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Life cycle assessment of mid-range passenger cars powered by liquid and gaseous 1 2 biofuels: comparison with greenhouse gas emissions of electric vehicles and forecast to 3 2030 Cyprien Ternel*, Anne Bouter, Joris Melgar 4 IFP Energies nouvelles, 1 et 4 avenue de Bois-Préau, 92852 Rueil-Malmaison, France 5 * Corresponding author 6 7 E-mail address: cyprien.ternel@ifpen.fr ***** +331 47 52 74 69 8 9

10 Abstract

Current and future forecast comparative analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions of mid-range 11 passenger cars, obtained using life cycle assessment (LCA) methodology, are presented. Two 12 13 important factors are addressed by assessing the use of biofuels suitable for internal combustion engines (including bio natural gas vehicles) and forecasting the LCA results in 2030 with 14 updated vehicle weight, battery technology, and CO₂ electricity content. The synthesis shows 15 16 that conventional engines powered with biofuels complement electrified powertrains. Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles seem to be the ideal solution owing to the limited size of their batteries. 17 The current trend of expanding the battery size to improve the range of electric vehicles is 18 19 detrimental to greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts. Biofuels can provide significant GHG emission benefits in a short time as vehicle powertrains can already accommodate up to 85% ethanol or 20 21 100% biodiesel without engine changes.

22 Keywords

Life cycle assessment, road transportation, passenger car, energy mix, electrified vehicles,
WLTP (World harmonized Light vehicles Test Procedures), 2030, biofuels.

25 **1 Introduction**

26

Historically, there are close links between transport and oil; 93% of the energy used for 27 transport comes from oil-based products. These links are challenged by energy transition 28 scenarios because globally, the transportation sector is the second-largest contributor to 29 anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In 2015, the transport sector accounted for 30 23% of Europe's GHG emissions (European Commission 2017), and road transportation was 31 responsible for more than 70% of these emissions (European Environment Agency 2019). To 32 satisfy its new climate objectives, the European Union (EU) raised the CO₂ emissions standards 33 34 of passenger cars by setting their upper limit at 95 g of CO₂ per kilometer (The European Parliament and the Council 2014). Considering these new thresholds, manufacturers must 35 develop more innovations for their powertrains in their roadmap. Moreover, due to growing 36 37 demand, GHG emissions from transport continue to rise in the EU (EEA 2015, Meyer et al. 2012), even with the technological improvements in internal combustion engine (ICE) 38 efficiency in recent years. However, in this harsh regulatory context, improving combustion 39 engine performance alone will be insufficient, strongly encouraging manufacturers to develop 40 and use low-carbon technologies. 41

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Previous studies have shown that electric vehicles (EVs) can provide climate benefits, although the results depend considerably on several elements such as battery size or the CO₂ content of the electricity (Bauer et al. 2015, Wu et al. 2019). Ambrose et al. (2020) performed a life cycle assessment (LCA) study of passenger cars equipped with high battery capacity for the year 2025. They determined that a larger battery system combined with low utilization did not reduce GHG emissions. Lombardi et al. (2017) and Elgowainy et al. (2018) presented a well-to-wheel assessment of CO₂ emissions and costs for current light-duty vehicles. They found that, 50 currently, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) offer attractive carbon emissions abatement 51 costs under certain hypotheses. Bouter et al. (2018) found that electric vehicles with large battery capacities are too expensive and the carbon emissions from battery manufacture are 52 never counterbalanced by the use phase. Fortunately, the work of Miotti et al. (2016) has shown 53 that the battery costs may decrease in the near future, allowing more consumers to buy low-54 carbon emitting vehicles. Similarly, Qiao et al. (2020) demonstrated that the life cycle cost of 55 an electric car in China is still higher than that of a conventional car, but will be approximately 56 equal in the near future. Finally, battery recycling represents a promising way to improve the 57 global battery electric vehicle (BEV) LCA results (Silvestri et al. 2020); however, this industry 58 59 appears to be in the early stages and has yet to enter the BEV value chain.

Another valuable solution would be to use more liquid (biodiesel, ethanol) or gaseous (biogas)
biofuels by increasing their incorporation rate in petroleum liquid fuels (Doumax-Tagliavini et
al. 2018).

