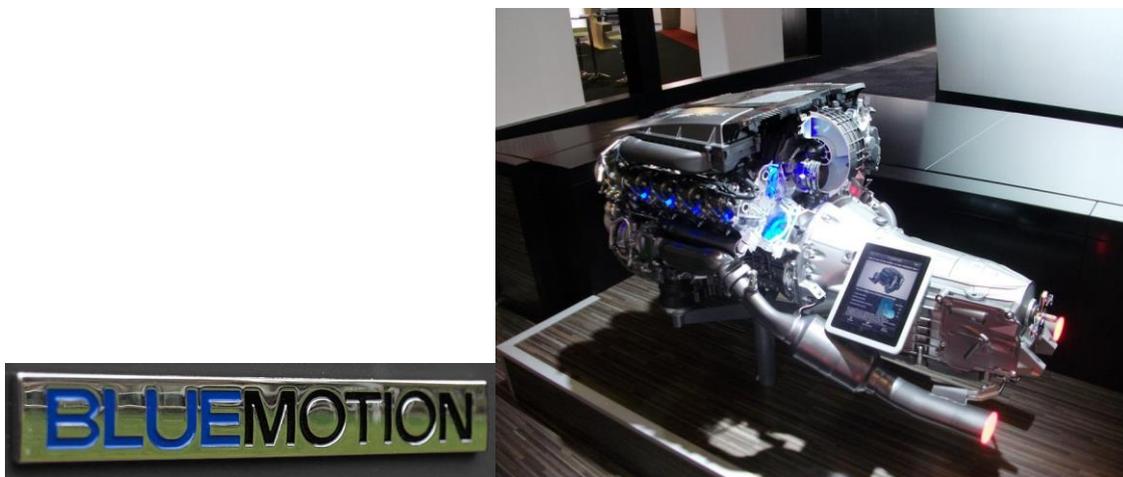


Technical.

Who would have known that a barge-like S-Class Mercedes Benz could be such a green option? On the outset this 3.0 litre turbocharged V6 diesel hardly compares with a Prius or Honda Insight's 90g/km when it comes to CO2 emission figures, but compare this; a hard charging 190kW and 620Nm torque engine under your right foot, contributing 177g/km to the atmosphere is very impressive, already meeting the new Euro 6 emissions which have yet to be introduced. How does it achieve this? Well, this Bluetec technology as they call it, does not involve expensive hybrid technology and batteries that are quite frankly, expensive and a nightmare to dispose of. Here is the interesting part: Mercedes have added a secondary 25 litre tank beneath the boot, filled it with Adblue, an aqueous urea solution that is injected in finely measured quantities into the exhaust system before the catalytic converter. The reaction of this solution with the exhaust gasses releases ammonia which then converts up to 80% of nitrogen oxides into harmless nitrogen and water in the converter. This secondary tank is topped up every 20 000km during the service interval. To achieve the best results however, one must find a filling station that actually stocks 50ppm low sulphur diesel which you might be hard pressed to find in South Africa. Having said that, this technology allows this huge car, if driven moderately, to drive between Johannesburg and Cape Town quite easily on an 85 litre tank. It is nice to know that the technology is also available in the truck division.

VW makes use of the same technology, naming it: BlueMotion

If you thought that Toyota and Honda and other Hybrids were the leaders in the drive for 'going green' then you have clearly fallen for their marketing hype.



VW BlueMotion Badge

Merc BlueTech V6 Diesel

Mike Gilchrist.