

## Countdown for PLANET-C Venus orbiter

# Masato Nakamura[1]; Imamura Takeshi Venus Exploration Group[2]

[1] ISAS/JAXA; [2] -

<http://www.stp.isas.jaxa.jp/venus/>

The Venus Climate Orbiter (PLANET-C), which will be launched in the summer of 2010, aims at understanding the atmospheric circulation of Venus. Meteorological information will be obtained by globally mapping clouds and minor constituents successively with 4 cameras at ultraviolet and infrared wavelengths, detecting lightning with a high-speed imager, and observing the vertical structure of the atmosphere with radio science technique. The equatorial elongated orbit with westward revolution fits the observations of the movement and temporal variation of the Venusian atmosphere which rotates westward. The systematic, continuous imaging observations will provide us with an unprecedented large dataset of the Venusian atmospheric dynamics. Additional targets of the mission are the exploration of the ground surface and the observation of zodiacal light. The mission will complement the ESA's Venus Express, which also explores the Venusian environment with different approaches.