Natural gas vehicles (NGVs) already exist in the market; they can be easily decarbonized by 63 switching from natural gas to biogas, without any constraint on the engine or vehicle. 64 Worldwide, there are more than 28 million NGVs running worldwide, with 15,000 in France, 65 mainly buses, heavy goods vehicles, and light commercial vehicles (NGV Global 2020). 66 Biomethane produced from organic sources (livestock effluents, crop residues, organic waste, 67 etc.) can be used as a renewable and sustainable fuel (bioNGV) and energy source (Murphy et 68 al. 2013, Prussy et al. 2019). The injection of biomethane into networks is currently under 69 development (Kapoor et al. 2020). The potential of biomethane in reducing GHG emissions has 70 already been established in LCA studies, an effective method that can reveal the technology 71 potential (Huttunen et al 2014, Lamnatou et al. 2019). Ravigné and Da Costa (2020) have 72 recently shown that bioNGVs can also be cost-effective for the freight transport sector. 73

Three main factors drive the development of liquid biofuels: the reduction of GHG emissions from the transportation sector (Larson 2006), the creation or maintenance of forestry and agricultural activities (Paris et al. 2018), and energy security (European Council 2014). Firstgeneration ("conventional") biofuels have been produced on an industrial scale. However, their development remains controversial as they compete with land use for food supply (Di Lucia et al. 2012).

Second-generation ("advanced") biofuels depend on processes that, despite being technologically more complex, present multiple advantages, such as potential resource availability (Searle et al. 2016), greater environmental benefits, and the absence of food competition. Noh et al. (2016) showed that the biofuel share in the aviation sector energy will increase in the near future, supported by EU incentives. Advanced biofuels can also become an alternative for the road transportation sector, such as being used for freight transport (Meyer 2020).

To LCA methodology is used to supply relevant and robust environmental findings to analyze 87 88 the potential of low-carbon fuels for the road transportation sector. A tank to wheel (TTW) assessment, which concerns energy use and emissions only associated with vehicle use, of 89 passenger car electrification found it to be a zero GHG emission technology (Nemry 2010, 90 Sadek 2012). TTW excludes the emissions and energy use associated with fuel production 91 (well-to-tank; WTT), and the vehicle's life cycle. A complete approach is required to calculate 92 93 the potential transfer of impacts from one life cycle stage to another (Chan 2007, Tran et al. 2012). Therefore, only LCA by its intrinsic definition (ISO 2006a, 2006b) can address the entire 94 system: WTT, TTW, and vehicle's life cycle. 95

The objective of this study is to assess the environmental impacts of passenger cars assembled and used in France, targeting two time-horizons (2019 and 2030), and considering both the vehicle and the fuel life cycle. This study focuses on GHG emissions. In this paper, we address

two main factors, which have this far only partially been discussed in the literature, by reflecting 99 the diversity of biofuels suitable for the internal combustion engine (including bioNGV) and 100 their GHG emissions reduction potential, and forecasting the LCA results in 2030 by which 101 time vehicle weight, battery technology, and electricity CO₂ content will have changed. More 102 precisely, a more comprehensive LCA study including vehicle life cycles has yet to be carried 103 out to assess the value of bioNGV fuel for road transport. A collaboration between the Joint 104 Research Center, EUCAR, and CONCAWE produced a well-to-wheel report which evaluated 105 relevant technologies to decarbonize the transport sector (JEC 2020). Elgowainy et al. (2018) 106 presented a cradle-to-grave assessment of GHG emissions for current and future (2030) light-107 108 duty vehicles. However, neither of these studies considered biofuel as a method of reducing emissions. 109

The LCA of the vehicles (mid-range cars), coupled with propulsion technologies (combustion engine, hybrid, electric) and their associated energy vectors (fossil fuels, biofuels, and electricity mix) make it possible to compare the envisaged technology options and to identify those best suited to the various environmental contexts, namely, for combating climate change. Different levels of powertrain electrification were used based on the new world harmonized light vehicles test Procedures (WLTP) cycle.

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117 **2. Method**

118 2.1 General Methodology

119 The first stage of this study was to conduct a systematic assessment of vehicle energy120 consumption for the "C segment," defined as mid-range cars.

Each vehicle was classified according to its engine system characteristics, considering a varietyof electrification ratio options, ranging from internal combustion vehicles, hybrid vehicles,

rechargeable hybrid vehicles, and all-electric vehicles. Each powertrain (combustion engine, electric engine, battery) was modeled from an energy perspective, considering major trends and predicted improvements by 2030. Similarly, each vehicle was modeled considering a prospective vision of its main characteristics (aerodynamics and tire friction) and weight (body and chassis lightening, impact of improved power, and energy density of electrified devices). These models made it possible to evaluate the current and future energy consumption (fuel and electricity) using these powertrain systems.

