

Business Times

Need to define 'green technology' clearly

08/10/2011, Saturday



THE newly announced duty exemption for franchise holders of electric vehicles and hybrid cars is a good initiative. However, such vehicles have a limited impact on cutting down carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission.

Electric vehicles reduce exhaust pollution but do not help much to cut overall carbon emission. This is due to our high carbon emission in electricity generation and supply.

In Malaysia, electricity production efficiency is about 35 per cent. Each kiloWattour releases 0.69 kg of CO₂.

This electricity is converted to charge the battery of an electric car. If the efficiency of that electricity converter is only 60 per cent, the electric car's battery will be only 21 per cent efficient in the total use of electricity.

So, it wastes energy resources and emits more CO₂ than direct combustion of fuel in an engine.

In many developed nations, energy efficiency is developed first and renewable energy (RE) is introduced after that.

Malaysia set up the Sustainable Energy Development Authority recently to govern small scale RE development. However, large-scale RE projects and research and development of RE are not governed by this agency. And there is a serious lack in energy efficiency.

There should be a clear definition, identification, standard, labelling and certification of what is green and otherwise. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) is a good tool to ensure this.

However, its adoption in Malaysia has been very slow due to lack of funding and database development. LCA will play a vital role in building Malaysia as a green technology hub.

* The writer is the president of Association of Water and Energy Research Malaysia (AWER)

Source: http://www.btimes.com.my/Current_News/BTIMES/articles/hippie/Article/