

Swiss Solar Boat Completes Fuel-free Atlantic Voyage

226 words

9 May 2007

04:23

Dow Jones International News <javascript:void(0)>

English

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BASEL (AP)--A Swiss-built solar vessel arrived in New York Tuesday on what the group behind the project said was the first sun-powered voyage across the Atlantic.

Dubbed "**sun21**," the catamaran reached North Cove Marina after a journey of six months and some 13,000 kilometers (over 8,000 miles) from Chipiona, Spain, to the Caribbean island of Martinique and then along the U.S. East Coast to New York, the Switzerland-based group transatlantic21 said in a statement.

According to the organization, the 14 meter (46 foot) boat produced 2,000 kilowatt hours of solar energy during its voyage thanks to a roof of photovoltaic panels mounted above the twin-hulled design.

The solar energy was used to power the boat's electric motors and any surplus was stored in batteries, allowing it to travel at a constant speed of 5-6 knots (10-12 kph) day or night, the group's Web site said.

The group said this showed the crossing can be made entirely without fuel, a claim which could not be independently verified.

"This proves that in our modern society it is indeed possible to travel the world efficiently and still safeguard the environment," said the boat's skipper, Michael Thonney.

transatlantic21 Web site: <http://www.transatlantic21.org> <javascript:void(0)> [09-05-07 0823GMT]