
Etihad "eco-flight" lands in Brussels

By **Rick Lundstrom** on January, 13 2020 | Airline & Terminal News



[Etihad Airways](#) operated a special 'eco-flight' from Abu Dhabi to Brussels today to demonstrate the airline's sustainable practices in the air and on the ground.

Flight EY 57, which arrived in Brussels shortly before 7.00 am, was operated with a 787 Dreamliner, which consumes at least 15 percent less fuel than any aircraft type previously flown by the airline.

The aircraft followed an optimized flight route facilitated by the European air navigation service provider [Eurocontrol](#) to help reduce fuel consumption and carbon emissions. Today's flight was timed to coincide with the start of [Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week](#), an annual event held in the UAE capital to highlight sustainable initiatives across a broad range of areas.

"Sustainable practice is a critical and continuing challenge for the air transport industry, which is striving to reduce carbon emissions and waste, while meeting soaring demand for air travel," said The Group Chief Executive Officer of Etihad Aviation Group, Tony Douglas, in today's announcement. "It is also a key priority of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, in which Etihad is a critical driver of both social and economic development."

The airline has announced the Etihad Greenliner Program, through which its entire fleet of 787s will be used as flying testbeds for a range of sustainability initiatives by Etihad and its industry partners. The first such partner is Boeing, which will join Etihad in a comprehensive research program, beginning next week with delivery of a new 'signature' 787, specially themed to highlight the sustainability partnership of the two companies.

In addition to the optimized flight route and fuel optimization measures, initiatives used to support the Brussels eco-flight included:

- Minimal single-use plastics on board, including removal of plastic wrapping from blankets, headsets wrapped in paper (Economy) and velvet bags (Business), plastic-free amenity kits; lightweight metal cutlery ([Sola Cutlery](#) the Netherlands), meals served in aluminium dishes, water served in recyclable boxes (Oasis), and hot beverage cups replaced with recyclable cups ([Butterfly Cup](#)).
- Wheat-based plates ([Biotrem](#)) for on-demand meals in Business Class.
- Electric tractors to help ferry freight and luggage between the terminal and the aircraft in Abu Dhabi. The airline recently received the first 10 of 94 such vehicles, to be introduced during 2020.
- Expedited taxi time from the Abu Dhabi terminal to the runway, to minimize or eliminate holding time with engines running
- The use of ground power at both Abu Dhabi and Brussels airport terminals instead of the aircraft's own fuel-powered auxiliary power unit.

Etihad is also implementing or considering sustainability initiatives including:

- Waterless cleaning of aircraft exteriors, improving presentation and removing grease and dirt to

'smooth' the fuselage and minimise aerodynamic 'drag.'

- 'Eco-wash' cleaning of aircraft engines to help improve fuel efficiency and minimise emissions.
- Reduction of single use plastics by 80 percent by 2022.