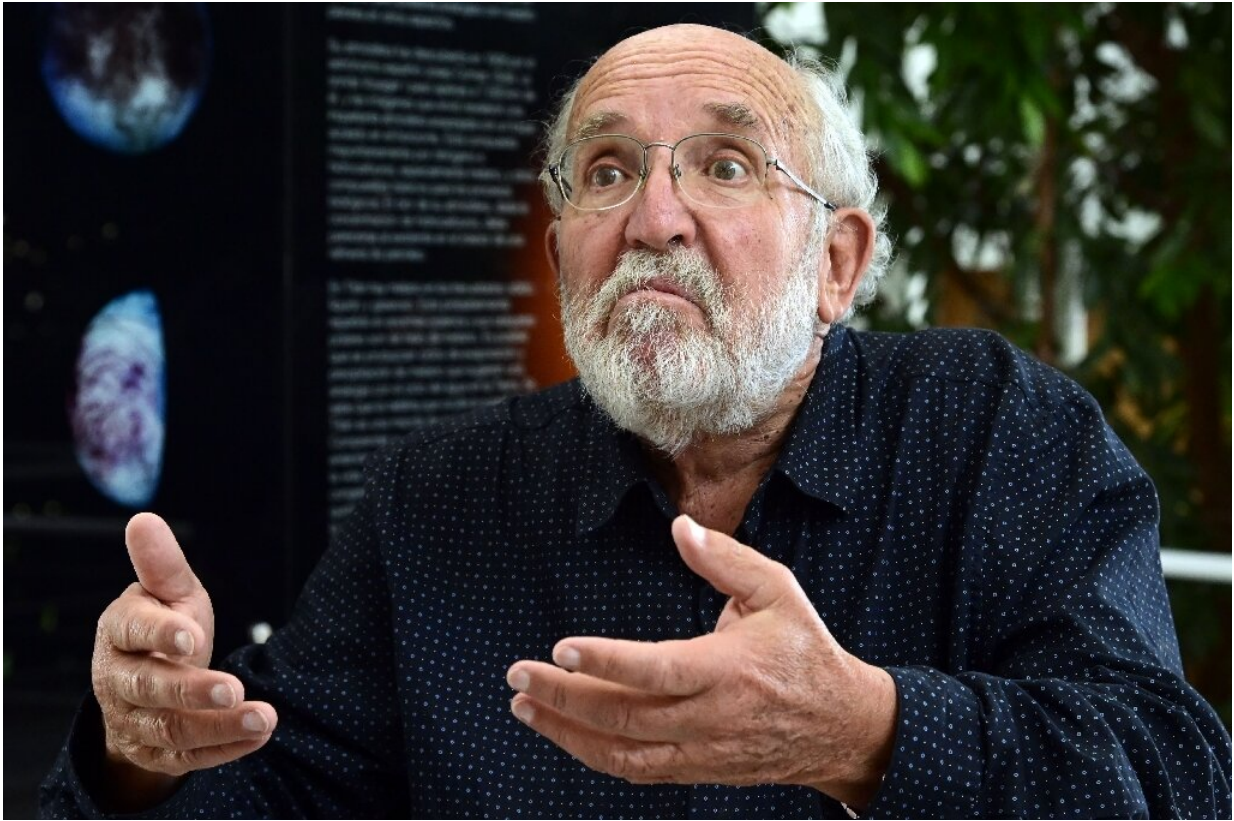


Humans will not 'migrate' to other planets, Nobel winner says

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Nobel prize winner Michel Mayor says the idea of humans living on another planet is 'completely crazy'

Humans will never migrate to a planet outside of Earth's solar system because it would take far too long to get there, Swiss Nobel laureate

Michel Mayor said Wednesday.

Mayor and his colleague Didier Queloz were on Tuesday awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics for their research refining techniques to detect so-called exoplanets.

"If we are talking about exoplanets, things should be clear: we will not migrate there," Mayor told AFP near Madrid on the sidelines of a conference when asked about the possibility of humans moving to other planets.

"These planets are much, much too far away. Even in the very optimistic case of a livable planet that is not too far, say a few dozen light years, which is not a lot, it's in the neighbourhood, the time to go there is considerable," he added.

"We are talking about hundreds of millions of days using the means we have available today. We must take care of our planet, it is very beautiful and still absolutely liveable."

The 77-year-old said he felt the need to "kill all the statements that say 'OK, we will go to a liveable planet if one day life is not possible on earth'."

"It's completely crazy," he added.

Using custom-made instruments at their observatory in southern France, Mayor and Queloz in October 1995 discovered what had previously only existed in the realm of science fiction—a planet outside Earth's solar system.

Mayor was a professor at Geneva University and Queloz was his doctorate student, when they made the discovery which started a

revolution in astronomy. Since then over 4,000 exoplanets have been found in our home galaxy.

"It was a very old question which was debated by philosophers: are there other worlds in the Universe?," Mayor said.

"We look for planets which are the closest (to us), which could resemble Earth. Together with my colleague we started this search for planets, we showed it was possible to study them."

Mayor said it was up to the "next generation" to answer the question of whether there is life on other planets.

"We don't know! The only way to do it is to develop techniques that would allow us to detect life at a distance," he said.

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