

Regional cooperation

Harmonization of new vehicle standards can potentially lower the overall costs of pollution controls by introducing economies of scale in vehicle manufacturing and reduced testing costs. The United Nation's Economic Commission for Europe Working Party 29 (WP29) is serving as a world forum for the harmonization of vehicle regulations. Under its auspices, there has been a Global Agreement to work toward further harmonization. In addition to the US, the European Union and Japan, several other Asian countries are parties to the agreement.

- Policymakers should aggressively encourage harmonization throughout the region and consider more active participation in WP29. As many countries in the region move toward Euro 4 or Euro 5 standards for vehicles and fuels, they should closely coordinate.
- Most countries in the region have adopted emissions standards for new vehicles, but there is still limited capacity for testing and verifying compliance with the requirements. Many countries, therefore, rely on type approvals carried out in other countries. A possibility suggested during the workshop was the establishment of an independent regional facility for Type Approval or Certification. Policymakers in countries that lack their own emissions test facilities should consult with their neighbours who face similar difficulties and explore the feasibility of collectively commissioning such a laboratory.

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- Inspection procedures often lack a scientific basis. For example, several workshop presenters noted that more research should be devoted to identifying a good test procedure for motorcycles. Policymakers must encourage and fund research efforts that can develop good test procedures for all vehicle categories. By working together, countries can assure that redundant research is not carried out. By closely coordinating research efforts and sharing results, reduced expenditures can bring maximum benefits.