
Preface

This book is designed as a “one-stop shopping” guide to the newly emerging field of space mining. The chapters that follow seek to provide a review of the past, current, and planned activities of various national space agencies of the world—as well as new commercial enterprises—in their relevant efforts to explore and exploit the resources of the Solar System. This review covers the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and its Moon as well as asteroids and even comets. It includes an overview of the exploratory and scientific activities of the United States, USSR/Russia, Europe, Japan, China, India, Canada, and others in terms of space initiatives of national space agencies.

This book also provides a review of the current activities of the new space mining ventures, including Planetary Resources, Deep Space Industries, Moon Express, and Shackleton Energy. The book describes the international and national legal and regulatory frameworks (or the absence thereof) within which space mining is being and will be developed or undertaken. Special attention is paid to the legal issues related to existing and evolving international liabilities, property rights, and national licensing systems applicable to private entities aspiring to engage in space mining.

Clearly there are great technological, ecological, and legal and policy challenges to be met and resolved before space mining can make the transition from aspiration to reality. This book attempts to provide useful background as to past and current activities as well as to offer a guide to that future as well.

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