
Etihad says no to single-use plastics for Earth Day flight

By **Rachel Debling** on April, 17 2019 | Airline & Terminal News



Etihad's Earth Day crew prepares for flight

On April 21, [Etihad Airways](#) flight EY484 will fly from Abu Dhabi to Brisbane, arriving at its destination on Earth Day (April 22), without any single-use plastics on board

According to a press release from the airline, this marks the first time an airline in the region has undertaken such a challenge. The move is part of Etihad's overall strategy to reduce single-use plastics in its organization by 80 percent by the end of 2022.

H.H. Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Department of Transport, said in a statement: "Sustainable and efficient transport is core to the government's vision, and we commend Etihad's proactivity in paving the way for sustainability and efficiency in air transportation. The investment in sustainable alternative fuels and the focus on emerging environmental concerns such as plastic pollution reaffirms Etihad's commitment to the Abu Dhabi transport vision."

H.E. Mohamed Mubarak Fadhel Al Mazrouei, Chairman Etihad Aviation Group, also said: "This step is an extension of Etihad's pioneering environmental efforts. Inaugurating 2019 with the locally sourced biofuel flight and the operation of the longest single-use-plastic-free flight are testament to our commitment to leading effective change towards sustainability."

Tony Douglas, Group Chief Executive Officer of Etihad Aviation Group, commented: "There is a

growing concern globally about the overuse of plastics, which can take thousands of years to decompose. We discovered we could remove 27 million single-use plastic lids from our inflight service a year and, as a leading airline, it's our responsibility to act on this, to challenge industry standards and work with suppliers who provide lower impact alternatives."

On that front, Etihad has been working with amenity kit supplier [Buzz](#) to help improve the sustainability of its onboard offerings with eco-friendly products, plush toys and eco-thread blankets, which Buzz pioneered.

In its efforts to be a leader in sustainability, the airline has been working with its suppliers and partners to ensure products aren't wrapped in plastic and to source alternatives to standard materials, such as [Cupffee](#)'s grain-based edible coffee cups. Of the more than 95 single-use plastic products that Etihad identified, most were replaced with eco-friendly options, and those that couldn't were removed from flights. These changes helped prevent over 50 kilograms of plastics from ending up in landfill.

The airline has additionally committed to remove up to 20 percent of single-use plastics on its flights by the first of June. By the end of 2019, the airline says that it will have removed 100 tonnes of these products from its inflight service.

Douglas noted: "We are making this promise not only for the environment but also for the wider community. Our guests and employees are largely responsible for facilitating this positive change, as they brought to our attention the effect plastics within our industry have on landfills, waterways and our oceans, contaminating our soil and water."