



BACKGROUND

A Global Survey of Highly Fuel Efficient, Low Greenhouse Gas Emitting Vehicles

A Pollution Probe Report (November 2007)

What is this report about?

This report was commissioned by Pollution Probe to find out how many top-performing vehicles — in terms of fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions performance — are available to consumers in North America, Europe, Japan and China (i.e., the largest automobile markets in the world)

The report is important because it shows that substantial improvements are possible in new vehicle fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions performance, and it is already happening in other automotive markets around the world — primarily where aggressive vehicle fuel efficiency standards have been established.

Why is it timely?

The Government of Canada is developing fuel consumption standards for new vehicles beginning with the 2011 model year. Pollution Probe has called for these standards to be world-class, benchmarked against leading jurisdictions around the world. Leading automotive jurisdictions around the world have already established standards for new vehicles and some are in the process of increasing the stringency of these standards even further.

Pollution Probe's survey explored:

- What are the most fuel efficient, lowest CO₂-emitting vehicle models available in these jurisdictions?
- What technologies do they use?
- Who builds them?
- Where are they sold?
- How are new technologies being incorporated into automakers' future vehicle plans?
- How do these vehicles compare to those available in Canada and the US?

What did the global survey find?

Pollution Probe found that in markets where stringent standards require higher fuel efficiency and lower GHG emissions levels in new vehicles, consumers enjoy an abundant choice of vehicles engineered to produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions because they burn less fuel per kilometer driven. Most major automakers compete for business in these markets by introducing a wide range of highly fuel efficient models, in a variety of shapes and sizes, and incorporating a range of technologies to improve performance.

Of the 200 vehicle models that comprise the survey, only 15 are available in North America — seven of these run on non-conventional fuels and the other eight are highly efficient models running on gasoline or diesel.

Canadian consumers who want more fuel-saving, low CO₂-emitting vehicles are currently limited in their choice compared to consumers in Europe and Japan.

Why does vehicle fuel efficiency matter?

In Canada, approximately 25 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming come from the transportation sector, half of which are from personal vehicles (e.g., passenger cars, minivans, pickup trucks, SUVs).

Pollution Probe calls for Canada to adopt a world-class vehicle fuel efficiency standard, benchmarked against leading jurisdictions around the world. The survey results reveal that leading automotive jurisdictions around the world have already established standards for new vehicles and some are in the process of increasing the stringency of these standards even further.

Consumers in other nations benefit from stringent government fuel efficiency and emissions standards — Canadians deserve no less.

-30-

For more information:
Bob Oliver, Transportation Program
(416) 926-1907 x237