

Swiss solar plane to attempt 48-hour flight to Morocco

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"After its inaugural flight to Paris and Brussels in 2011, Bertrand

Piccard and Andre Borschberg's solar airplane will attempt, for the first time ever, to fly over 2,500 km (1,550 miles) without using a drop of fuel, finally landing in Morocco," said the project in a statement.

Piccard and Borschberg will take turns to pilot the plane during the 48-hour journey, with a stopover near Madrid expected for the swap.

The trip, expected for May or June, would be a rehearsal in the run-up to the plane's round-the-world flight planned for 2014.

"Flying as far as this, powered only by [solar energy](#) will be excellent training for the round-the-world trip," said Borschberg, co-founder and chief executive of [Solar Impulse](#).

The high-tech aircraft, which has the [wingspan](#) of a large [airliner](#) but weighs no more than a saloon car, made history in July 2010 as the first manned plane to fly around the clock on the sun's energy.

It holds a record for the longest flight by a manned solar-powered aeroplane after staying aloft for 26 hours, 10 minutes and 19 seconds above Switzerland, also setting a record for altitude by flying at 9,235 metres (30,298 feet).

It has since flown several times, notably between the Geneva and [Zurich](#) airports, as well as to Paris and Brussels.

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