

Environmental monitoring camera system for the Martian aerosols and water vapor for the Japanese Mars rover, MELOS

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We propose the environmental monitoring camera system of aerosols and water vapor in the Martian atmosphere for the Japanese Mars rover, MELOS. The meteorology and the climate of Mars are strongly controlled by the aerosols, which consists of dust and clouds in the Martian atmosphere, and the better understanding of the basic parameters such as optical depth, radius distribution and composition of the aerosols enables us to describe the effect on the Martian meteorology and climate quantitatively. The water vapor also affects the Martian meteorology and climate through the infrared radiation and the generation of clouds. The MELOS aims at the search for life, and it needs the basic knowledge of the meteorology and climate at the landing site for detailed discussion. Therefore we should conduct the measurements of aerosols and water vapor at the MELOS landing site simultaneously.

To satisfy the requirement of monitoring the aerosols and water vapor in the MELOS rover mission, we propose a three-CMOS-camera system, which consists of a direct sunlight camera, a scattering light camera and a high-resolution color camera. The direct sunlight camera has four wavelength band (340 or 450nm and 550nm for aerosols and 870 and 940nm for water vapor). The scattering light camera also has the same wavelength band, but it is directed at the neighborhood of the sun and at several points along the great circle including the sun and is utilized for aerosol measurements. The arrangement proposed here basically follows the previous Mars missions, e.g., Viking lander, Mars Pathfinder and Mars Exploration Rover. The high-resolution color camera obtains pseudo color pictures around the rover and is intended to support the navigation for the life search experiment.

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