The Real Green Deal

Dear Reader,

Car manufacturers are no longer on the defensive. They need to take a new approach, because Ursula von der Leyen has tightened up the regulations even further. As part of the Green Deal, the President of the European Commission aims to make faster progress on protecting the climate and has concluded in an impact assessment that the new stricter rules will bring "economic benefits." The plan is for the European Union to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 55 % over 1990 levels by 2030, instead of the previous target of a 40 % reduction. For the first time carmakers and automotive suppliers such as Daimler, Audi and Schaeffler have come up with realistic responses.

At a formal event attended by Andreas Scheuer, Germany's Federal Minister of Transport, Daimler Trucks demonstrated how its GenHW prototype fuel cell truck can cover distances of up to 1000 km. Fuel cells powered by green hydrogen, which is produced using electrolysis with renewable fuels, are considered to be the powertrain solution of the future. As Scheuer explained: "Hydrogen offers huge potential for protecting the environment and strengthening the economy. This is why we have been promoting the use of hydrogen in transport for more than ten years."

Bavarian-based car manufacturer Audi has entered into a partnership with the Zurich environmental start-up Clime-works and has invested in forward-looking CO₂ storage technology. The Swiss company is setting up the world's largest plant for direct air capture and storage in Iceland, which will filter 4000 t of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere every year and subject it to an underground mineralization process. A total of 1000 t of this is being removed on behalf of Audi. The Clime-works technology has two major benefits. According to the life

cycle analysis more than 90 % of the CO₂ filtered out of the air can be stored efficiently and permanently underground. In addition, the system can be scaled up to process megatonnes of the gas per year.

Schaeffler has incorporated the already outdated 40 % rule imposed by Brussels into its mix of vehicles. A split in new registrations in 2030 of 30 % electric, 40 % hybrid and 30 % combustion engine vehicles seems to be a constructive approach because it promotes the rapid development of electric mobility while continuing to exploit the potential of the combustion engine, as Uwe Wagner explains in his guest commentary on page 88.

Electric and hydrogen vehicles will not solve all our problems. Only joint, carefully coordinated measures taken by governments and the industry will enable us to achieve our ambitious Paris targets. But the Green Deal must not place too great a burden on either side. A realistic approach is needed.

Warm fall greetings!

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