

FAI Environmental Commission Report 2018

Prepared by Tom Gunnarson
CIMA Liaison to EnvC

There has been little tangible sign of progress this year on the FAI Environmental Commission (EnvC) agenda to promote environmental values and showcase the value of environmental friendly practices in relation to air sports. This commission relies on air sport commissions such as CIMA to implement programs that put those values in practice. The lack of interest expressed by delegates in the 2017 CIMA meeting appears to be FAI-wide.

So EnvC is trying a different approach to action by aligning with other motor sports where electric propulsion is becoming popular. On 1 October 2018 it was announced that motor sport federations would increase collaboration in this area. EnvC president Pierre Duval was quoted saying, that jointly - air sports, auto, motorcycling and power boating - will "...promote through sport the use of cleaner energies for the world and make sure we all run our activities in the most efficient and safe manner without wasting our sportsmen and sponsors time and money replicating tasks. This evolution will allow us to better work together with authorities, organisers and media for offering the public new experiences in an environmentally friendly format."

One concept is a cross-country rally with teams using a mix of vehicles. This is an intriguing idea that could bring a new level of public interest if properly marketed and publicized. CIMA should consider supporting this - if FAI commits to it.

Somewhat separate from EnvC activity but of possible interest to CIMA is the rise of small single seat all-electric powered aircraft utilizing a full suite of digital technologies to provide the capability for interesting flight with non-traditional configurations. The Opener Black Fly and Kitty Hawk Flyer represent two of the more mature designs. Both have VTOL capability and the Black Fly can fly like an aeroplane.



Black Fly



Flyer

These aircraft have more in common with microlights than helicopters and could, in the future, provide compelling performances worthy of competitive air sports. Like with gyrocopters, these hybrid lift machines may deserve a chance to compete under the CIMA banner. And being quiet with zero emissions, they meet EnvC goals.