

A 6,503 km flight without using a single drop of fuel: mission accomplished for Solvay chemicals with Solar Impulse!

Brussels, July 8, 2013 --- Solar Impulse completed its coast-to-coast flight across the USA when it touched down in New York last Saturday at 23:09 local time. Within the framework of the solar flight initiative *Mission 2013: Across America*, Solvay is proud to present its contribution as a long-standing partner of Solar Impulse, the world's only solar-powered aircraft capable of flying day and night without burning a single drop of fuel and without generating polluting emissions: the fruit of 9 years of unfailing support, joint initiative and shared emotions backed up by research & development focused on transforming this ambitious project into a reality.

"My first words are for Bertrand Piccard and André Borschberg. It is with great pleasure that we welcome them in triumph at the end of an outstanding scientific and human adventure that we have actively supported over the past 9 years. Because we share the same values, because we are determined to contribute to a better future, we are proud to have played a part in the success of this project. We are already prepared to support Bertrand Piccard and André Borschberg in their forthcoming challenge to fly around the world in 2015. I would like to thank the Solar Impulse teams for making our dreams come true!" said Jean-Pierre Clamadieu, Chairman of Solvay's Executive Committee.

In 2004, Solvay was the first, and the principal, partner to believe and invest in this ambitious project. It decided early on to offer its full, enthusiastic support by mobilizing the skills of its engineers and researchers in the Group's main European laboratories: several dozen of Solvay's chemists and physicists have been contributing from Belgium, Germany, Italy, and the United States. In this way, the Solar Impulse initiative has benefitted from Solvay's expertise in materials and alternative energy sources.

The Group decided to make Solar Impulse a flagship project, a veritable "flying laboratory" with, first, its search for innovative solutions to enable the aircraft to operate as designed and, second, with experimentation in extreme in-flight situations conducted to test these solutions.

Jacques Van Rijckevorsel, a Member of Solvay's Executive Committee, was successful in convincing the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors to support the Solar Impulse initiative from the very outset at a time when the solar-powered plane only existed in Bertrand Piccard's imagination. He explains his commitment as follows: *"I immediately saw that Solvay had an important role to play. Our activities consist in imagining and creating new materials, and Solar Impulse has become a fantastic showcase of our expertise. This project is also an exceptional unifying force for our teams and provides a perfect illustration of our motto 'Asking more from chemistry.' This is because Solar Impulse is not just an aircraft; it is primarily a message of confidence in Man's ability to excel, to transcend the limits of the impossible."*

All in all, Solvay is present through 11 specific products, a score of applications, and nearly 6,000 individual components. Its contribution is visible in a large number of areas:

- The propulsion system through the capture of solar energy,
- The protection of the photovoltaic system,
- The storing of energy in lithium batteries,
- The thermal insulation of the cockpit and battery compartments,
- The development of lightweight, high-performance composite materials,
- The outstanding strength of carbon-fiber mechanical parts,
- The fluidity (lubrication) of the propeller systems, effective from -60°C to +40°C,
- The design and behavioral simulation of the materials (solar panels, wing ribs, etc.) thanks to the use of sophisticated calculation software.

Ce communiqué de presse est également disponible en français. - Dit persbericht is ook in het Nederlands beschikbaar.

This unique partnership between a major player in the global chemical industry and Bertrand Piccard and André Borschberg, the originators of the project and pilots of the plane, will lead to major advances in science and technology. The solutions developed by Solvay and tested by Solar Impulse should find a host of future applications in solar panels, batteries for computers and mobile phones, onboard aircraft equipment, home insulation, ground transportation, consumer electronics, etc.

** Across America 2013: a coast-to-coast flight across the United States from east to west, from SAN FRANCISCO TO PHOENIX (Arizona), and DALLAS (Texas), St. Louis (Missouri), Washington and New York.*

Further details can be obtained from the Solar Impulse blog: [What has Chemistry to do with the Solar Impulse project?](#)

As an international chemical group, [SOLVAY](#) assists industries in finding and implementing ever more responsible and value-creating solutions. The Group is firmly committed to sustainable development and focused on innovation and operational excellence. Solvay serves diversified markets, generating 90% of its turnover in activities where it is one of the top three worldwide. The group is headquartered in Brussels, employs about 29,000 people in 55 countries and generated 12.4 billion euros in net sales in 2012. Solvay SA [SOLB.BE](#) is listed on [Nyse Euronext](#) in Brussels and Paris (Bloomberg: [SOLB.BB](#) - Reuters: [SOLbt.BR](#)).

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