

green is for starboard

There is no doubt that the world's climate is changing and that for many this is synonymous with the excesses of mankind. But if we're not careful there will be a time when the 'Green Brigade' will have infiltrated every conceivable pastime, removing from it every vestige of enjoyment. It is happening to motoring — where we are urged to go green and buy safe slow electric cars that do not pollute the atmosphere; it is heading for boating — ripping away everything from the cheap two-stroke outboard engine, and now it is heading towards superyachting.

It is here I begin to worry, rather like the navigation cadet on his first trip to sea, that I might get my port and starboard mixed up.

What's green these days?

Dutch yard Royal Huisman is building *Ethereal*, a 58m eco-friendly sailing yacht for millionaire Bill Joy, co-founder of Sun Micro Systems.

Designed by Pieter Beeldsnijder, she is setting new standards in energy efficient sailing yachts. Despite her size, she will be able to mimic the silent lifestyle of small family cruising yachts when at anchor, dispensing with the need to run generators constantly. Every piece of equipment on board must, as a result of her owner's wishes, be extremely energy efficient. Much has been developed especially for, and put into use for, the very first time aboard the yacht — at a cost of millions to satisfy one man's dreams. But could this project ever be called green?



voyaging in Alaska and Antarctica among others.

But is she green?

True she has a filtered bilge-water separation system and a water-ballast management system that complies with the IMO resolution A868(20) sub-paragraph something or other; yet is she really eco-friendly?

How many tons of fossil fuel a day does she burn to turn her engines, to keep her generators running, and the air conditioning fully operational? She has non-toxic antifouling paint and a system of waste treatment that monitors and even analyses the strength of the effluent, but is she truly green?

She carries eight passengers and a crew of 12 which gives a staff-to-guest ratio way above that offered by the top hotels and probably suggests that sheets and towels are changed and washed on a daily basis — assuming millionaires drop their towels on the bathroom floor rather than hanging them up on the rail for reuse as we mortals are asked to do when staying in three- and four-star hotels.

Coping with tax-deductible guilt

The Monaco Yacht show is seemingly proud of its green credentials and boasts of its carbon-neutral footprint. Organisers have declared that because carbon-related pollutants are created in the process of running the show — from transporting exhibition displays to the arrival of the yachts and the production of show brochures — they are counteracting this by investing in 10 wind turbines that should produce enough energy to supply 30,000 households in India and an additional 36 wind turbines as part of a wind-farm in China.

Now, is that a green guilty conscious, or is it a charitable donation and, probably, tax-deductible?

These investments have earned the show a carbon-neutral stamp three years running and will win the hearts of many who have forgotten what it is the show is actually promoting — gas-guzzling yachts, whose acres of open-deck space are covered in teak stripped for Burma forests where it takes 80-odd years for quality wood to grow and getting on for a hundred trees need to be felled before enough teak for just one 50m yacht is produced.

Tribù was on display at Monaco '07 showing off acres of real teak decks and, after the event, as she steamed from the harbour, I couldn't help but notice how the owner's love of primary colours had influenced his choice of paint on the accommodation ladder which displayed, on an otherwise all white hull, a huge red slash on the starboard side.

Yes that's right — red to starboard.

Isn't that where we started? □

“She has bilge-water separation and water-ballast management — but is she really eco-friendly?”

One who should know all about colour is Luciano Benetton, the man who brought the 'United Colours of...' to the high streets in towns across the world.

His 50m yacht *Tribù*, launched by Mondo Marine in 2007 for worldwide globetrotting, is said to be the epitome of the ultra-green travelling machine — to the point that it is the first ever yacht to be built to RINA's new Green Star notation.

The classification society is happy to point out this is a voluntary decision by an owner, but suggests, by following the green code, yachts will be more welcome in sensitive cruising grounds around the world. In theory, this will open up opportunities of