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The country’s Finance Act 2023, which came into effect on 1 January, states that “customs duties on electric vehicle charging equipment have been reduced to 10% and the value-added tax (VAT) has been reduced to 7%.”

The Tunisian Ministry of Environment projects these incentives will result in the deployment of 50,000 electric cars by 2025. “This is likely to lead to a reduction in oil consumption of 5.9 million barrels, or a reduction in imports of fossil fuels of US$660 million over the period 2020-2030” the Ministry said in a statement.

Currently, French oil marketer, TotalEnergies is installing the first network of recharging electric vehicles in 19 service stations in Tunisia. At the same time, German-Tunisian start-up Bako Motors plans to deploy locally-made tricycles and electric bicycles in 2023.

South Africa is also mulling tax incentives and pumping billions of dollars into green energy and e-mobility industries, with a focus on saving its auto exports. Both the UK and Europe - its key markets - have announced a shift to green energy-powered vehicles.

The UK Government said it will introduce a zero-emission vehicle mandate setting targets requiring a percentage of manufacturers’ new cars and van sales to be zero emissions rated, each year from 2024.

Similarly, the European Commission is implementing various regulations with the intention of lowering carbon emissions from motor vehicles by 55% by 2030 and reaching a zero emissions target by 2035.

During the 111th anniversary celebrations of the Africa National Congress, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said South Africa would develop the productive capacity to participate in global green energy value chains, including green hydrogen production and electric vehicles.

“The ANC directs government to expand incentives to the electric vehicle manufacturing industry to accelerate the transition from the internal combustion engine in our country’s manufacturing sector,” said Ramaphosa.

In May 2021, South Africa’s Department of Transport introduced a new driving tax - the traffic-management levy - that hikes taxes for drivers using petrol and diesel-powered vehicles. Legal experts at the law firm, Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr (CDH), said the measure would accelerate the shift to electric vehicles in the market.

South Africa will need to move faster to build local demand for - and supply of - affordable electric vehicles.

Vehicle manufacturers, which currently produce internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles for the country’s local market are already worried about their overseas markets.

“We don’t want our main export markets to say that they are no longer interested in ICEs because of their emission targets, and that they are taking their business elsewhere. We need to remain relevant,” said Mike Mabasa, CEO of the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa.

South Africa and Morocco are Africa’s largest vehicle manufacturers and exporters and both are heavily dependent on European markets. While Opel and Renault have both announced plans to produce electric cars in Morocco, other African nations are pushing e-mobility as an opportunity to build local vehicle manufacturing capacity and offer more environmentally friendly commuting options.