

Press Release

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Volvo Cars' environmental vision: "DRIVE Towards Zero"

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"DRIVE Towards Zero" is Volvo Cars' vision for developing cars entirely free from harmful exhaust emissions and environment-impacting carbon dioxide.

New steps are being continuously taken to reach that vision.

For instance, Volvo has introduced a range of high-efficiency diesel models with very low CO₂ emissions. And the company's ambitious electrification strategy includes a C30 Electric and a market introduction of plug-in hybrids as early as 2012.

At a time when pressure on the automobile industry is perhaps greater than ever before, there is a sparkling combination of creativity and ambition that is helping the drive towards increasingly efficient cars and the essential phasing-out of fossil fuels. Not least at Volvo. The company continues to prioritise its focus on advanced green technology.

Between the years 2006 and 2014 Volvo Cars invests a massive SEK 15 billion in research and development with the aim of reducing the fuel consumption and environmental emissions of its cars.

"We already have a wide range of models with extremely competitive CO₂ emissions.

Electrification is an important part of the paradigm shift to significantly reduce CO₂ emissions," says Peter Mertens, Senior Vice President, Research & Development at Volvo Car Corporation. He adds:

"We believe that 95 g CO₂ per kilometre is a suitable target for 2020 in the EU. However, this target is dependent on the outcome of the new European driving cycle discussions. How electricity and increased low-blending of biofuels will be valued in this cycle are a couple of crucial issues. "

Volvo's environmental dedication dates back to the 1970s and encompasses the car's entire lifecycle, from design, construction and production to use, servicing and recycling. The main focus is on efficient energy and resource utilisation, reduced emissions and non-allergenic car interiors.

2008 saw the introduction of the DRIVE badge, a collective symbol for Volvo Cars' dedication to greener motoring. The new symbol reflects the company's commitment to sustainable mobility and zero emissions, at the same time as it includes a promise of constant improvement.

"Here at Volvo, we do not feel that there is any single obvious route to sustainable mobility. For one thing, local preconditions vary considerably when it comes to biofuels and the necessary infrastructure. And for another, we are seeing a steady stream of exciting new technological advances in such fields as electrification, which change these preconditions," says Peter Mertens.

"We therefore maintain an open and proactive approach to various development tracks and technologies - so that we can quickly and cost-effectively commercialise products with the minimum possible climate impact," clarifies Peter Mertens.

Product development within three areas

Volvo follows three main tracks for reducing the environmental impact of its products:

- Efficiency enhancement
- Renewable fuels
- Electrification.

These three tracks will coexist and vary in significance over the coming decades, with the aim of gradually reducing fuel consumption and emissions to the levels required by the authorities, the customers and the environment.

Efficient diesels

Volvo's DRIVe cars consist of a series of extremely fuel-efficient diesel models. The C30, S40 and V50 are currently the most economical DRIVe models with fuel consumption (EU Combined) down to 3,8 l/100 km and CO₂-emissions at 99 g/km.

Volvo Cars feels that the most effective way to cut the product range's total carbon dioxide emissions in the short term is to reduce the fuel consumption of its diesel and petrol engines.

This is because cutting the emissions of many cars sold in large volumes will have a bigger total effect and bring favourable results more quickly than making huge cuts in a small number of cars. Really economical diesel engines featuring start/stop technology will be introduced across the entire product range in the coming years.

Renewable fuels

The switch to increased use of renewable fuels includes car models that are tailored to run on multiple fuels. Volvo offers models that are powered by petrol, diesel, ethanol and natural gas/biogas. Volvo's Flexifuel models, that is to say cars that can run on both petrol and bioethanol, today constitute one of the widest such ranges on the market.

What is more, on several European markets there are aftermarket-converted gas models that can run on up to five fuels - natural gas, biogas, hythane (biomethane with low-blend hydrogen), E85 and petrol. Biogas in particular offers excellent environmental properties. Within the next few years, second-generation biofuels such as synthetic diesel will also be able to be used in Volvo's cars.

Hybrids and electric cars

In 2012, customers will be able to buy Volvo plug-in electrical hybrids, that is to say cars that can be recharged via a regular household electric socket. These cars have both a conventional combustion engine and an electric motor powered by a battery pack. They are propelled primarily by energy from the battery, with the combustion engine taking over when the distance travelled exceeds the capacity of the battery.

For shorter distances in and around cities, it is likely that dedicated battery-powered cars may be in demand. Volvo is therefore moving forward in this area too. The Volvo C30 Electric project has attracted immense international attention. Volvo Cars has received visits from many potential overseas customers, but the first confirmed user is Swedish. In June 2010, Volvo Cars and the energy company Göteborg Energi signed a letter of intent regarding cooperation in the area of electrical vehicles and recharge infrastructure. Within the terms of the agreement Volvo provides ten C30 Electric cars with delivery starting during the autumn of 2010.

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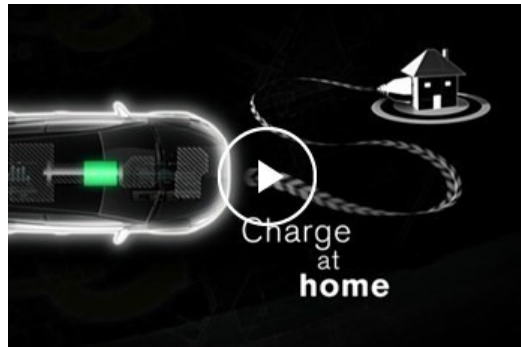
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