



Press release

PlanetSolar: New look for his world tour in 2010 with Gérard d'Aboville

The biggest solar boat of the world will begin his worldtour in 2010, with a new design. A village, in the form of an exhibition will accompany this first worldtour powered by solar energy.

Paris, 14th of October 2008 – To achieve the first round-the-world sea voyage powered by solar energy is the dream of Raphaël Domjan : « I want to prove it is possible », explains the adventurer from Neuchâtel. More than a dream, it is a real conviction. « We want to be the Philéas Fogg of the XXI ... But beyond Jules Verne's dream, our project is to resolutely serves humanity and the environment to overtake the possibilities of fossil fuels, called classical energies ».

PlanetSolar will achieve the first round-the-world sea voyage powered by solar energy. The world tour will be made on board a revolutionary 30-meter long catamaran covered with 470 square meters of photovoltaic solar panels. The first solar-powered round-the-world voyage – scheduled for 2010 – will run from East to West, along an equatorial route.

PlanetSolar is committed to sustainable development and is particularly motivated by the necessity to develop alternatives to fossil fuels; which are in limited supply and causing measurable negative environmental impact. But beyond the dream and emotion brought on by this project, a real conviction stirred him up and its realisation became concrete.

PlanetSolar has brought together an international team of physicists, engineers, boat builders and a variety of people who all realize the importance of renewable energies and environmental protection. Raphaël Domjan will be the boat's skipper alongside the famous French sailor Gérard d'Aboville. PlanetSolar's ambition is to be a symbolic step towards a better world.

“During our round-the-world attempt, we will have to manage whatever energy nature gives us,” explains Raphaël Domjan. “We will have to constantly optimize our route and speed in line with the available sunshine and the medium-range weather forecast. No one has ever undertaken such a task.”

To promote the PlanetSolar project and sustainable development, the first solar-powered circumnavigation of the globe will be preceded by a touring exhibition in the form of the “PlanetSolar Village”.

It will act as a support for educational programmes, conferences and cultural events. The Village will then travel ahead of the PlanetSolar boat to all its ports of call, serving as a platform for the promotion of solar energy and sustainable development.

The Village will be inaugurated in Yverdon-les-Bains in spring 2009. The Village will then make a promotional tour in Switzerland during summer and trough Europe in January 2010. Subsequently the Village will travel one step ahead of the PlanetSolar boat's 2010 tour around the world, and will be set out in cities in different countries. Access to the Village will remain free to the public.

www.planetsolar.org



The skippers of PlanetSolar

Raphaël Domjan

PlanetSolar's founder is a man of conviction. At the age of 36, Raphaël Domjan conceived the PlanetSolar concept, and he has done everything possible since to turn his dream into reality. Someone who genuinely "dabbles in everything", Raphaël Domjan wears several hats and increases activities he takes part in that are closely connected to man and nature: an ambulance driver, high mountain guide, rescue specialist in perilous environments etc. Passion is what drives him on!

The PlanetSolar project, an extraordinary technological and human challenge, is also an expression of the world-view of Raphaël Domjan and of the team he has built around him: our planet deserves a better, brighter and less polluted future. Future technologies must be keenly investigated and solutions must be found. The project will help to motivate engineers and scientists to develop innovative technologies, inspire people around the world, and show that the impossible can become possible.

Gérard d'Aboville

Gérard d'Aboville is one of the great names in recent maritime history. In 1980 he became the first person to successfully row across the Atlantic Ocean, and with that became a living nautical legend. Eleven years later, he continued his exploits by rowing across the Pacific Ocean, despite capsizing several times in atrocious sea conditions.

His adventures have been published in many enthralling works that recount not only the sporting exploit, but also the human achievement of the solitary rower. D'Aboville continues to navigate, but now devotes more time to another great passion – it could be called a vocation – his dedication to the marine environment. He is directly involved as the President of France's boating and watersports authority.

Involved in the project since the beginning, Gérard d'Aboville puts all his experience of the sea and the ocean to the service of PlanetSolar. Aware of the current issues affecting our planet he feels very strongly about promoting renewable energies and contributing in his way to developing peoples' mentalities as far as the environment is concerned.

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