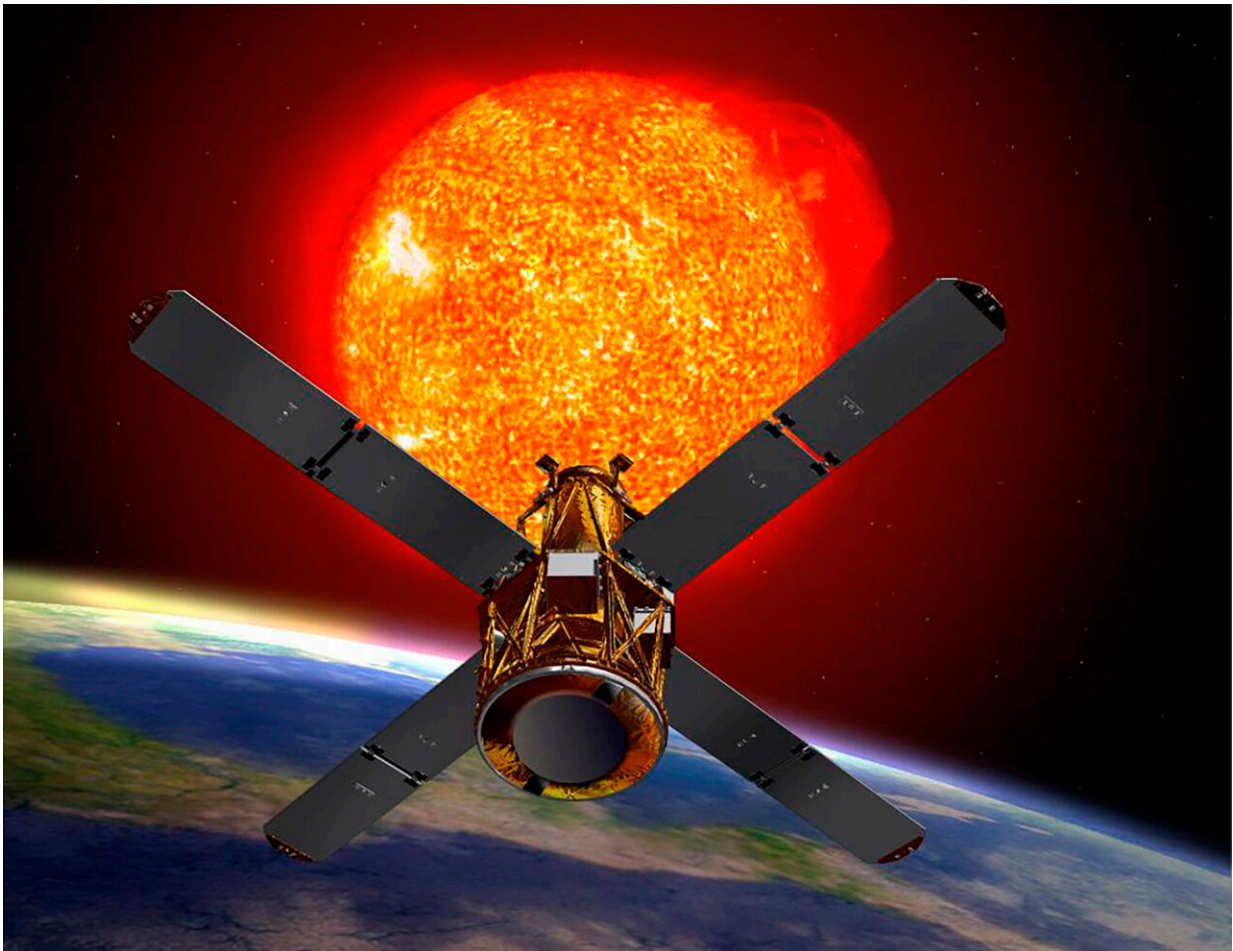


Old NASA satellite plunges to Earth over Sahara Desert

April 20 2023, by Marcia Dunn



This illustration provided by NASA depicts the RHESSI (Reuven Ramaty High Energy Solar Spectroscopic Imager) solar observation satellite. The defunct science satellite will plummet through the atmosphere Wednesday night, April 19, 2023, according to NASA and the Defense Department. Experts tracking the spacecraft say chances are low it will pose any danger. Credit: NASA via AP