The CO₂ emissions of each vehicle (with its powertrain) were then evaluated using the LCA
methodology to estimate the carbon footprint from energy production and use, and the carbon
footprint from manufacturing the vehicle.

- **2.2 Vehicle Simulation Platform**
- 134 2.2.1

2.2.1 Principle

Vehicle simulators have been developed and validated using measurements performed on components and vehicle tests (Badin et al. 2015, Da Costa et al. 2012). This step aims to assess the fuel or electricity consumption based on the WLTP cycle for passenger cars. Hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) were simulated considering a sustainable battery mode. We considered that the battery of a PHEV can provide the driver with a sufficient range (approximately 50 km) if the battery is loaded (Loisel et al. 2014). Consequently, PHEV was simulated both at 100% electric mode and at 100% gasoline mode (and considered as an HEV in sustaining mode).

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To measure the energy consumption of various vehicles defined by their architecture and segmentation, simulations were performed using the Simcenter Amesim software package. This vehicle simulator was developed and validated through component and vehicle tests (Badin et al. 2013). The simulation platforms were based on the "IFP-Drive" library of components

developed jointly by IFP Energies Nouvelles and Siemens PLM Software (Figure 1). Several 147 simulation tools dedicated to vehicle energy consumption calculations exist, such as 148 Autonomie, developed by Argone National laboratory. The vehicle modeling approach in the 149 IFP-Drive library was similar. It was based on 'forward modeling', which computes the vehicle 150 speed from the driver's demand by integrating transient behavior. The IFPEN-Siemens 151 collaboration developed embedded tools that help users to input characteristics for vehicle 152 components (such as energy conversion efficiency maps for electric machines, batteries, and 153 internal combustion engines) and to define optimal energy management strategies for hybrid 154 vehicles. Thus, the use of the Simcenter IFP-drive library was well suited for the purpose of the 155 156 study, which addresses the evaluation of multiple vehicle architectures and energy carriers. These models considered the physics of all the devices present in conventional vehicles 157 (combustion engine, transmission, etc.) and electric vehicles (battery, traction engine, power 158 electronics, etc.). A component dedicated to hybrid architectures was used to determine the 159 optimal management strategy for internal combustion and electrical energy to minimize fuel 160 consumption. Further details can be obtained by consulting the Society of Automotive 161 Engineers (SAE) publication (Dabadie et al. 2017). 162



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Figure 1: Methodology used for the sizing and the energy analysis of vehicles

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These vehicle simulation platforms were validated against IFP Energies Nouvelles' laboratory equipment, namely laboratory bench facilities for combustion engines, electric engines, and batteries, as well as roller test benches. Thus, these resources provide data that accurately reflect the technological choices made by vehicle manufacturers.

170 2.2.2 Determination of weight

Of all the input parameters for the vehicle simulations, the driving weight was paramount. For 171 any given powertrain, the weight varies as a function of its architecture. A "shell" weight was 172 identified for the segment, to which the weights of the components present in the vehicle were 173 174 added according to their design. Battery electric vehicles are represented in two designs: EV (standard battery capacity) and EV+ (for BEVs with a larger battery). For electric vehicles, the 175 calculation of component weights was based on assumptions for energy densities and power 176 177 densities determined for the current horizon and the horizon projected for 2030. Batteries are a major component of the weight of EVs. The density of the total pack, including battery cooling, 178 battery structure, and control, is currently estimated at 150 Wh/kg, predicted to rise to 179 200 Wh/kg by 2030 (Baltac S. et al 2019). 180

For NGV and bioNGV vehicles, the weight of the gas tanks was defined using state-of-the-art principles. These tanks contain gas at 200 bars, and are made of steel, which makes NGV vehicles heavier than those equipped with plastic liquid fuel tanks: excess weight for NGV vehicles is around 30–40 kg. This relatively small surplus can be reduced by 50% by using composite carbon fiber tanks (type III and type IV), which are expected to become cheaper owing to the emergence of hydrogen powertrains.

