

Electric Vehicles and the Irreversible Impact on Biodiversity

In Britain there has been a massive push by the government and the vehicle manufacturers to get people into electric cars, vans and lorries. The driving force, if you will excuse the pun, has been climate change and the need for Britain to cut down on carbon emissions. Of course, the real agenda is consumerism – the requirement for the populace to spend money on electric vehicles. Today, stand in a petrol station and count the number of petrol and diesel vehicles that arrive for fuel and then imagine the massive number of electric charging points that will be required to support electric vehicles in the future. If it takes a certain amount of time to charge an electric vehicle, it is inevitable that motorway garages with electric charging stations will endure long queues. For sure, many people will charge their vehicle at home and overnight for internal city journeys but due to restrictive mileage during motorway extended travel, these vehicles will require to be re-charged at garages with electric charging points.

Perhaps the greatest obstacles to home charging points are relative to people who reside in tenements and high-rise flats and who park their vehicles in the street. However, there is a hidden obstacle and that is the cold. In countries with harsh winters and long-term minus temperatures, the range of the vehicle's battery is severely curtailed and, in many cases, by two thirds. A fully charged electric vehicle which has a range of 300 miles and which is left in a car park for a few hours without re-charging, and endures minus temperatures, will only have a range of around 100 miles, due to the impact of the freezing cold on the battery.

It seems that the politicians have chosen to forget just how much electricity will be required to charge millions of electric vehicles in the years ahead. It can only lead to a rise in nuclear power stations with all their toxic nuclear waste. The massive carbon footprint in the mining for lithium ore (for the electric batteries) is also conveniently forgotten about, and also that lithium will become a rare commodity and therefore more expensive in the long run. Nobody seems to consider that lithium has a reputation for degradation and an electric battery in a new electric car that can travel 120 miles between charges, could in 5 years' time, only achieve 80 miles – what then the cost of battery replacement? A Finnish man who purchased a Tesla S in 2013 discovered in December 2021, that a new battery replacement would cost him \$22.5K, more than the value of the car, so he blew the car up using dynamite with a dummy of Elon Musk inside it.

The recent 2019 coup d'état in Bolivia which was orchestrated by the U.S. ensured that the American corporations expected to gain direct access to the world's richest supply of lithium ore. Fortunately, this will be reversed, thanks to the recent 2020 election in Bolivia where the socialist party regained power. Amnesty international challenged industry leaders to clean up their battery supply chains. Lithium is mined mostly in Bolivia, China, South Korea, Japan and its carbon footprint continues to grow as deposits diminish and demand increases. Amnesty also warned about the deep-sea mining taking place to farm lithium, which studies have predicted will have an irreversible impact on biodiversity. Prolonged exposure to lithium can cause fluid to build-up in the lungs, leading to pulmonary edema. The metal itself is a handling hazard because of the caustic hydroxide produced when it is in contact with water causing an explosion. Lithium mining carries high environmental costs but the British government refuses to face facts and carries on regardless.

There is absolutely no doubt that the battery cells within electric vehicles can short, either during a trip or while on charge at a charging station. The fire cannot be extinguished by hose and water. No fire department will approach a burning battery-powered car because of the toxic gasses produced during the fire. No recycling place will take the car's remains because of the toxic chemicals the batteries contain. Imagine leaving your dog in an electric vehicle, even for a short-time; no responsible owner will ever feel 100% that the vehicle is safe from self-imploding.

The corporate car manufacturers are pushing ahead with electric vehicles and robots. They see huge financial rewards and the British government politicians are wholly behind the agenda. I guess it will make the taxman happy if all the petrol and diesel vehicles in Britain are replaced. Huge ongoing financial return is the preferred option and the elite, not for one minute, consider the huge rate of unemployment this will generate by the advance in artificial intelligence. Robots require rare metals, including lithium in their manufacture and this will create a massive impact on the environment. Of course, it is not going to happen all at once, the technology will probably take another 10 years to fully develop. What then, massive unemployment? There has to be a balance between the advance of digital technology, the environmental and social impact, and consideration given to the jobs it will destroy.

