

U.S.-French satellite prepared for launch

May 1 2008

A U.S.-French spacecraft designed to continue a long-term survey of Earth's oceans has arrived in the United States for its final launch preparations.

The spacecraft -- Jason-2 -- was flown on a Boeing 747 from its manufacturer, Thales Alenia Space, in France to Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. After final testing it will be integrated onto a launch vehicle for a June liftoff.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration said the Jason-2 satellite will study ocean circulation and the effect oceans have on weather, climate and how our planet is responding to global climate change.

The spacecraft will be launched into a circular, non-sun-synchronous orbit, allowing it to monitor 95 percent of Earth's ice-free oceans every 10 days.

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Citation: U.S.-French satellite prepared for launch (2008, May 1) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2008-05-us-french-satellite.html>

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