



Global EV Goals Need Ambitious Public Policies

By John Bozzella

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Leaders from around the world are in Dubai for the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference – also known as COP28.

With decarbonization at the top of the global climate agenda, now is a good time for a progress report on zero carbon personal mobility.

The International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA) gathered recently in São Paulo, Brazil to assess the state of automotive decarbonization.

OICA represents 36 automotive trade associations – including major auto manufacturing countries in Europe, the Americas and Asia.

Every representative at our general assembly meeting – no matter the country, region, geography or economic circumstances – is committed to [decarbonizing road transport](#).

But... every representative in Brazil also expressed concern about a growing gap between government regulation and the reality of decarbonization and automotive electrification. In other words, it's a recurring theme and on the minds of automakers all over the world.

So where are we?

On the good news front: there are now [26 million electric vehicles](#) on the world's roads – a five-fold increase since 2018.

And the global auto industry has made a [\\$1 trillion commitment](#) toward carbon neutrality.

That's positive.

At the same time, countries around the world have established ambitious electrification regimes to achieve zero carbon personal mobility.

That's where we all get concerned.

The shift to electric vehicles requires nothing short of a complete transformation of the global automotive industrial base and a reimagining of auto markets around the world.

And that's going to take some time.

EVs represent just a fraction of the more than [1.4 billion vehicles](#) on the world's roads. And it varies (substantially) in every country.

I'm confident automakers can produce cutting edge zero emission vehicles. We already are. Take a look at some of the electric models for sale today. You won't be disappointed.

But the big challenges we face as automakers are *outside* the control of the industry.

Like what?

Public charging infrastructure

It's estimated that a [\\$300 billion infrastructure investment](#) would be required by 2030 to support projected growth in the world's EV fleet.

Electric recharging infrastructure along public roads today is insufficient. In fact, the gap between the number of EVs on the world's roads and the number of needed recharging stations is increasing in most markets.

Electric power generation

There must be enough electric power generation to [accommodate](#) millions of additional EVs. New sources of power generation are needed, and policymakers need to urgently upgrade electric grid infrastructure while transitioning to clean and renewable sources of energy.

Critical mineral supply chains

[Wider adoption](#) of EVs around the world requires a massive increase in the identification and responsible extraction of resources critical to the battery supply chain, as well as battery end-of-life policies that minimize environmental harm.

So what's the solution?

Public policy must be part of the conversation at COP28 and in every country committed to electrification.

We need an active partnership with government policymakers to bring down the barriers preventing EV adoption.

There will be different solutions and different paths in different markets, but my message to policymakers at COP28 and around the world:

When you set these ambitious electrification goals, you must make a real (and honest) appraisal of the EV market and external conditions in your own country.

Ask yourself: is there enough public charging infrastructure?

Sufficient electric grid and power capacity?

Are there reliable global supply chains for critical minerals and raw materials for EV batteries?

Are you addressing affordability?

Those challenges (again, automakers can make these vehicles) are more evident than even last year. The factors outside the vehicle are getting worse – not better.

Finally, there's no "one size fits all" approach to this unprecedented shift. Each market faces different challenges and policymakers should aim for solutions that account for the economic, geographic and cultural realities in their own country.

Policymakers can't assume everything will go 'perfectly' in the EV transformation between now and the end of the decade. It will be bumpy.

But the future is electric. This will happen.

The auto industry and policymakers – together – need to have a shared – and realistic – vision of success when it comes to automotive electrification.

An approach that balances carbon reduction and protects the global industrial base that supports economies and social mobility around the world.

There is too much at stake to set the course on hope.

John Bozzella is the president of Paris-based OICA and the president and CEO of Washington, DC-based [Alliance for Automotive Innovation](#).

OICA's global decarbonization framework is available [HERE](#).

About OICA

The world association OICA was founded in 1919 and currently gathers 36 trade associations around the world, including all major automobile manufacturing countries in Europe, America, and Asia. OICA is the only non-governmental car and truck manufacturers' organization accredited to the United Nations and represents the technical interests of the global auto industry in international institutions and organizations.