

## OEMs and The Environment – A New Beginning?

The relationship between OEMs and the environment has hardly been a cordial one over the years.

I was chatting with my brother last night. He's the brainy one and he runs a sustainability practice called Two Tomorrows ([www.twotomorrow.com](http://www.twotomorrow.com)). His business is global and they have a client list that makes you drool! He told me about work they are doing with GM in the US on which the press embargo has just been lifted.

Basically Chevrolet is going to prominently environmentally label all future products providing factual environmental information broken down:-

- Pre on the road
- On the road
- Post on the road

The inputs are being independently verified (this is where Two Tomorrows comes in)

My initial reaction is one of 'hallelujah' if it's as transparent as the press releases claim.

I guess there are two camps regarding the environment and the car. There is the Clarksnesque camp (albeit I think actually Jezza plays a clever counterpoint role), and then there is the 'activist' camp. These two gangs have fired brickbats at each other for a number of years, one side barricaded behind a petrol V8 Range Rover and the other behind an oak tree!

Interesting as this battle has been, I don't think it helps me, the reasonably bright man (or woman) in the middle who needs their car, but wants to do the right thing environmentally.

The polarized view has allowed vehicles like Toyota's Prius to establish itself. My issue is I don't know whether it's a truly environmentally friendly product or not. In truth I suspect it isn't. If the OEMs follow GM's lead, we stand a better chance of finding out.

I have always taken manufacturers consumption figures with a pinch of salt, and CO2 numbers whilst objective are more about benefit in kind than anything.

So I think I think I applaud GM and hope it's just the beginning. As a consumer I respond well to being treated like an adult.

And well done to my brother.....

Some interesting links below.

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<http://www.treehugger.com/cars/chevrolet-adds-usda-organic-type-label-all-cars-sold-us.html>

<http://carfanaticsforum.com/thread-13119.html>

<http://www.gm.ca/gm/english/ecologic/chevrolet/overview>

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jimgorzelay/2012/01/26/chevy-to-id-its-cars-with-eco-impact->

<http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2012/01/26/gm-launch-industrys-first-eco-label-cars>