

US stepping up Earth's protection from asteroids, comets

June 20 2018, by Marcia Dunn



In this Feb. 15, 2013 image made from a dashboard camera video, a meteor streaks through the sky over Chelyabinsk, about 930 miles east of Moscow. On Wednesday, June 20, 2018, the U.S.'s National Science and Technology Council released a report calling for improved asteroid detection, tracking and deflection. NASA is taking part in the effort, along with federal emergency and White House officials. (AP Photo)

The U.S. government is stepping up efforts to protect the planet from incoming asteroids that could wipe out entire regions or even continents.

The National Science and Technology Council released a report

Wednesday calling for improved asteroid detection, tracking and deflection. NASA is participating, along with federal emergency and White House officials.

For now, scientists know of no asteroids or comets heading our way. But one could sneak up on us, and that's why the government wants a better plan.

NASA's planetary defense officer, Lindley Johnson, says scientists have found 95 percent of all near-Earth objects measuring one kilometer (two-thirds of a mile) or bigger. But the hunt is still on for the remaining 5 percent and smaller rocks that could still inflict big damage.

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Citation: US stepping up Earth's protection from asteroids, comets (2018, June 20) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-06-earth-asteroids-comets.html>

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