

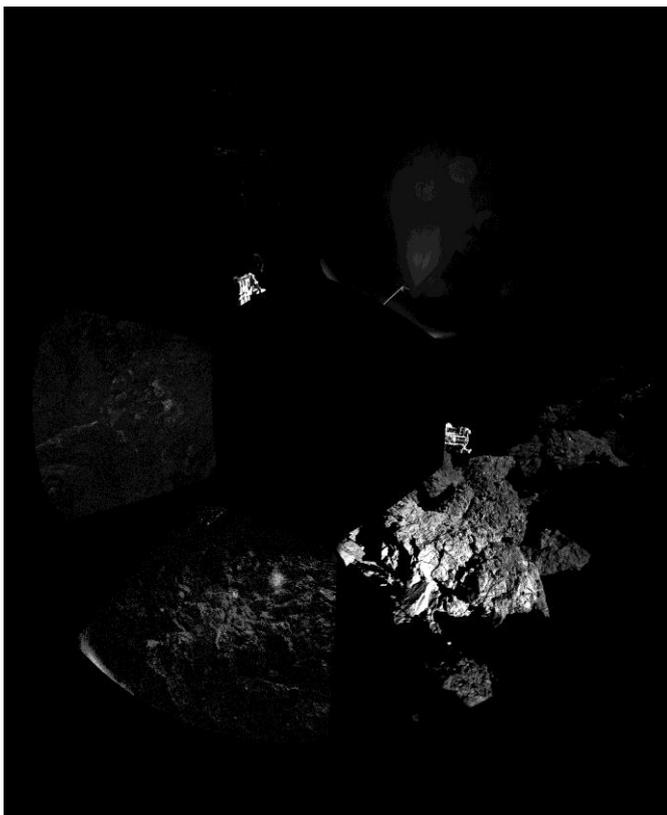
## **Rosetta mission Philae makes historic comet landing and sends back first picture**

**After its separation from Europe's Rosetta spacecraft and a nail-biting landing sequence, the Philae lander successfully touched down on comet Churyumov-Gerasimenko, 10 years after its launch—a first in the history of space. Rosetta and Philae will now continue probing the comet to unveil its secrets.**

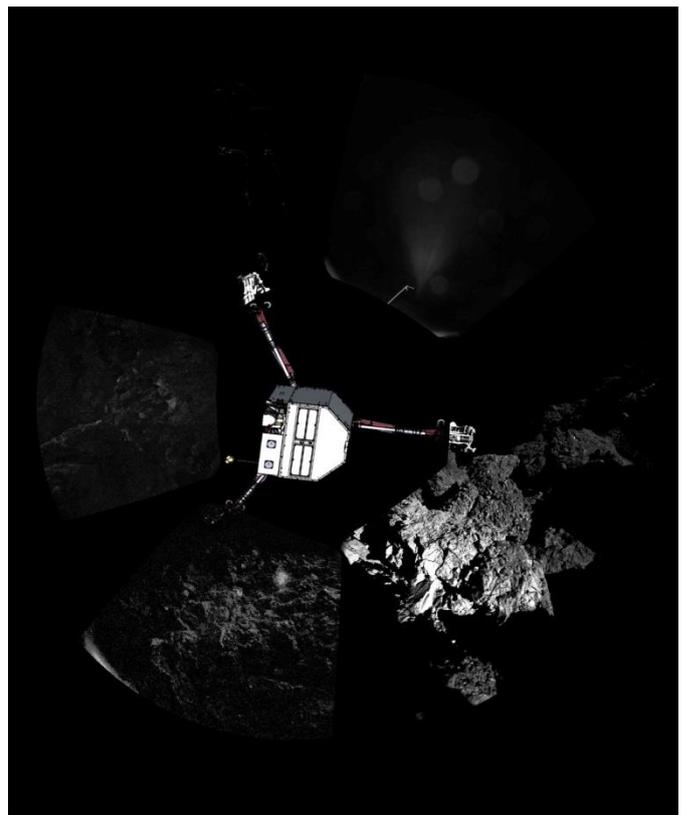
It took Philae about seven hours to complete its slow descent toward the comet, but on arrival the landing proved trickier than expected. The tiny lander bounced on the surface several times before eventually stabilizing more than one kilometre from its landing point and sending back a first panoramic photo to Earth.

Philae has been operating continuously since its descent and all of its instruments have been tasked. A wealth of data has already been obtained and everyone involved is working flat out to task new activities in the hours ahead in light of the lander's current position, where the solar illumination is lower than planned.

Philae's landing is a world first, as never before had humans succeeded in landing a spacecraft on a comet. Rosetta has now done it and can begin searching for new clues about how life formed.



Comet panoramic



Comet panoramic – Lander orientation

Commenting on the event, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall said: "Philae's landing is the first result of a particularly ambitious mission that began more than 20 years ago. Today, Europe has achieved a spectacular world first and we can all be proud of that. Space is a constant challenge and with Rosetta we are now set to move forward on fundamental questions concerning the formation of the Solar System and the organic molecules that could have led to the appearance of life."

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