Figure 2 shows a breakdown of the vehicles selected for the current horizon of segment C.
"ELE" refers to electric engine and "ICE" to internal combustion engine. The payload is
determined according to the European WLTP test protocol and the tank is considered. We note

190 the absence of hybrid NGV vehicles, as this type of vehicle is not marketed to date; however,



they will be part of the 2030 fleet considered in the study.



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195 Accounting for changes in the vehicle components through to 2030 allows us to estimate vehicle driving weights for that year; Figure 3 shows the planned changes in vehicle road weight for 196 197 the C segment. The estimated weight reduction for conventional and hybrid vehicles by 2030 198 is approximately 4%. For electric vehicles, the estimated weight reduction is 3%, based on a 50% increase in battery capacity as extending the battery range remains a priority for 199 manufacturers (with an unchanged battery capacity in 2030, the weight reduction would be 200 201 8%). Details on assumptions regarding vehicle raw material composition and evolution are presented in the following section (see Section 2.3.2). 202



Table 1: Reference values for 2019 C segment vehicle parameters

Aerodynamic drag (S: vehicle active area [m ²] - Cx: air penetration coefficient [null])	S x Cx = 0.67
Rolling resistance (C0: constant friction coefficient [null] - C1: proportional friction coefficient [1/(m/s)])	C0 = 7.80E-3 C1 = 1.40E-4
Engine peak efficiency	39%
Electrical Inverter efficiency	90%

These improvement assumptions match the ranges found in Argonne (2018) and Bauer (2015) and were validated by the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) and through collaborations with French original equipment manufacturers (OEMs).

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2.3 Life Cycle Assessment

2.3.1 System definition

The LCA was carried out in accordance with ISO 2006a and ISO 2006b standards using the 222 SimaPro® commercial software (Siemens 2021). The database used was Ecoinvent v.3.5 223 (Frischknecht. et al. 2005). The model selected "allocation, cut-off by classification" as default, 224 meaning that producers are environmentally responsible regarding their waste, and so do not 225 226 receive any credits for recycling. One consequence is that recyclable materials are burden-free. This system model allows the LCA practitioner to independently model the end-of-life scenario 227 that they want to study. We considered the use of other LCA transportation databases: the GaBi 228 database¹ developed by Sphera and the US GREET model² developed by Argonne National 229 230 Laboratory (A. Elgowainy, M. Wang 2019). Because of the software choice, the use of the GaBi database was not an option. Considering the US GREET database, we preferred a European 231 database as the geographical scope of the study was France by default and the conclusions can 232 be extended to Europe. Another reason is that Ecoinvent was implemented in the SimaPro® 233 software we used. 234

Two time-horizons were considered in the context of this study: current (2019) and prospective (2030). One cycle was examined, that is, the WLTP cycle. The low heating values (LHVs) in this study use the JRC values (JRC 2012), along with the quantities of CO₂ emitted during the

¹ http://www.gabi-software.com/international/index/

² https://greet.es.anl.gov/

combustion of gasoline and diesel fuels. Regarding NGV combustion, CO₂ emissions were
based on a carbon open-source French database developed by the French Environment and
Energy Management Agency (ADEME). For Biofuels, we followed the specifications of the
renewable energy directive (RED) II (Directive EU 2018/2001). The consumption of vehicles
per use cycle was established in the first phase of this study (see Section 2.2). The detailed LCA
methodology used in this study is explained in a study by Bouter et. al. (2020).

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2.3.2 Description of the vehicles

All vehicles were assembled and used in France. All vehicles were modeled according topreviously mentioned data:

- bare vehicle body with gearbox
- 248 combustion engine
- 249 electric engine and generator
- 250 battery

Table 2 summarizes the vehicle characteristics. The main assumptions for the model came from
an ICE gasoline vehicle and were then customized using other models and expert opinion.
Finally, we obtained virtual vehicles, not commercial, that were representative of the average
vehicles existing on the market. For example, the HEV gasoline vehicle was derived from a
baseline vehicle glider with a hybrid powertrain.

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Table 2: Powertrain specifications

Type of	ICE	ICE diasal	HEV	PHEV	EV	$\mathbf{EV} \perp$	
Technology	gasoline	ICE diesei	gasoline	gasoline	Ľν	Ľν +	
ICE							
Max power	96 kW	88 kW	72 kW	72 kW			
Electric motor							
Max power			70 kW	70 kW	80 kW	80 kW	
Generator							
Max power			30 kW	30 kW			
Battery Capacity							
2019			2 kWh	10 kWh	40 kWh	60 kWh	
2030			2 kWh	10 kWh	60 kWh	80 kWh	

259 Figure 4 illustrates the design and choice details of the vehicle components representing

segment C.



