

'Plastiki' bottle ship to complete Pacific voyage

July 6 2010



A boat made from 12,500 plastic bottles, will leave New Caledonia for Sydney on its final leg of a voyage across the Pacific to raise environmental awareness. The "Plastiki", dreamed up by British adventurer and ecologist David de Rothschild (pictured), has already sailed 6,944 nautical miles in 108 days from San Francisco to the French Pacific territory.

A boat made from 12,500 plastic bottles will leave New Caledonia for Sydney this week on the final leg of a voyage across the Pacific to raise environmental awareness, organisers said Tuesday.

The "Plastiki", inspired by the 1947 Kon-Tiki raft expedition, has already sailed 6,944 nautical miles (12,860 kilometres) in 108 days from

San Francisco to the French Pacific territory, via the Line Islands and Western Samoa.

The voyage, to highlight the dangers of plastic pollution, over-fishing and [climate change](#) to the world's oceans, is expected to start its last and most challenging leg on Wednesday after arriving in New Caledonia last week.

"It looks like tomorrow they will be leaving," a spokeswoman told AFP.

"They just watch the weather patterns basically, and plan their journey around the weather patterns so that's why they're leaving tomorrow, good sailing conditions (are forecast)."

British adventurer and ecologist David de Rothschild, the youngest heir to Britain's Rothschild family banking fortune, dreamed up the idea of a fully recyclable performing vessel after reading a UN report on [ocean](#) ecosystems.

He said it was partly inspired by Norwegian explorer Thor Heyerdahl's trans-Pacific Kon-Tiki expedition from South America to Polynesia on a raft made from carved-out balsa husks.

The Plastiki's bottles are packed together in a "pomegranate-like" structure and fixed to pontoons, giving the catamaran 68 percent of its buoyancy, and it uses fully [renewable energy sources](#) including solar, wind and sea turbines.

It is held together with a fully recyclable plastic called Seretex and an organic glue made from cashew nut husks and sugarcane, while its sails are also made from [recycled plastic](#).

The Plastiki has already stopped in the Line Islands and Western Samoa

and its final stretch to Sydney, estimated to take about 10 days, will be its most challenging, the spokeswoman said.

"The Plastiki crew hope to inspire the world to reduce, reuse, recycle, rethink and ultimately refuse our use of wasteful disposable plastics such as bags, styrene foam and bottles," she said.

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Citation: 'Plastiki' bottle ship to complete Pacific voyage (2010, July 6) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-07-plastiki-bottle-ship-pacific-voyage.html>

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