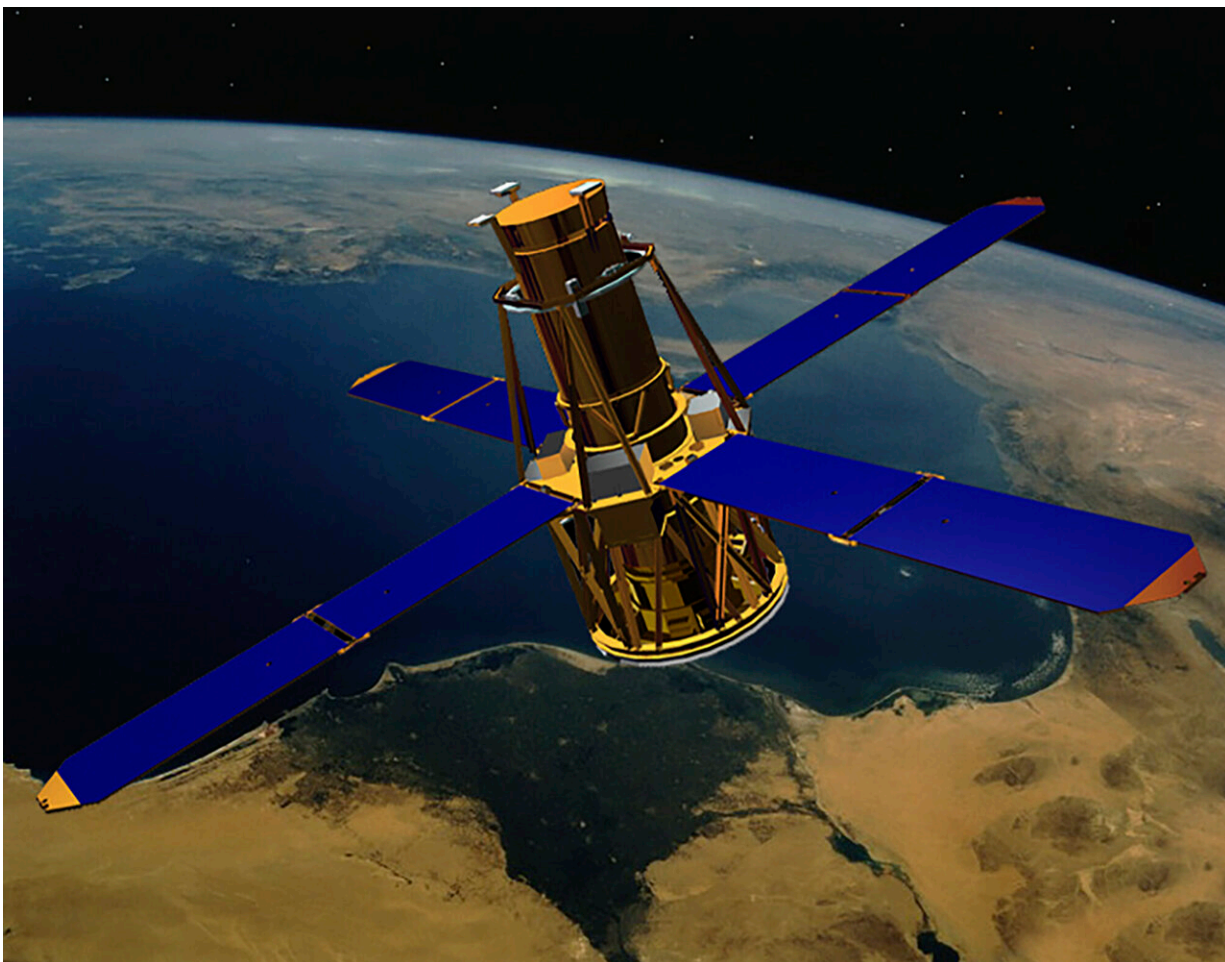
An [old NASA satellite](#) that studied the sun for more than a decade fell to Earth over the Sahara Desert, the space agency reported Thursday.

NASA officials said they have received no reports of damage or injury so far from the reentry, which occurred in the wee hours of the morning in Sudan.

Most of the 660-pound (300-kilogram) satellite, called Rhessi, was expected to burn up while plummeting through the atmosphere. But experts anticipated some pieces would survive and slam into the ground.

Launched in 2002, Rhessi was turned off in 2018 following a communication problem. Before falling silent, it studied [solar flares](#) and [coronal mass ejections](#) from the sun.

Rhessi stands for the Reuven Ramaty High Energy Solar Spectroscopic Imager.



This illustration provided by NASA depicts the RHESSI (Reuven Ramaty High Energy Solar Spectroscopic Imager) solar observation satellite. The defunct science satellite will plummet through the atmosphere Wednesday night, April 19, 2023, according to NASA and the Defense Department. Experts tracking the spacecraft say chances are low it will pose any danger. Credit: NASA via AP

© 2023 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: Old NASA satellite plunges to Earth over Sahara Desert (2023, April 20) retrieved 23

May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-04-nasa-satellite-plunges-earth-sahara.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.