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End-cretaceous cooling and mass extinction driven by a dark cloud encounter

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# **ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT**

### End-Cretaceous cooling and mass extinction driven by a dark cloud encounter

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#### **Abstract:**

We have identified iridium in an  $\sim$ 5 m-thick section of pelagic sediment cored in the deep sea floor at Site 886C, in addition to a distinct spike in iridium at the K-Pg boundary related to the Chicxulub asteroid impact. We distinguish the contribution of the extraterrestrial matter in the sediments from those of the terrestrial matter through a Co-Ir diagram, calling it the "extraterrestrial index"  $f_{\rm EX}$ . This new index reveals a broad iridium anomaly around the Chicxulub spike. Any mixtures of materials on the surface of the Earth cannot explain the broad iridium component. On the other hand, we find that an encounter of the solar system with a giant molecular cloud can aptly explain the component, especially if the molecular cloud has a size of  $\sim$ 100 pc and the central

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