

Are Electric Motorbikes the Future of UAE Transport?

The twin issues of air pollution and global warming are two of the biggest challenges facing the human race today. As such, controlling our carbon footprint is a major objective for governments all over the globe and road transport is a major contributor of emissions. Electric vehicles (EVs) in general and electric motorbikes in particular are emerging as one solution to this difficult problem.

Not only do these ingenious innovations reduce emissions and fight climate change, but they also alleviate congestion and improve the quality of life for those using them. Now, thanks to Dubai-based start-up Terra Tech, an electric motorbike that has been specifically designed to cope with the UAE's harsh environment is finally arriving on Emirati shores.

A huge problem

Despite its reputation as a luxury travel destination, the UAE remains plagued by lengthy traffic jams, especially in its two major hubs of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. In the latter city, there are some 540 vehicles for every 1,000 residents, leading to mass congestion on its streets. This not only delays journeys and impacts negatively upon commute times, but also releases significant amounts of harmful emissions into the atmosphere.

Indeed, road traffic is believed to be responsible for up to 20% of particulate matter 2.5 (PM2.5) emissions, a harmful contaminant that can cause irreparable damage to human health over an extended period of time. Meanwhile, it's also a chief contributor to other pollution, such as nitrogen oxides (NOx) and carbon monoxide (CO). It's responsible for a whopping 78% of the latter contaminant's presence in our environment.

The advantages of electric motorbikes

Cognisant of the dangers posed by this status quo, the Emirati authorities have been investigating several avenues of tackling the issue. Electric motorbikes are one attractive option, given that they produce no emissions at the point of use and are generally easier to drive and cheaper to maintain than vehicles with a fuel combustion engine.

As well as drastically reducing the carbon emissions contributed by the transportation sector, electric motorbikes are also quieter and create less noise pollution. What's more, with their ability to weave in and out of traffic and their space-efficiency on the road itself, they are expected to slash congestion rates – which are as high as 19% in some parts of the country.

Coming soon to an Emirati dealership near you

Until now, electric motorbikes have enjoyed huge success in other parts of the globe, especially in Africa, but have suffered from limited availability in the Middle East. However, EV company Terra Tech have announced that a fleet of electronic motorbikes which are capable of withstand the desert landscapes and climates of the region will be hitting the market in the imminent future.

First launched in 2021, Terra Tech offer Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) and Battery-as-a-Service (BaaS) subscription packages, allowing people to partake of their services on a rolling basis. They have also developed swappable batteries, meaning there's no need to spend hours charging the battery when undertaking longer journeys. Corporate entities with commercial fleets are said to be extremely interested in the project, while individual consumers will also be able to take advantage of the electronic motorbike very soon.