

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



Reply to Attn of: SMD/PSD

December 14, 2011

Dear Dr. Escoubet,

Thank you for your letter of September 30, 2011. In that letter you requested that additional information be provided that contains a "broader discussion about NASA's potential level of participation in MarcoPolo-R, addressing all aspects including a discussion of possible elements that would be provided by NASA."

I want to thank you for your patience in allowing me to see how the Planetary Science Division budget may evolve over the next couple of years and therefore provide you with an early estimate of support within the context of the MarcoPolo-R mission as it is known to us today. I have also discussed this with key personnel in the Human Exploration & Operations Mission Directorate who have shown some interest.

At this time I would state that NASA should only be considered as a potential minor partner (~\$50M), but I would hope you will see that we could play an important role. In return we would like to obtain an appropriate amount of the asteroid sample.

As an example, to be used as the start of any discussion, we could be prepared to consider providing:

- One or two instruments (or potentially some subsystem);
- Deep Space Tracking and navigation support as needed;
- Study scientists, participating scientists, and engineering support personnel;
- Sample management support/consultations, including expertise on how to set up a sample receiving and curation facility;
- Proximity-operations support;
- Potentially other support to be agreed upon, which at this time is unknown.

I believe it is a good idea to organize a teleconference after the holidays to further discuss these points and to rapidly explore how best to proceed in order to benefit your current study activities. Once agreed upon, and as needed, we can document this in an exchange of letters between NASA and ESA that would, at this stage, not commit either Party beyond the initial study phase.

I am looking forward to your positive reply.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James L. Green".

Director, Planetary Science Division