

Press release – COSPAR 2018

The 42nd COSPAR Assembly was held in Pasadena, CA, USA on 14-22 July 2018. Over 3,300 participants registered in the Assembly, which featured more than 130 scientific events covering all disciplines of space research, from Earth sciences to planetary exploration, astronomy and astrophysics, the ionosphere and magnetosphere, the heliosphere, life sciences and human spaceflight, material sciences and fundamental physics from space. Over 4,200 abstracts were submitted for oral or poster presentations in the scientific sessions. Technical panels discussed pressing issues related to planetary protection, space weather and other topics. Plans for future capacity buildings and education were elaborated.

Among the highlights of the Assembly were:

- A session on Latest results with four papers on the Chinese Dark Matter mission DAMPE, Gravitational waves and associated emissions from ground-based and satellite observations, Venus atmosphere dynamics as revealed by the Japanese probe Akatsuki and an analysis of 25 years of satellite altimetry providing evidence of the accelerating global sea level rise.
- Six outstanding Interdisciplinary Scientific Lectures covering the Earth's Radiation Belts (Mikhail Panasyuk and Daniel Baker), Quantum Communication (Jian Wei Pan), the ESA GAIA mission (Elena Pancino), the economic value of an advance climate observing system (Bruce Wielicki), astrobiology from Earth to Mars and beyond (Penelope Boston) and ocean worlds (Alex Hayes).
- A roundtable of space agency leaders involving ASI (Piergiorgio Piccozza), CNES (Jean-Yves Le Gall), DLR (Pascale Ehrenfreund), ESA (Guenther Hasinger), IKI (Lev Zelenyi), ISAS/JAXA (Hitoshi Kuninaka), ISRO (B.N. Suresh), NASA (Thomas Zurbuchen) and NSSC (Ji WU), moderated by the COSPAR President Lennard Fisk.
- The first presentation of a COSPAR roadmap on "Small Satellites for Space Sciences".
- A roundtable discussion involving two past COSPAR Presidents and the current President on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of COSPAR (established in 1958) about its past, present and future.

COSPAR Scientific Commissions and Panels elected a number of new Chairs and Vice-Chairs. Plans for the next COSPAR Symposium to be held in Israel, 4-8 November 2019, were refined. The preparation of the 43rd COSPAR Assembly which will take place in Sydney, Australia, on 15-23 August, 2020, are now developing full-speed, based on the preliminary list of scientific events proposed in Pasadena.

The COSPAR Council, composed of the representatives of the 45 national members and 13 international scientific institutions and the chairs of the eight scientific commissions, renewed their confidence to Professor Fisk who was elected for a second term (2018-2022), together with a largely renewed Bureau. The Council further decided on the site of the 44th COSPAR Assembly which will be held in Athens, Greece, in July 2022, for the first time in this country.

The 42nd COSPAR Assembly was hosted by the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory and Caltech. The Scientific Program Committee was chaired by Prof. Thomas Prince (Caltech) with Dr Rosaly Lopes (JPL) as Deputy Chair. The Local Organizing Committee was chaired by dr. Gregg Vane (JPL) with Dr David Imel (Caltech-IPAC) as Campus Co-Chair. It was made possible thanks to the generous support of sponsors, notably the anchor sponsor Lockheed Martin, Orbital ATK, Northrop Grumman, KACST, DRL, The Planetary Society, Aerospace, ULA, NSSC, ASU, CNES, USRA and many other companies and space agencies.

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