

Green Activists Get Tough On 4x4 Users

German activists operating under the banner of the green lobby have taken to slashing tyres on high performance vehicles in Berlin in order to 'educate' the drivers of such vehicles. Each owner of the 80-plus vehicles that were subject to an attack in the last week of July found a hand-written note under the windscreen wiper detailing the dangers of carbon emissions, in particular from their type of preferred vehicle.

Police investigating the incidents believe that they are the work of organised groups allied to international activists in France and Belgium who prefer to smear the vehicles with manure, rather than slash the tyres. In what effectively amounts to war being declared on sports and utility vehicle drivers by self-styled environmentalists, the 4 x 4 wheel vandalism highlights the frustration felt by the activists in the difference in the speed of progress on green issues between the majority of German society and the German motor industry. While the population has readily adopted renewable policies, the car industry appears to be dragging its heels. Porsche recently came under attack from Greenpeace, being labelled a "climate pig" by the environmentalists for concentrating on power and performance over green issues in its product range.

However, despite recently introducing a hybrid engine which promises to cut carbon emissions by 20%, the German auto giant's own research shows that demand for the green cars will be limited. Their V6 sports utility vehicle is highly sought after by consumers, who obviously still remain to be convinced of the benefits of buying a green hybrid car. So, despite targeting the manufacturer, it looks like they are not to blame as they are only responding to consumer demand, and the market in Germany is currently demanding high performance, high carbon emitting vehicles.

And it's not only Porsche who are the targets of the car terrorists; Daimler and BMW are also accused of putting performance ahead of green issues. The fact that a lobby of all three German manufacturers have been successful in getting the EU to change their minds on carbon emission targets for vehicles doesn't help their cause in the eyes of the green lobby. In a co-ordinated drive, the trio have managed to effect a change in the EU draft legislation resulting in carbon emissions being categorised by vehicle size as opposed to the original absolute target for all vehicles. This means that the future for high performance vehicles in Germany and the rest of the EU looks bright, despite the best efforts of the green lobby to effect change.

However, whether wholesale slashing of [4x4 tyres](#) will really persuade car-loving Germans to abandon their prized performance assets, or make them even more determined to not be brow-beaten by a minority of vandals remains to be seen.

About the Author

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