



Green Mobility in the GCC: Challenges and Opportunities 28

January 12, 2022

Webinar Summary

On January 12, 2022, the Gulf Research Center held a webinar discussion on the topic of “Green Mobility in the GCC: Opportunities and Challenges.” The objectives of the event was to examine the status of green mobility in the GCC countries, look into recent innovations and business development activities for electromobility solutions in transport and automotive industries across the GCC countries, evaluate the pros and cons of different green mobility solutions and what is best for the region, highlight the obstacles facing green mobility in the GCC region, and better understand the role of green mobility to help achieve carbon neutrality in the GCC.

Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research at the Gulf Research Center welcomed the participants while Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Manager at the Gulf Research Center moderate the discussion.

Urška Skrt, Mobility Manager at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, started by highlighting a number of key transitions in the transportation and mobility sector such as advances in battery technology, the introduction of low carbon fuel and efficiency innovation to decarbonize transportation. She then presented several action areas for businesses in transportation and mobility and presented a transport decarbonization roadmap in line with the IEA’s net zero plan. She further outlined the different challenges facing this plan including the speed of deployment and grid integration. At the end of her talk, she presented a number of recommendations for faster technology deployment of green mobility technologies.

Dr. Rubal Dua, Research Fellow at the King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, highlighted that Saudi Arabia, led by the Saudi Energy Efficiency Center, was among the first GCC countries to adopt fuel economy standards. He stressed that the demand-side policies are costly and difficult to justify in countries without a local EV manufacturing industry, as is currently the case with the GCC countries. Market barriers to EVs in the GCC region are exacerbated by policies that tend to favor hydrocarbon fuel use. An alternative approach for the GCC region is to emphasize technology-neutral supply-side policies, such as fuel economy standards. Such policies are based on a combination of more stringent technology-neutral performance standards and credit-based mechanisms to incentivize the uptake of lower emission vehicles.

Balqees Al-Daghar, E-Mobility Solutions Manager at ABB in the UAE, gave a presentation of the status of current green mobility in GCC countries. She started by explaining the difference between AC and DC charging options and the benefit of DC charging that can compete with traditional fuel stations and presenting different car models. She then discussed the potential impacts on power systems and the evolution of the grid reaching to Virtual Power plants.



Several questions raised around the negative impacts related to the spread of electric cars such as natural resources usage and batteries disposal dominated the subsequent discussion. The role of subsidies in GCC countries and how it can hinder or encourage promoting of green transportation was also mentioned. In general, it was noted that one of the challenges is the usage of resources. Here, technology is developing very fast and the recycling of materials is one solution to maximize the usage of available resources. Meanwhile, the role of subsidies in the GCC countries and their lifting is seen as having a minimum impacts of private cars usage.

Recording of webinar can be found [here](#)