

## FIVE QUESTIONS FOR.... JEAN-LOUIS LEGRAND INTERMINISTERIAL COORDINATOR FOR CARBONLESS VEHICLES

***In January 2009, you were appointed Interministerial Coordinator for Carbon-free Vehicles by the French government. Could you tell us about your responsibilities?***



First of all, let me state that my nomination falls within the framework of a program instituted by the Minister of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development, and National and Regional Development following the *Grenelle de l'Environnement*, and the *Pacte Automobile*, piloted by the Secretary of State for Industry and Consumer Goods. The *Grenelle* is aimed at providing assistance to the transition of the automobile industry towards products that are greener, less dependant on fossil fuels, that reduce energy consumption, and which produce less greenhouse gasses. The *Pacte* will help the French automobile sector to reposition itself competitively, to carry out the indispensable technological leap forward – most notably toward cleaner cars – and to increase the added value factor of automobiles produced in France.

My job is to ensure that actions are concerted with those of industry, and assuring the mobilization and coordination of the different State administrations; as well as organizing the preparation, decision-making, and enactment of the "Carbon-free" Car Plan. As the French

President underlined during the recent Paris Auto Show, the objective is to lend "carbon-free" vehicles a competitiveness comparable to thermal combustion cars through four approaches: intensification of research efforts, support for the materialization of a commercial market, creation of a recharging infrastructure, and through inciting demand and providing information available to citizen-consumers.

***The government launched a national strategy for the deployment of recharging infrastructure for electric vehicles and plug-in rechargeable hybrids on February 17. What are its goals and major themes?***

The matter is one of elaborating a national strategy for the installation of recharging infrastructure, and of accelerating and coordinating its establishment. Implantation could be effected in advance as a measure to reassure the first customers, and then later increased in relation to car sales. This is a group approach, a joining together with efforts being undertaken by the industrials. Infrastructure may mean recharging points (at residences, workplaces, along roadways, in parking facilities), rapid recharging or battery-swapping stations, or equipment for communication between the vehicle and the electric grid.

***How are efforts being organized, and what is your role?***

The work is being organized through four sub groupings: elaboration of new business models, experimentation, standardization and norms, and legislation and regulation. Represented in each of the four subgroups, EDF heads up standards and norms team. The subgroups will have finalized their work plan toward March 20. My role is coordinator of the overall project, ensuring coherency throughout, and watching over the planning stages until their conclusion at the end of June.

***In parallel, the French State and major public and private corporations have engaged in a joint purchase of electric vehicles. What commitments have been made?***

On the basis of the information in the report by J.P. Bailly, President of the La Post Group, we have committed to a coordinated purchase of electric vehicles, between the State and the big public and private sector accounts – among them, EDF. A draft agreement targeting a shared objective of 100,000 vehicles was concluded in February; collective requirements and specifications to be defined between now and summer should enable tenders for bid from September 2009. Certain of these markets will be tied in with some of the projects I have just spoken about and which include provisions for running tests.

***In your view, does the current economic crisis favor a move toward "low-carbon"?***

The current economic context would not seem favorable, and yet – as put forward by Jean-Louis Borloo: "...auto making could be the first activity born of the 2<sup>nd</sup> industrial revolution to shift to the 3<sup>rd</sup> industrial revolution and be viewed not as a threat to the future of the planet, but as a challenge to the hope of success in transition". Once we find our way back from this crisis, growth will return in emerging countries and within a few years, the number of cars in the world will double. In 10 to 15 years, electricity will by necessity be looked to as the solution for satisfying transportation energy needs. Paradoxically, it may be the current crisis that facilitates the arrival of "low-carbon" mobility – at once both necessary and inevitable.