# FRENCH AVIATOR PLANS TO FLY FROM PARIS TO NEW YORK IN A BIOFUEL PLANE

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**In the spirit of Charles Lindbergh, a French research company hopes to complete the first carbon-free trans-Atlantic flight later this year.**

**The Eraole, an electric biofuel plane developed by Laboratoire Océan Vital, will take flight from New York to Paris in June: The company says the plane will produce zero carbon emissions. If successful, the plane could have lasting impacts in the field of environmentally-friendly flight.**

Laboratoire Océan Vital was founded by Raphaël Dinelli, a pilot and adventurer, who will pilot the plane on its transatlantic journey.

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The plane's wings, covered in solar power panels.

IMAGE: LABORATOIRE OCEAN VITAL

The Eraole's electric engine is powered by solar panels across the wings, and when there's not enough sunlight, biofuel kicks in. The company claims this mix would be zero emissions, however depending on how greenhouse gas emissions are accounted for, most biofuels are not zero emissions. There are also two lithium batteries that will help the plane during takeoff and landing.

The aircraft has been in development since 2009: The fuel, made from micro-algae, took two years to develop; the plane was made with composite materials to be as light as possible. Eraole will run on 25% solar power, 55% biofuel and 20% pure gliding.

Eco-friendly innovation comes with a trade-off: The flight will last 60 hours, almost 10 times as long as current commercial jet flights.

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The body of the Eraole.

IMAGE: LABORATOIRE OCEAN VITAL

That means Dinelli will be in the cockpit with no autopilot and no sleep for over two days straight. Flying in an unpressurized cabin at 10,000 feet also means he'll be breathing 30% less oxygen than normal. Despite those concerns, what Dinelli is most worried about is the small size of the cockpit: He will not be able to move his legs.

Laboratoire Océan Vital's venture comes as Solar Impulse, an aircraft powered entirely by solar panels, ramps up for its departure from Hawaii. Two Swiss pilots have been attempting to circumnavigate the globe in the Solar Impulse II, however the aircraft was damaged and waylaid in Hawaii since last year. Solar Impulse is expected to depart Hawaii in April.

If Solar Impulse completes the trans-Atlantic journey first, it could take some wind out of Eraole's sails, so to speak — however there are no guarantees Solar Impulse will fly from New York to Europe before June.

Aviation accounts for 11% of carbon emissions from transportation, and 2% of all world emissions,

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