

Beat: Technology

SOLAR IMPULSE 2-AROUND THE WORLD ON SOLAR ENERGY

TAKE-OFF FROM ABU DHABI

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USPA NEWS - Around the world, flying 35 thousand kilometers with only on solar energy. The Solar Impulse 2, a single-seater as great as light built by EPFL, took off from Abu Dhabi, to be back in five months after flying around the globe.

Flying the first stage will be André Borschberg, while Bertrand Piccard will take over in Muscat, capital of the Sultanate of Oman, to lead him to Ahmedabad (India). The intention will be to globally state that with renewable energies we can achieve the impossible and focusing on clean technologies, combined with a pioneering spirit, you can really change the world.

On the technical level the aircraft has been developed with a carbon fiber wing span of 72 meters, larger than that of a Boeing 747, but with a weight of just 2,300 kg, more or less as an SUV, against 180 tons of 'Jumbo Jet'.

. On the wings are placed more than 17 thousand silicon photovoltaic cells, which give energy to four electric motors and charge more than 630 kg of lithium batteries. With this equipment, the Solar Impulse 2 is the first solar aircraft in the world able to travel day and night.

The two men who will take turns in flying the aircraft, André Borschberg eBertrand Piccard. The first, a businessman and pilot; the second already in the annals for having been around the world non-stop in a balloon just as his father, Jacques Piccard-the first man, in 1960, to go down in the Mariana Trench, aboard the bathyscaphe Trieste, which was designed by his father Auguste.

Borschberg and Piccard will be able to fly for 5 consecutive days, without fuel and with only one pilot in a non-pressurized cabin. With a cruising speed of between 50 and 100 km per hour, they will need 25 days of cruise to accomplish the mission, which will wind through 12 stages flying over the Arabian Sea, India, Burma, China, the Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea. After take-off from the Persian Gulf the aircraft will reach Muscat (Oman), Ahmedabad and Varanasi (India), Mandalay (Burma), Chongqing and Nanjing (China). From here, after crossing the Pacific via Hawaii, they will make three stops in the US, including one at JFK in New York, and a stop in southern Europe or North Africa, according to weather conditions.

If all goes according to plan, August Piccard and Borschberg will land in Abu Dhabi with a new world record in their pockets.

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