

Nissan EVs Tested In New York Amid Standard Debate

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YOKOHAMA, Japan (AP) — Nissan is supplying New York City with fuel-efficient cabs, including six electric cars for testing, but acknowledged uncertainties Tuesday about an ongoing "debate" over charging standards for electric vehicles.

The battle in fast-charging stations, the equivalent of gasoline stands for electric vehicles, is threatening to turn into a futuristic replay of other major platform wars like VHS of Panasonic Corp. vs. Sony Corp.'s Beta in video.

Nissan Executive Vice President Andy Palmer said the debate was still going on, and it was unknown whether nations will adopt the CHAdeMo used by Nissan, or the competing one called Combo backed by General Motors Co. and European automakers. The standards use different plugs and aren't compatible.

Palmer said Nissan as a leader in electric vehicles must persuade others that its standard is the best.

"The disadvantage is that we are setting the standard," he said, adding that Nissan was "engaged in that debate" over charging standards.

CHAdeMo, which comes from the words "charge" and "move," and sounds like Japanese for, "Care for some tea?" is also backed by Mitsubishi Motors Corp.

Nissan said its gas-engine NV200 vehicle, painted yellow, is set to start running as New York taxis in October 2013, and six Leaf electric vehicles will be part of a pilot program this year. But it is still unclear whether New York will opt for CHAdeMo.

Electric vehicles' limited cruise range means they can be used only for short trips, or towns must invest in building charging stations.

"If we can get the combination right, the EV is very viable," said Palmer.

At least one electric-car competitor has proposed using replacement batteries for electric vehicles so they can keep running, rather than using charging stations, Palmer said. Although charging stations would not be needed, service stations would have to pick up the used batteries.

Electric vehicles can also be recharged from regular home sockets, but that takes longer.

Growing concerns over global warming and pollution are major boosts for the zero-emission electric car.

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