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1. Volkswagen emissions scandal could be the death of diesel;Volkswagen has admitted using software to rig the results of its diesel emissions tests

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Body

The Volkswagen emissions scandal that has engulfed the German company could be the death of diesel, according to analysts.

The Volkswagen scandal has raised environmentalists' hopes that diesel power could die out as consumers become aware of the environmental and health risks of the fuel.

Simon Birkett, founder and director of the Clean Air in London campaign, said that the combined effect of consumers unable to sell their diesel cars, plus suppliers which may face class action, will be the death of diesel. "You have a consumer problems, a supplier problem and the combination is the death of diesel," Birkett said.

Diesel cars are far more common in Europe, where they have 50 per cent of market share, compared to less than 5 per cent in the United States. Some analysts said that the prevalence of diesel cars in Europe means it is unlikely they will be phased out easily.

"We do not believe that the diesel disaster will have a major negative impact on consumer preferences in Europe, but should curb market share growth in the United States," said Carsten Menke, commodities research Analyst at Julius Baer.

Volkswagen has admitted using software to rig the results of its diesel emissions tests to comply with stringent US regulations in a scandal that has wiped over 40 per cent of the value of its shares in three days.

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But Volkswagen is not the only manufacturer whose cars emit more poisonous nitrogen dioxide than they are allowed to under law. Diesel cars and vans typically emit 5 times more pollution than permissible limits when driven on the road.

Business news in pictures

Roger Barrowcliffe, chair of the Institution of Air Quality Management, said that consumers the world-over would

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always chose a car to get the job done at the cheapest price. He noted that when Boris Johnson set the ultra-low emissions targets in London, comments posted online suggested that motorists were "not bothered".

"I'm sceptical about the death of diesel, consumers have had this information for a long time but have chosen to ignore it. People are still buying cars for the same reasons: to get the job done at the cheapest price," said Barrowcliffe.

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