

The electric boat: cheap and green

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THERE'S a new way to go green on the blue waters of Middle Harbour.

A new company, Eco Boats Australia, is offering luxury electric boats for hire as an environmentally friendly alternative.

Research has shown that a few hours in a petrol-powered boat has a bigger environmental impact than a return road trip from Sydney to Melbourne.

But it's possible to have fun on the water without wrecking the planet, Eco Boats Australia founder Steven Mullie said.

He said the electric boats for hire on Middle Harbour were emission-free, low maintenance and would cruise for a whole day and cost less than a dollar to recharge.

"The beautiful thing is that electric boats are so quiet," he said.

Mullie said research has also shown that gas-powered marine engines were among the highest contributors of hydrocarbons, oxides and nitrogen emissions in Australia. He said the threat of global warming and rising fuel prices had generated a lot of interest in electric boats in his native Holland.

"Electric boating is getting a lot of attention from councils who've decided to clean up their act, reducing noise and pollution on their waterways," he said.

"Some rivers and canals already only allow electric power vessels."



Steven Mullie from Eco Boats at Northbridge Marina with his battery-powered hire boat.

Picture: DAVE SWIFT -PP238728

The Eco Boats run off batteries which recharge from normal household power or top up on the run from optional solar panels. "With cruising speeds of around four knots (7km/h), a trip on an electric boat is all about relaxing and unwinding," Mr Mullie said.

"Some people want speed but we're offering a social event that brings friends

and family together and doesn't cost the earth."

Eco Boats operates out of Northbridge Marina. The company also represents both imported and locally manufactured electric boats and motors, including outboard motors.

» **Details:** www.ecoboats.com.au or 9929 8834.