academy of Sciences counts some of the most eminent French and international specialists in its ranks. It performs an expert, advisory and alerting role with respect to political, ethical and social issues posed by science. Thanks to the generosity of its donors and public and private partners, the academy awards numerous prizes and medals every year honouring distinguished scientists or encouraging young researchers just starting their career. These awards cover all domains of fundamental and applied research, contributing directly to the academy's mission to support science.

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