



# The Emperor's New Hybrid

Dear Reader,

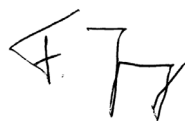
After carrying out careful investigations, German government advisors and ministers repeatedly assured us that the product was of very high quality and that the project was making very good progress. "It's excellent," everyone said. And so the cabinet approved even more funding on a large scale for the promising program. Finally, the electrification concept was presented personally by the head of government to the speechless and astonished people of the country. "But he has nothing on!" a little child cried out at last. In Hans-Christian Andersen's folktale "The Emperor's New Clothes," it is initially just one single voice which highlights the problem that is so obvious to everyone.

How does this bring us to plug-in hybrids? Well, the voices that have been expressing more than just moderate criticism of the ongoing state subsidies for this technology have recently become louder again. A persuasive example is a study that was commissioned by the emperor, sorry the federal government, from the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (ifeu), the Oeko Institute and the NGO Transport & Environment. The results, which were published in mid-January under the title "Too often in combustion engine mode: plug-in hybrids put transport sector's climate targets at risk," show once again that the hoped-for effects of hybridization are likely to be barely noticeable or even completely non-existent.

As the experts explained, one of the reasons for this is that the current boom in electrified cars in Germany involves mainly large plug-in hybrids, more than three quarters of which are registered as company cars. As they primarily use their combustion engines on their daily

journeys, they emit much more CO<sub>2</sub> than the calculations of German greenhouse gas emissions in 2030 were previously based on. The calculations showed that, in the light of market forecasts, an increase of up to 4.3 million t of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be expected in the transport sector from plug-in hybrids in 2030.

Why is the hybrid currently so popular with company car drivers in particular? The answer is breathtakingly simple. In order to boost sales of the wannabe EVs, the tax on hybrids in private use is only half the amount of the tax on cars with diesel and gasoline engines. As the fuel costs are almost always paid in full by employers in Germany, it makes absolutely no difference to the employees whether or not their cars are running in electric mode. The stories of hybrid cars being handed back at the end of their lease with the charging cable still in its packaging will therefore come as no surprise.



Frank Jung  
Editor



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