

Lithium-ion batteries togo

"Firstly, the electric motorcycle is half the price to run. Secondly, it doesn't explode in the event of an accident. Thirdly, it reduces noise and air pollution. And fourthly, it is healthy to ride."

There are an estimated 27 million two- and three-wheelers on the road in Africa, corresponding to an estimated annual market value of US\$4.8 billion. Less than 1 per cent of these vehicles are electric.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) are assisting governments from 41 countries to accelerate the uptake of e-mobility as part of the Global E-mobility Programme.

The programme has been helping Togo move towards its Paris Agreement goals by supporting the development of a national e-mobility policy. The policy aims to put in place regulatory and fiscal mechanisms to make electric vehicles mainstream.

The world must cut greenhouse gas emissions by more than 40 per cent by 2030 to keep warming below 1.5°C and avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Fossil fuels, including oil, coal and gas, are responsible for nearly 90 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions. Experts say there is a pressing need for a shift to alternative energy sources.

UNEP Director of the Industry and Economy Division Sheila Aggarwal-Khan says it is essential that low- and middle-income countries are part of a global shift to zero-emissions electric mobility - to meet the targets of the Paris Climate Agreement and to reduce air pollution.

"With two and three-wheelers playing an important role in local economies, Africa has the potential to leapfrog the conventional mobility pathway by moving directly to electric vehicles," Aggarwal-Khan says. "Togo is showing how a combination of private sector initiative and government support can accelerate the introduction of e-mobility that meets local market needs, from the bottom up."

Battery-powered transportation is cleaner than fossil-fuel-based transit, but it comes with its own costs. Lithium-ion batteries rely on the extraction of minerals--especially lithium and cobalt--while improper battery disposal can harm the environment.

Alongside work to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles in Togo and around the world, UNEP is ramping up efforts to develop a circular economy for electric vehicle batteries. By promoting innovative battery design and increasing recycling in the battery industry, countries can reduce the need for virgin raw materials.

"Do your utmost to change your combustion motorcycle for an electric one," electric motorbike driver Amegan Kpe Yao says. "Given that the environment is everything, we must not contribute to its degradation."

The first International Day of Clean Energy will be held on 26 January to raise awareness and mobilize action for a just and inclusive transition to clean energy for the benefit of people and the planet. If the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals are to be met, the annual energy efficiency rate must be doubled by 2030. UNEP works with partners to improve energy efficiency and strengthen the business case for energy efficiency, including at the city level.

UNEP's Global Electric Mobility Programme is currently working with the support of the Global Environment Facility, the European Union, the German Climate Initiative, the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, the FIA Foundation and other donors to support more than 60 low- and middle-income countries with the shift from fossil fuel to electric vehicles.

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Web: <https://www.sumthingtasty.co.za/contact-us/>

Email: energystorage2000@gmail.com

WhatsApp: 8613816583346

