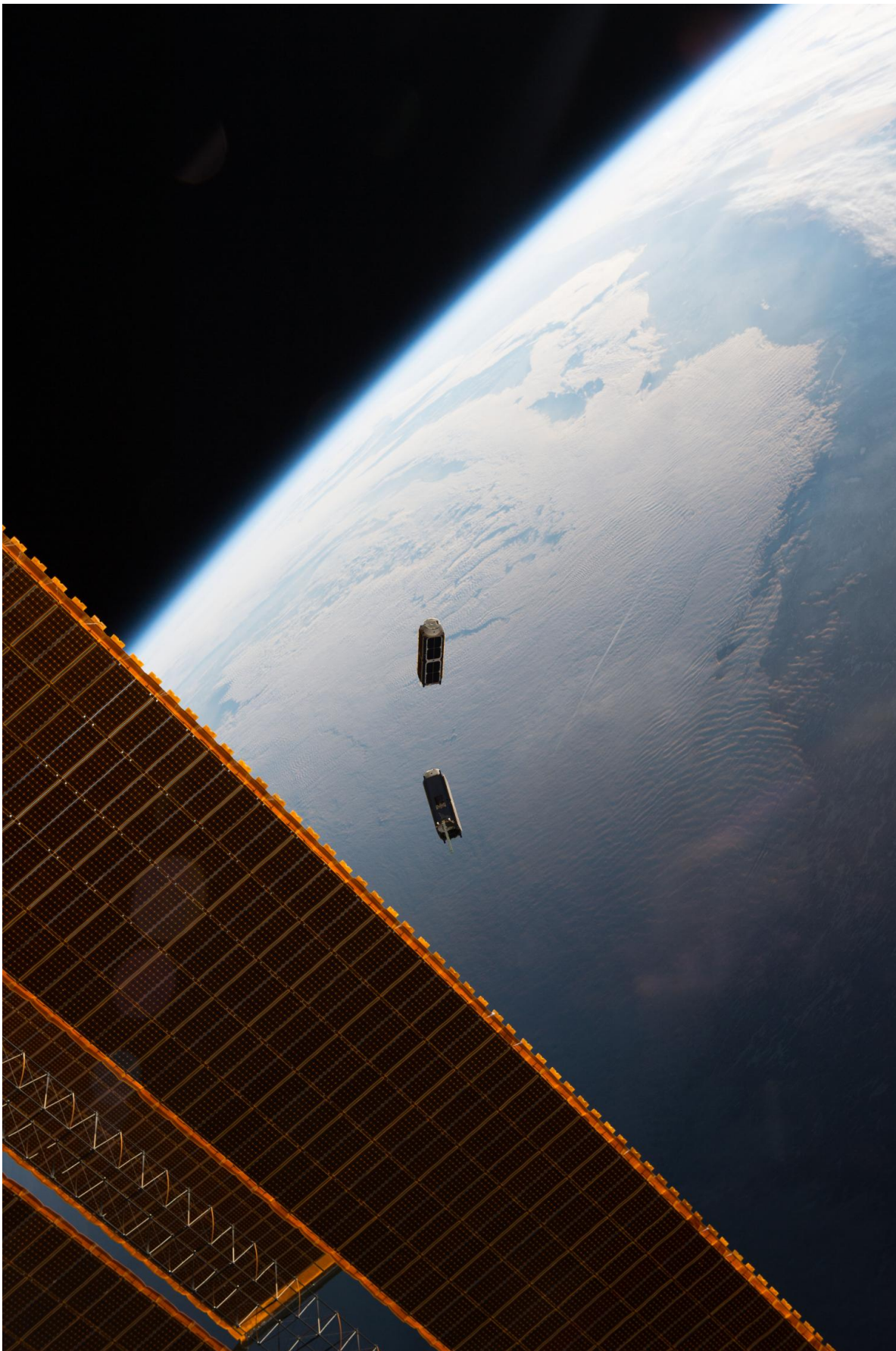


NASA image: CubeSats deployed from the international space station

May 23 2016



Credit: NASA

CubeSats fly free after leaving the NanoRacks CubeSat Deployer on the International Space Station on May 17, 2016. Seen here are two Dove satellites.

The satellites are part of a constellation designed, built and operated by Planet Labs Inc. to take images of Earth from space. The images have several humanitarian and environmental applications, from monitoring deforestation and urbanization to improving natural disaster relief and [agricultural yields](#) in developing nations. A total of 17 CubeSats have been released since Monday from a small satellite deployer on the outside of the Kibo experiment module's airlock.

CubeSats are a new, low-cost tool for [space science missions](#). Instead of the traditional space science missions that carry a significant number of custom-built, state-of-the-art instruments, CubeSats are designed to take narrowly targeted scientific observations, with only a few instruments, often built from off-the-shelf components.

Provided by NASA

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