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### Europe Auto Industry Chief Calls for Global Fuel Standards

Tokyo, March 1 (Jiji Press)--Japanese automakers should join forces with European peers to develop globally harmonized fuel efficiency standards, a European auto industry chief said in a recent interview with Jiji Press.

There is "no doubt" a common fuel efficiency testing procedure "will be of help and assistance" to increasingly eco-conscious customers, said Ivan Hodac, secretary-general of the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association, or ACEA.

Efforts are currently being made in Geneva to create such standards under a U.N. arm called the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations.

At present, Japan, Europe and the United States set their own test cycles to measure the fuel efficiency of vehicles.

Even though the Japanese government recently expanded its tax break program for eco-friendly vehicles to cover more imported vehicles, Washington is asking Tokyo to further loosen the criteria, based on its own test cycle.

Whether in Japan or elsewhere, "if incentives are given based on fuel efficiency...it has to be across the board," Hodac said, indicating that foreign-made vehicles should be on a level playing field with local products.

Hodac forecast that the discussions in Geneva will reach an agreement around 2015-2016, but he said that "for the application, it can be much, much longer."

"It will take a long time before we are able really to...speak one language in the major markets," he said.

Meanwhile, Hodac predicted that 2010 will be an "extremely difficult" year for the European automotive market because most of the incentive programs introduced in member countries last year are set to expire by the end of this year.

In 2009, new vehicle registrations in Europe were down 1.6 pct year on year at 14.48 million units, a result Hodac sees as better than expected.

"We do believe the market will return back to normal in 2014-2015," he noted.

On Toyota Motor Corp.'s <7203> massive recalls, Hodac said these were "regrettable" but he hopes the company will resolve them "as quickly as possible."

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2010/02/25-20:05

**欧州自工会事務局長、燃費基準の統一を呼び掛け＝消費者の利点大きい**

欧州の自動車メーカーなどで組織する欧州自動車工業会(ACEA)のイバン・ホダッチ事務局長は25日、都内でインタビューに応じ、消費者の環境意識が強まる中で「燃費測定基準を統一できれば消費者へのメリットは大きい」と述べ、日本の自動車メーカーなどに協力を呼び掛けた。

自動車の燃費測定は、日米欧が独自の方法を採用しており、日本のエコカー補助制度をめぐる、米国が同国の燃費測定に基づき適用車種の拡充を求めている。

これに関して同事務局長は、エコカー補助制度の適用基準を国内外のメーカーで差別すべきではないとし、燃費測定基準の国際統一に向けて各国メーカーが協力すべきだと訴えた。ただ、「現在国連機関で進められている測定手法統一の作業結果は2015年か16年にまとまるが、実際の適用はさらに時間がかかる」との見通しを示した。

一方、今年の欧州乗用車市場については、各国政府が昨年導入した購入補助が打ち切られるため、「非常に厳しい」と分析。昨年に前年比1.6%減の1448万台にとどまった販売台数の回復は14～15年になるだろうとの厳しい見通しを示した。

トヨタ自動車の大規模リコール問題に関しては、「残念だ。トヨタ自身が早急に問題解決をすることを望んでいる」と述べた。(了)



インタビューに答える欧州自動車工業会のイバン・ホダッチ事務局長＝25日、東京都千代田区の日欧産業協力センター（時事）

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