

World's first solar-powered plane lands safely

08.07.2010

Categories: [Renewable Energy](#), [Clean Tech](#), [Green](#), [Sustainability](#)

Tags: [Green Technologies](#), [Solar Cells](#), [Solar Energy](#)



Model of the HB-SIA prototype, taken from www.solarimpulse.com

Related Articles

- [Solar-powered plane takes to the skies to set record](#)
- [Harland and Wolff wins tidal turbine contract](#)
- [Predictions for wind energy agenda in UK with new coalition Government](#)

Solar Impulse has become the world's first solar-powered plane to make it through the night, landing safely at 9am.

As reported on Siliconrepublic.com yesterday, the solar-powered aircraft set off from Payerne airfield in central Switzerland at 6am yesterday for a 24-hour flight, with the aim of achieving the longest and highest ever flight carried out by a solar plane.

Well, it has succeeded in its mission.

At 6am today, as the sun rose over Switzerland, the plane's sole passenger and pilot, André Borschberg, kept chanting from the cockpit: "It's only the beginning". The plane landed at 9 o'clock this morning to a flood of well-wishers and media.

Fuelled with this fresh injection of hope for a greener, more sustainable form of travel, the Solar Impulse now has its sights set on creating the first plane to fly around the world.

Speaking at 9.56am, the team said: "That's very good news for us to now prepare for long-distance flights, with the final objective to fly around the world."

Following its take-off yesterday, the experimental airplane climbed to almost 9,000 metres and then saved energy to still fly during the night.

Congratulating Borschberg and the Solar Impulse team behind the project, which has been in progress for seven years, a representative from Deutsche Bank said this morning: "It's a task of everybody. We have to reach the world. We have to change our mindset to harmonise mankind. That's what I learned during the night."

With a 63-metre wingspan and a 1,600 kg take-off weight, the plane captured the sun's rays via 11,628 solar cells, each 150 microns thick, with 10,748 solar cells on the wings and 880 on the horizontal stabiliser. Energy was stored in lithium polymer batteries.

To view the cockpit and videos from the flight, visit the [Solar Impulse website](#).