

Alternative fuel 'can power 15% of flights by 2020'

November 17 2009



An Airbus A-380 flies past a mosque during an aerobatics performance on the first day of the Dubai Airshow on November 15. Alternative fuels could power 15% of global air traffic by 2020 and 30% by 2030, European aircraft-maker Airbus has said.

Alternative fuels could power 15 percent of global air traffic by 2020 and 30 percent by 2030, European aircraft-maker Airbus said at the Dubai Airshow on Tuesday.

"If we get the right sources, it is possible that 15 percent of the world's jet fuel will come from sustainable sources by 2020, and 30 percent will come from sustainable sources by 2030," said Ross Walker, engineering programme manager for alternative fuels at [Airbus](#).

"The challenge is finding sustainable feedstocks" that do not take land and water used for food production, he said.

Walker said the alternative or sustainable fuels he was referring to were based on gas or biomass and converted to liquid.

He described algae, which can be grown in salt water, as a promising source of biomass for [alternative fuels](#). "We believe this is the golden chalice we've been looking for."

"If an area the size of the United Arab Emirates were planted with algae, it could produce enough bio jet fuel to support the world's civil aviation industry," he said.

Airbus was focusing on "drop-in fuels," or fuels that can be used in existing aircraft without modifications, he said.

Walker pointed out that the whole aircraft manufacturing industry, including engine and airframe manufacturers, were collaborating on alternative fuel projects.

Airbus conducted its first test of an [aircraft](#) using a 50-50 mix of GTL and kerosene in one engine in 2008, while a Qatar Airways Airbus A340 flew from London to Qatar burning a GTL-kerosene mix in all four engines last month.

Walker said Airbus hopes to conduct a test flight of an A320 burning a 50-50 BTL-kerosene mixture some time next year.

(c) 2009 AFP

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.