Ghana Chamber of Clean Energy

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GCCE E-Mobility Working Group

Advocacy & Government Engagement on EV Import Duty Reforms and Local EV Industrial Development

Concept Note

Ghana’s transport sector is a significant contributor to national greenhouse gas emissions, with ageing internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles particularly “trotros” and other commercial fleets, driving disproportionate levels of urban air pollution. In December 2023, Ghana launched the National Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy at COP28, committing to the decarbonisation of its transport sector in line with the National Energy Transition Framework (2022–2070) and its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, including a target of no new ICE vehicle sales after 2045.

Despite this policy ambition, EV adoption remains constrained by several challenges including high upfront costs. EVs carry significantly higher upfront purchase prices compared to ICE vehicles, placing them out of reach for the majority of Ghanaian consumers and businesses. Ghana's tariff regime, operating under the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET), currently imposes a higher import duty burden on EVs than on comparable Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles.

Analysis of recent vehicular import Bills of Entry indicates that the sampled ICE vehicle attracted a 10% import duty rate, while the sampled EVs attracted a 20% rate, further increasing the cost of EV adoption. While the CET does not explicitly identify EVs as a separate tariff category, the current treatment effectively places EVs within a higher duty band despite Ghana's stated ambitions to promote e-mobility and transport decarbonisation. This removes any fiscal incentive for consumers to choose EVs over conventional vehicles and contributes to the gap between policy ambition and market uptake.

The challenge is equally acute in the two- and three-wheeler segment, where Ghana’s EV ecosystem is gradually industrialising. A number of local assembly and manufacturing operations have emerged in recent years, signaling early but meaningful progress toward domestic production capacity. Yet this nascent industry faces a major constraint: although import duty exemptions exist on paper for Completely Knocked Down (CKD) and Semi-Knocked Down (SKD) unit imports by registered assemblers, as reflected in the Ghana Automotive Development Policy, these exemptions remain largely theoretical in practice.

Assemblers and importers have consistently reported that the waivers are not operationalised at the port, with duties continuing to be levied despite the announced policy position. While the 2024 national budget further announced an eight-year import duty waiver for public transport EVs and for CKD/SKD kits used by registered assemblers, implementation has been significantly hindered by legislative gaps.

The waiver has not been formalised through a Legislative Instrument (LI), and importers continue to be subject to duties, thereby constraining the industrial growth of e-mobility in Ghana.

In response, stakeholders across the e-mobility ecosystem, including GCCE Charter Members, other private sector actors, and consumers, have increasingly advocated for import duty waivers and broader fiscal incentives to accelerate EV adoption and industrialisation. A recurring theme across these discussions is that reducing the landed cost of EVs and their components represents the most immediate and effective policy lever for improving affordability, expanding market uptake, and accelerating Ghana's transition to electric mobility.

However, the introduction of import duty waivers or significant duty reductions could reduce government revenue at a time when Ghana continues to face considerable fiscal constraints. In addition, poorly designed import incentives may weaken the competitiveness of local assembly, manufacturing, and other e-mobility value-chain activities that have the potential to create jobs and support industrial development. The central policy challenge, therefore, is not whether incentives should be provided, but how they should be designed to accelerate EV adoption while balancing fiscal sustainability and supporting the development of a competitive domestic e-mobility industry.

In response to these dynamics, the GCCE E-Mobility Working Group, to be comprised of industry stakeholders will focus on developing practical proposals on the design of EV import duty waivers or reductions. The goal will be to identify policy options that work best across different segments of the market and develop a coherent set of recommendations that are commercially viable, fiscally responsible, and supportive of local industry development. These proposals will then form the basis for a structured engagement with government.

Specifically, the Working Group will:

1. Assess the current policy and regulatory framework governing EV imports and identify key gaps in design and implementation.
2. Develop practical policy options for EV import duty waivers or reductions across different market segments (public transport, private vehicles, and assembly inputs).
3. Evaluate the commercial and fiscal implications of proposed options, including their impact on EV affordability, market growth, and government revenue.
4. Identify mechanisms to support local industry development, ensuring that any proposed incentives strengthen Ghana’s emerging EV assembly and manufacturing base.
5. Explore fiscally responsible approaches to implementing duty waivers or reductions, including potential revenue offsets and phased implementation pathways.
6. Develop a coherent, evidence-based set of recommendations to inform structured engagement with government.