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## **Minister condemns 'irresponsible' 4x4 drivers**

With road transport accounting for around a fifth of Britain's carbon emissions, energy minister Malcolm Wicks said that targeting vehicles such as 4X4s in cities would be crucial to meeting the government climate change targets.

He told the Times newspaper the trend for 4x4s was "irresponsible".

"There is crass irresponsibility in some of the larger monstrosities people drive around suburbia and in London," he said. "We have to move against this kind of thing."

Ministers have pledged to cut CO2 emissions by 60 per cent by 2050 and sees vehicle emissions as central to meeting the goal.

As head of the government's energy review, Wicks said fuel would form a central part of it. He revealed that he drives a hybrid Toyota Prius, the only 'green' model currently on the market, but said he would have preferred not to have to buy a Japanese car. "I'm disappointed how slow some motor manufacturers have been to follow the lead of the Japanese," he said.

"Why do I use a Toyota Prius hybrid? Other things being equal, I would like to have bought a car from a British or European manufacturer."

However he hinted that policy would have to move beyond providing incentives, such as the £1,000 subsidy available for buying a Prius, towards barring the sale of polluting models. "Given the very demanding CO2 cuts we must make, we are going to need more than just a series of marginal changes," he said.

"We are going to need a step change. We will have to ask 'is it environmentally responsible to be producing cars which are a serious part of the problem?' There will come a time when it will be irresponsible for those to be on sale."

Transport minister Stephen Ladyman added that fuel taxes would have to be made more effective.

"Somewhere down the supply chain, it will have to be more expensive to supply fuels which are high in CO2," he argued. "The thrust of any policy post-2010 has to be to make people make greener choices."

But he said that he had only considered buying a Prius "for about a millisecond" before opting for an Alfa Romeo GT diesel.