

Regional cooperation

Harmonization of fuel requirements can potentially lower the overall costs of pollution controls by introducing economies of scale in the manufacture and distribution of fuels. Further, to the extent that fuels specifications are identical throughout the region, there would be less risk of contamination (e.g. high-sulfur fuel being mixed in with low-sulfur fuel).

- Policymakers should more aggressively encourage harmonization throughout the Asian region. Since most countries are striving to phase in Euro 4 vehicle standards by 2010, they should also aim for Euro 4 fuels with a maximum of 50-ppm sulfur by that time.
- Similarly, several countries in the region are switching certain vehicle categories to CNG or LPG but there is limited capacity for certification of CNG or LPG kits. Cooperative efforts in this area and on other alternative fuels issues (e.g., fuel specifications) would benefit all countries in the region.

Conclusions

It is now well established that cleaner fuels must be an integral part of a comprehensive and effective motor vehicle pollution control effort. The elimination of lead in gasoline as well as the dramatic reduction (if not virtual elimination) of sulfur from both gasoline and diesel are now well established elements of clean fuels programs. The major lesson of the past twenty-five years with regard to these components is to move quickly.

It is also widely accepted that certain additives can be beneficial in reducing the emissions of certain pollutants from vehicles. However, the MTBE experience in the United States indicates that great care is needed to assure that the use of such additive does not produce unintended consequences, which can be more harmful than the benefits achieved.