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Dear Jim,

Thank you for sending me your writeup and information on CLIMSAT.

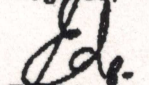
It appears to me to be increasingly more urgent, as the budgetary climate for EOS in particular, and NASA in general, grows more dismal, to ask a number of tough questions. Perhaps these are being raised in the contest of Mr. Goldin's Red and Blue Teams.

In any case, if another 30% or so is lopped out of the EOS/EOSDIS budget, it becomes increasingly silly to go on with yet another restructuring exercise. In that case one can examine more drastic options. For example, keep the PM satellite, drop the AM satellite recognizing that the Europeans will do the AM mission or something very like it, and consider a set of small satellite missions in addition to ALT, CHEM and COLOR and AERO. Small in this context means to me the size of CLIMSAT, TOPEX/POSEIDON, ADEOS and TRMM. Yet an even more drastic option is to drop the PM mission in addition and see whether the whole job can't be done with small satellites.

When you talked to us in La Jolla last summer vis-a-vis CLIMSAT, it was in the context of an adjunct to EOS. It was a most appealing concept then though as you know we worried about costs and timing. The question I am raising now is how you would view it (or modify it) if it moves more to center stage in one of the above scenarios. My current thinking leans toward believing that an overall renormalized system of small satellites may well be not only what we can afford but might also end up doing first-rate science.

I would appreciate hearing any views you have on these notions that you would be willing to share at this point.

Regards,


Ed Frieman