

No oceans on Titan, say researchers

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There are no oceans on Saturn's moon Titan and flat areas of the satellite appear to be solid and dry, U.S. astronomers said.

The moon's atmosphere, containing methane and ethane, had prompted speculation that lakes or oceans of these chemicals might be found on Titan, reported the BBC Thursday.

"We infer mechanisms that produce very flat solid surfaces, involving a substance that was liquid in the past but is not in liquid form at the locations we studied," Robert West, of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, in Pasadena, Calif., wrote in *Nature*.

The observations were focused on Titan's southern hemisphere, however, the northern region may contain pools of liquid organic material, the researchers said.

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