

International Motor Symposium

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Climate neutrality for cars needs a holistic approach

Vienna (ots) -

The near 1.5 billion liters of fossil fuels used daily worldwide must be replaced by carbon-neutral fuels by 2050 if we are to achieve the climate goals. More than 1,000 experts at the 44th International Motor Symposium in Vienna discussed the global strategies required to achieve these targets.

The potential for producing renewable energy is particularly great in regions such as North Africa, the Middle East, Chile, or Australia. An attractive option for the long-distance transportation of eco-electricity are so-called e-fuels also known as synthetic fuels. Once transported, these can be turned back into electricity for use in car batteries.

As Bernhard Geringer, Head of the Institute of Powertrains and Automotive Technology at the Vienna University of Technology summarized: "To reach true climate neutrality, one must look at the entire system, from sustainable energy generation to the vehicle's wheel. Focusing only on electricity or even supposedly inefficient e-fuels is not enough." Fuel studies presented at the symposium by Ulrich Kramer, technology expert for renewable fuels at Ford, also demonstrated that the current strategy is unlikely to achieve global climate targets. Overall, from the production of the required energy through to the manufacturing and recycling of a vehicle "electric only" vehicles would produce 39 percent more greenhouse gases by 2050 than a mix of various climate-neutral technologies, which also have the advantage of being considerably cheaper.

Kramer believed that the decisive factor in achieving the climate targets by 2050 was the speed of conversion to climate-neutral vehicles: "The battery-electric approach is not fast enough, if only because of various technical bottlenecks such as the slow expansion of the energy grid, or insufficient supply of cobalt for battery production."

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