Future generations cannot ALL be employed to work behind computer desks, monitoring and re-programming firmware and software to maintain a digital age but then the CEOs and their shareholders in those massive corporations do not care – as long as they are raking in the profits. Also, it is a win for the banks and financial institutions who receive printed money at almost zero interest from the government and distribute it through leases or as loans to the public to allow them to lease or purchase the electric vehicles, the latest smartphones and digital gadgets. Today, the vast majority of the public lease their vehicle rather than purchase it outright or through hire purchase. In the future, people will only be able to lease robots because I doubt very much that those corporations who manufacture them, will allow them to be purchased – leasing brings in a greater financial return.

The greatest threat to man's survival is his inability to stop multiplying. The world's population levels are now rising at an alarming rate and man's aspirations to own digital technology, to feed himself and his family, to own property and drive around in an electric car will further impact on the world's resources. If he does not address his unchecked breeding then man is likely to face the wrath of nature which usually addresses such problems. Perhaps man's greatest weakness is his hubris in thinking that he is exceptional. The Covid-19 virus in 2020, brought man down to earth with a thump as his numbers were reduced. It is not over and I am sure that nature is not finished in addressing man's overpopulation of the world and the impact he has on the environment. Some people claim Covid-19 is the wrath of God, perhaps they are right, but I think that nature is creating a reset.

The population of the world in 1900 was 1.6 billion and in 2000 it was 6.1 billion. Today the world's population is 7.7 billion, a growth of 1.6 billion in 20 years. The maths are fairly straightforward, the world population in the next 80 years (2100) will grow by an additional 6.4 billion and take the total world population to around 14 billion plus. By the year 3000, the population of the world will have risen to a very conservative figure of around 80 billion people. This massive convergence of the human race will create a demand for more and more living space and a massive demand for food to sustain everyone. The waste product alone will prove to be unsustainable and the impact on the wildlife of the planet and the environment will prove catastrophic. In Britain the population in the 1700s was around 11 million, by 1900 it was around 40 million and today, 120 years later, it is around 68 million. If it continues on that trajectory the population of Britain in the year 2100 will be around 86 million and in the year 3000 it will be a very conservative figure of around 296 million.

The Case for Fusion or a Hydrogen Power Plant - Of course, fusion may be the answer to produce electricity, a much safer solution than nuclear fission. However, in 2040, don't expect to install a small fusion reactor unit behind your house to produce almost free electricity, that will never happen; a corporation will probably continue to distribute the electricity from its fusion power station and charge you an absorbent amount of money per month for your power. Perhaps the ultimate power station is one that produces almost free electricity, one that uses hydrogen gas to heat water to power steam turbines to turn generators to produce electricity and in turn some of that electricity is used to produce hydrogen gas via electrolysis to power the power plant and for vehicles – perpetual energy?

The Case for a Hydrogen Engine Rather than a Hydrogen Electric Fuel Cell - A hydrogen gas powered combustion engine, rather than a hydrogen powered electric fuel cell, is the answer for the future of travel. Materials, such as Lanthanum strontium manganite (LSM or LSMO) and Yttria-stabilized zirconia (YSZ) are used in the manufacture of a hydrogen fuel cell which delivers a detrimental impact on the environment and the wildlife. LSM nanoparticles are spherical high surface metal particles that appear as a brown or black crystalline powder. Numerous studies on LSM's mechanical and electrical properties have been conducted, but very little research has concentrated on its biological effects. Nanoparticles have illustrated tendencies to promote mucus secretion and accumulation, and are linked to respiratory illnesses and mitochondrial disease - poor cell growth, muscle weakness, neurological problems, autism and hearing problems.

A hydrogen gas powered combustion engine produces no emissions other than water. However, hydrogen gas is difficult to liquify, due to the minus zero freezing (33 Kelvins: - 8,980.95 degrees centigrade) required to convert it into liquid form and maintain it as a liquid. In gas form it is highly explosive but consider this - to drive a hydrogen fuel cell in a vehicle it would be stored in gas form in hydrogen gas stations and pumped into the hydrogen gas tanks of vehicles which is the same method used to drive a hydrogen combustion engine. The downside, none of this will prevent global warming and eventually, a new cold glacial period with millions relocating from the northern hemisphere in a mass migration.

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