

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration



Ames Research Center
Moffett Field, California 94035-1000

Reply to MS 247-6

December 28, 2009

Prof. Francois Raulin
Professeur à l'Université Paris 12
President, Société Française d'Exobiologie

Dr. Frances Westall
Directeur de Recherche au CNRS, Orléans
Vice Présidente pour les affaires internationales

Dear Prof. Raulin and Dr. Westall:

Thank you very much for your letter of 9 December concerning the transition from the French "GDR Exobio" (Groupement de Recherche en Exobiologie) to the Société Française d'Exobiologie (SFE). The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has enjoyed a nearly decade-long relationship with the GDR Exobio through its partnership with the NASA Astrobiology Institute (NAI). With the transformation of the GDR Exobio into the SFE, the NAI concurs with your request that we transfer the Affiliate Partnership between the NAI and the GDR Exobio to the Société Française d'Exobiologie.

The initial partnership between the NAI and the GDR Exobio resulted in a diverse suite of successful and productive activities that included information exchange, French participation in NAI General Meetings, collaborative workshops, and opportunities for student exchange. The NAI wishes to build on this history of productive collaboration through a renewed program of cooperative activities with the SFE in astrobiology research, the training of students and young investigators, and education and public outreach as described in your 9 December letter. Of particular interest are activities that take advantage of the modern IT communication and collaboration tools that the NAI uses to maximize the effectiveness of a distributed research community and engage in outreach to the public and to the formal and informal education communities.

This letter thus confirms the formal transfer of the Affiliate Partnership between the NAI and the GDR Exobio to the Société Française d'Exobiologie. As with the previous NAI-GDR Exobio partnership, cooperative activities would be the subject of separate agreements between the NAI and the SFE, to be implemented on a no-exchange-of-funds basis.

We look forward to continuing the productive partnerships between the French and American astrobiology communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carl Pilcher". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carl B. Pilcher, Director
NASA Astrobiology Institute
NASA Ames Research Center