

The hybrid cars



of the of the Concerned 22 February The Future is Hybrid! The earth is getting warmer. The glaciers are melting. There are bush fires raging in Australia. The Sub-Saharan Africa is facing drought like conditions since the past couple of decades. The winters are getting shorter. The summers are getting hotter. The polar bears are making regular forays into human settlements in North America. And yes, the consumption of fossil fuels over the last 50 years has continuously increased. A major portion of the gasoline around the world is burned by automobiles. The automobile emissions are one primary source of green house gases. The crux of all these facts consolidates around the words ‘ cars’ and ‘ pollution’. Just changing the type of cars we drive can make a significant contribution towards assuring a greener and healthier environment (Anderson & Anderson 14). The future is hybrid! Hybrid cars are the vehicles that rely on two or more disparate sources of energy to run (Mitchell, Borroni-Bird & Burns 22). Mostly the term hybrid cars are also considered synonymous with the Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs). A Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV) contains both an internal combustion engine that is run by gasoline as well as an alternate source of energy that is an electric battery. As per one’s requirements and traffic conditions, the driver can chose as to run a hybrid car on gasoline or on electricity. In addition, the dual mode cars that run on a mixture of fuels like gasoline and ethanol are also considered hybrid. Hybrid cars bring in an element of choice into the overall driving experience. They allow a driver to opt for cleaner and greener modes of driving. Low fuel consumption and reduced emissions are the factors that set hybrid cars apart from other vehicles (Westbrook 17). It is no wonder that the emission levels of the latest hybrid cars are even lower than the criteria set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

(Westbrook 37). As per some conservative estimates, hybrid cars can cut carbon dioxide emissions by half. As compared to the regular cars, hybrid cars consume much less gasoline. The vested interests backed by the powerful and well connected automobile lobby do come out with excuses that question the green credentials of hybrid cars. One of them is that the batteries used in the hybrid cars are almost as polluting as gasoline (Maier 25). Yet, the innovative minds have managed to move around this fact by replacing the polluting lead batteries with greener lithium ion or nickel metal hydride batteries (Maier 25). High cost is oft sighted as other lacuna. Yet, once people start opting for hybrid cars, mass production will eventually give way to economies of scale, bringing the prices low. Going for hybrid cars is conclusively a more responsible and well informed approach towards travelling. Though, the adoption rate for hybrid cars is currently negligible, the circumstances portend to be propitious in the times to come. By all measures of logic and rationality, sooner or later, people will eventually vote in the favor of a greener future and hence a hybrid future. Works Cited Anderson, Curtis D, and Judy Anderson. Electric and Hybrid Cars. New York: McFarland and Company, 2004. Maier, Timothy W. “ Hybrid Cars Roll to Green Future”. Insight on the News 11 June 2001: 24-28. Mitchell, William J, Christopher E Borroni-Bird, and Lawrence D. Burns. Reinventing the Automobile. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2010. Westbrook, Michael H. The Electric Car. Toronto: The Institution of Engineering and Technology, 2001.