

2025年度 国際キャリア学科

英語

[自己推薦AO (B)]

サンプル問題

Response to a Reading Passage

This is a test of your reading comprehension and your ability to respond to the issue presented in a text. What do you think about the problem discussed in the passage? Write a response in which you summarize the main issue and present your views on this topic. Your response should be between 300 and 500 in length and in English.

Reading Passage

In recent years more and more people have been buying battery-powered electric vehicles (BEVs). Since 2020 the market for BEVs has expanded greatly. Meanwhile, many countries have announced plans to ban the sale of internal-combustion engine (ICE)* cars that run on gasoline or diesel. Norway is the first country to ban the sale of new ICE cars, beginning from 2025. Other countries in Europe and elsewhere, including China and India have announced plans to end the sale of ICE passenger cars during the 2030s.

Why are many countries planning to ban the sale of new ICE cars over the next 15 to 20 years? Under the 2015 Paris Agreement 193 countries agreed to become carbon neutral* by eliminating net Green House Gas (GHG)* emissions, such as CO₂, by the second half of this century, mostly by 2050 to 2060, to keep global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius, or a maximum of 2.0 degrees Celsius. Replacing ICE cars and trucks with zero emission vehicles is an important way many countries are striving to realize the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Japan played a leading role in the development of electric vehicles. Nissan was the first company to mass-market a BEV, the Nissan Leaf, starting in 2011. In 2014 Toyota followed suit by becoming the first company to mass produce a Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV)* that uses hydrogen* instead of charging a battery. Nonetheless, Japanese automobile makers have fallen behind in the race build and sell electric vehicles, as most of the cars they produce are still gasoline-powered ICE cars, including hybrids that use an ICE engine plus

an electric motor powered by a battery. Companies outside of Japan, such as Tesla, Hyundai, Volkswagen, and several Chinese companies such as BYD, have taken the lead in BEVs

At the same time electric vehicles have attracted criticism.** Some argue that the batteries that BEVs use are not environmentally friendly as they require mining a lot of minerals, such as cobalt and lithium, require a lot of energy to produce, and eventually must be discarded when they wear out. Some even claim that their net emissions are not much lower than those of ICE vehicles. At the same time FCEV sales remain very small as hydrogen remains expensive, there are few hydrogen fueling stations, and most hydrogen is still produced from coal or natural gas, thereby creating CO2 emissions. Some critics argue that hybrid cars are more practical and better for the environment in the short run, even though they still emit some CO2.*

BEV supporters respond that the batteries BEVs use can and are being recycled, and that if zero-emission renewable energy such as solar and wind power are used in the manufacturing and charging of BEVs, then their net carbon emissions are nearly zero. Finally, they point out that better and more environmentally friendly batteries are being developed and that all new technologies require time and trial and error to improve. One thing is for sure, the debate over whether BEVs, FCEVs or hybrid cars are better for the environment is likely to continue for at least several more years.

*Internal Combustion Engine: 内燃機関

*Carbon neutral: カーボンニュートラル (温室効果ガスの排出実 ゼロ)

*Green House Gas: 温室効果ガス

*Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle: 燃料電池電気自動車

*hydrogen: 水素

****Rowan Atkinson, “I love electric vehicles – and was an early adopter. But increasingly I feel duped,” *The Guardian*, June 3, 2023.**