

France's First Hydrogen-Powered Inland Cargo Vessel Enters Service



Image courtesy Sogestran

Published Dec 3, 2024 9:19 PM by [The Maritime Executive](#)

The Sogestran Group has commissioned France's first-ever hydrogen-powered river vessel, the *Zulu 06*.

The 55-meter vessel, formally christened on the Seine in Paris on Tuesday, has a cargo capacity of 400 tons. It is designed to deliver small deck cargoes for customers in the urban environment of Paris. It was designed by LMG Marin with a power system supplied by ABB Marine & Ports, with two 200 kW hydrogen fuel cells delivered by Ballard. It carries 300 kilos of compressed hydrogen, which is enough for seven days of operation between refills. The system is the first of its kind in France, and the operator hopes to demonstrate a new, clean business model for transporting goods by water in a large city.

"With the launch of the *Zulu 06*, we witness a major breakthrough for river transport and the energy transition in France," said François Durovray, the French Minister of Transport, who attended the vessel's inauguration. "This project is a prime example of European cooperation and synergy between public and private stakeholders for green mobility."

The project came from the EU-funded FLAGSHIPS initiative, a six-year program dedicated to advancing zero-emission waterborne transport. Construction was carried out in Romania, followed by propulsion system outfitting in France.

"While the hydrogen industry is still maturing, every innovation like the *Zulu 06* accelerates its democratization, ultimately building a robust value chain," said Pascal Girardet, Chairman and CEO of the Sogestran Group.

The next vessel in the FLAGSHIPS program is the *FPS Waal*, operated by Future Proof Shipping. The *Waal* is a conversion project to turn a conventional inland container feeder into a zero-emissions vessel for operations on the Rhine.