

The context of EChO: the Cosmic Vision programme

L. Colangeli - Head, ESA Solar System Missions Division and Coordinator, ESA Solar System Missions: Science and Robotic Exploration Directorate – ESA-ESTEC, Noordwijk, The Netherlands

The ESA Cosmic Vision programme is the framework for the scientific missions to be launched by ESA in the period 2015-2025. Solar Orbiter and Euclid have been selected in 2010 as “Medium-class” missions for launch in 2017 (M1) and 2020 (M2), respectively. The Jupiter Icy Moon Explorer (JUICE) has been selected as the first “Large” mission in May 2012, for a launch in 2022.

Presently, 5 missions, including EChO, are under study and compete as Medium-class M3 mission, for a launch in the 2022-2024 time frame. The down-selection is presently planned for February 2014.

The purpose of my contribution is to give an overview of the Cosmic Vision programme, to summarise the M3 selection process and to illustrate future opportunities that will be offered within the programme for new ideas and missions.