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PORTUGAL TOPS EUROPEAN LEAGUE OF LOW CO₂ CARS

- **Majority of countries to miss CO₂ vehicle emissions targets**

Analysis by JATO Dynamics, the world's leading provider of automotive data and intelligence, has found that Portugal leads Europe in terms of sales of low CO₂ emission cars in 2008.

The average new car in Portugal emits 139.3 g/km, compared to an average of 154.8g/km for new cars sold across 21 countries in Europe in the first quarter of 2008.

France, in second place with average CO₂ outputs of 140.2 g/km, is the only other EU country to have achieved the European Automobile Manufacturers Association's (ACEA) 1998 commitment to achieve an average of 140g/km for all new passenger vehicles sold in the EU. France, which introduced tax incentives on vehicles with low CO₂ emissions at the beginning of 2008, has seen a marked decrease in average CO₂ emissions for new vehicles since the launch of the scheme.

JATO's analysis showed the average CO₂ emissions of new vehicles sold in France in Q1 2008 had decreased by 5.8% compared to the same period in 2007. Prior to that average CO₂ emissions had decreased by a total of just 3% in four years.

Portugal has long led Europe in terms of low emission car on the roads, thanks in part to established taxation which has traditionally favoured vehicles with smaller engines. Other EU countries, including the UK and Germany, are planning similar incentive and taxation schemes.

Nasir Shah, Global Business Development Director at JATO, said: "The headlines from the recent G8 summit have focused on technology solutions to CO₂ emissions, but evidence from France and Portugal indicates taxation policies and incentives have a substantial effect in curbing CO₂ emissions by proactively influencing consumer choice."

While the average CO₂ emissions output of new cars remains outside ACEA targets, analysis indicates a record decrease in the past year, providing an outside chance that EU objectives of 120 g/km by 2012 may yet be achieved.

Denmark and Finland both made notable strides by slashing 9.1% and 7.7% respectively off the average CO₂ emissions of new vehicles sold in Q1 of 2008, compared to 2007. Both countries will easily meet ACEA targets if average CO₂ emissions continue to decrease at similar rates.

Switzerland and Germany, where strong economies and national preference have traditionally favoured larger, more powerful cars, prop up the list of countries. CO₂ emissions of new vehicles in each country dropped by record amounts, but both look set to miss 2012 targets by some way.

Nasir Shah commented: "It's encouraging that CO₂ emissions have dropped by record amounts almost across the board, but most countries have missed ACEA targets for 2008, and the 2012 targets look very optimistic.

"The signs from Switzerland and Germany are that technology can have a significant impact on CO₂ emissions in new vehicles regardless of consumer buying habits. Looking across Europe however, our analysis points to an equal emphasis on policy and technology to deliver effective change in the long-term.

"Fuel costs are also set to play a massive role in guiding consumers towards fuel efficient cars, and I'll be keen to see the impact rocketing petrol prices will have on sales in 2009"

-Ends-

Editorial note: JATO Dynamics background

JATO was founded in 1984 and provides the world's most timely, accurate and up-to-date intelligence on vehicle specifications and pricing, sales and registrations, news and incentives. The company has representation in over 40 countries, providing unique local market expertise. The JATO client base includes all of the world's volume vehicle manufacturers, giving them the ability to react to short-term market movements, plan for long-term developments and ultimately to meet consumers' needs. JATO's data has also been adapted for consumer use in motoring web portals where customers can see the advantages and disadvantages of a specified model against any other while major leasing companies use JATO data to drive the vehicle quotation process. Visit JATO at www.jato.com

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