

# NEW ENERGY WORLD

ISSN 2753-7757 (Online)

## How to deliver a decarbonised transport network

20/11/2024

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Photo: C Haigh

▲ Claire Haigh, Managing Director, Zemo Partnership

Photo: C Haigh

Transport has represented one of the most intractable challenges as we try to piece together the decarbonisation jigsaw. Responsible for around a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions, 95% of the world's transport energy still comes from fossil fuels. Now, we're at a critical juncture, as many of the developed western economies, including the UK, have set (some legally enforceable) targets for the end of sale of road vehicles powered by fossil fuels. The targets are linked to the ultimate goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050 which means end-of-sale dates for most categories of road vehicles by 2040, or earlier, writes Claire Haigh, Managing Director of Zemo Partnership, the membership organisation for road decarbonisation.

The technologies that will end fossil fuels' hegemony in transport are now largely known, with electrification the dominant solution at least for lighter vehicles (and many heavier vehicles, albeit those with shorter range requirements).

There are signs of real progress; electric cars have comprised nearly 15% of all car sales in Europe this year, while the UK has achieved 20% in recent

months. Norway is showing the rest of the world the way, with electric cars now totally dominant (90% plus) in the new car market and more electric than petrol cars now drive on Norway's roads.

Other sectors of road transport are behind the progress of cars, but there are encouraging signs. Zero emission vehicles accounted for 4.1% of all heavy-duty vehicle sales in the EU-27 in the second quarter of this year. The electrification of vans (which is easier than in trucks) has been gathering momentum for a while. The UK, in particular, has made strong progress in the bus sector.

The new UK government has confirmed that the target for the phase-out of sales of cars with conventional internal combustion engines will be brought forward to 2030, reversing the previous government's decision to delay the deadline until 2035.

### **Delivery infrastructure**

So, we're making clear progress in decarbonising transport, but there are still many major challenges, particularly around the provision of a capable national delivery infrastructure and enabling access to affordable charge points to all who need them at the local level.

As an expert convenor with a mission to accelerate transport decarbonisation in the UK, Zemo Partnership is working to bring together the widest range of stakeholders with roles to play in the transition. The Partnership's recent 'summit' held in Westminster brought together an unparalleled gathering of the most senior policymakers from national, devolved and local government, with leaders of key public sector organisations and businesses, to help inform the UK's delivery roadmap for net zero transport.

The next phase of the transport transition is multi-faceted and presents complex challenges, requiring collaboration across sectors and between

industries that have hitherto not necessarily been accustomed to working closely together.

***‘We’re making clear progress in decarbonising transport, but there are still many major challenges, particularly around the provision of a capable national delivery infrastructure and enabling access to affordable charge points to all who need them at the local level.’***

To help address the complexity and multiple challenges, Zemo has convened a new Council for Net Zero Transport, chaired by Lord Deben – former UK Environment Minister and Chair of the UK’s Climate Change Committee, the official body charged with monitoring the UK’s overall progress towards legal net zero targets. The Council comprises leading representatives of key organisations with a responsibility to deliver elements of the transition. It is also advised by a Strategic Advisory Group made up of leaders of trade organisations with a role in delivering net zero transport.

The Council will provide independent, high-level strategic guidance to help steer and identify key areas of challenge requiring more detailed policy prescriptions to be prepared by Zemo and its members.

For the last 18 months or more, Zemo has been working on the development of a Delivery Roadmap for Net Zero Transport. In September we published a [report](#) stating high-level principles that will frame the further development of the roadmap.

As we move rapidly into the delivery phase of the transport transition, and with a new government now establishing its policy programme in the UK, this feels like a key moment.

The UK is among the worldwide leaders in terms of transport decarbonisation and it's vital to get things right, both for the benefit of 'UK Plc' and in terms of the country's role as an exemplar of what could and should be done elsewhere to ensure a successful transition.

Zemo plans to publish the next stage of the Delivery Roadmap for Net Zero Transport in early December, developing the principles outlined in the earlier report and highlighting areas where policies are missing, urgently required or in need of development.

We've created the basis for road transport decarbonisation; now it's time to focus all our efforts on making sure the delivery phase is both an economic and environmental success.

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are strictly those of the author only and are not necessarily given or endorsed by or on behalf of the Energy Institute.*

- *Further reading: **'Challenges and opportunities on Canada's path to net zero transportation'**. Canada's road transport accounted for 21% of the country's total greenhouse gas emissions in 2018, according to its government. Advanced biofuels, low-carbon substitutes for petroleum, are becoming an increasingly popular way to reduce emissions.*
- *India's commitment to slashing carbon emissions, shifting behaviours caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and an annual crude oil import bill of over \$100bn, are all **motivating the development of a clean transportation programme**.*

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