

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



JUL 15 2019

Reply to Attn of: Science Mission Directorate/Deputy Associate Administrator for Research

Dr. Margaret Kivelson
Space Studies Board
National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine
500 5th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Dr. Kivelson:

I would like to express my appreciation for the January 2019 delivery of the pre-publication "Planetary Protection Classification of Sample-Return Missions from the Martian Moons" report. I thank you and the international members of the Study Team for their hard work and diligence in preparing such a clear and comprehensive set of recommendations.

During the inaugural meeting of the reconstituted Panel on Planetary Protection of the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR), Dr. James Green, the NASA Chief Scientist and representative to COSPAR, offered the recommendations of the "Planetary Protection Classification of Sample-Return Missions from the Martian Moons" report. The adopted recommendations stated that:

1. the outbound portion of the Mars-Moons Exploration (MMX) mission be classified Planetary Protection Category III; and,
2. the inbound (Earth return) portion of the MMX mission, as currently planned by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), be classified Planetary Protection Category V, unrestricted Earth return.

These recommendations were based heavily on the conclusions of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's report. The recommendations were later adopted by the COSPAR Bureau at its meeting in March 2019.

Please express my appreciation to the Chair, Dr. David Pearce, the Study Director, Mr. David Smith, and to all of the volunteers and staff who worked to bring this complex and comprehensive project to such a successful conclusion.

Please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Michael New, who can be reached at (202) 358-1766 or at michael.h.new@nasa.gov, with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thom", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Thomas H. Zurbuchen, Ph.D.
Associate Administrator,
Science Mission Directorate