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- 262

Figure 4: Design of C segment architecture for 2019 (ELE: electric engine, BAT: Battery)

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For the bodies of the 2030 horizon vehicles, 30% of the vehicle's steel was assumed to be replaced by aluminum, a material which weighs only 65% that of steel per volume (ADEME et al. 2013). The vehicle specifications were built from manufacturers' data and according to IFPEN experts. The split of the raw material components of the gliders came from the IMPRO Car II report (Nemry et al. 2009). The lifetime mileage of these mid-range vehicles was assumed to be 10 years at a rate of 15,000 km/year, that is, 150,000 km over their entire life cycle.

270 **Batteries**

In this study, the battery model was informed with confidential data provided by ADEME 271 (Bouter et. al 2019) based on data from two battery manufacturers. The battery type was 272 lithium-ion, and the cathode chemistry was nickel manganese cobalt (NMC), resulting in an 273 LiNMC battery. It results from a 50:50 combination of the two manufacturers' life cycle 274 inventory datasets. The GHG emissions associated with the manufacturing of such batteries 275 276 were approximately 102.7 kg CO₂ eq./kWh in 2019 and 77.0 kg CO₂ eq./kWh in 2030. These results are in accordance with those of other studies (Ciez et al. 2019, Jiang et al. 2020). 277 Improvements refer to differences in technical specifications (Table 2) and energy density: 150 278 279 Wh/kg in 2019 and 200 Wh/kg in 2030. These values are in line with the orders of magnitude reported in the literature (Peters et al. 2017, Dai et al. 2019). The expected battery lifespans 280 were 10 years for passenger cars. Therefore, only one battery was considered during the vehicle 281 282 life cycle.

283 *Liquid fossil fuels*

Gasoline and diesel fuels were modeled using Ecoinvent data for the upstream part, or WTT, at 284 17.5 and 12.2 g CO₂ eq./MJ, respectively. Ecoinvent data were preferred over JEC data because 285 the modeling used SimaPro® software. We also preferred to use a physical allocation for 286 refinery products given the scope of our study, which is clearly attributional oriented (Sphera 287 and IFPEN 2020). This is the methodology used for Ecoinvent processes, whereas JEC data 288 base their calculations on incremental allocations, which more accurately reflects a 289 consequential assessment. The emissions associated with gasoline and diesel combustion were 290 based on JEC values (JEC 2014): TTW, namely 73.4 and 73.2 g CO₂ eq.MJ for gasoline and 291 diesel, respectively. Reduction in fuel consumption modeled in 2030 in comparison with 2019 292 are only triggered by improvements in engine performance. 293

294 Liquid biofuels

The introduction of biofuels in France is ruled by legislative measures to ensure the 295 sustainability of biofuels incorporated into gasoline and diesel pools. Thus, the quantity and 296 quality of incorporated or imported biofuels into French territory must be recorded (DGEC 297 2018). This allows a split between the bio-products incorporated into the diesel pool: fatty acid 298 methyl ester (FAME) biodiesel and hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) biodiesel, and into the 299 gasoline pool: ethanol. The resources (agricultural products, residues, or wastes) used for the 300 different biofuels are also known, and this leads to an assumed average biofuel for both 301 biodiesel and ethanol. We used the default GHG emissions proposed in Directive 2018 of the 302 303 European Parliament and the Council: REDII Directive. This has a twofold purpose: the aim of 304 the study is not focused on biofuel GHG emissions and their calculation, and the REDII values have the advantage of being commonly used, representing a scientific consensus. REDII GHG 305 306 emissions values for biofuels also reflect the geographical perimeter of the study, which is French-and European-oriented. Using these default GHG emissions proposed in Directive 2018 307 of the European Parliament and the Council led to an average value of 50.9 g CO₂ eq. g/MJ for 308 the French biodiesel (Table 3) and 44.2 g CO₂ eq./MJ for the French ethanol in 2017 (Table 4). 309

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Table 3: Average composition of French biodiesel delivered at the pump in 2017

Biodiesel type		Agricultural resource		REDII GHG emissions, default value, without iLUC (in g CO2 eq./MJ)	REDII provisional estimated iLUC mean value
FAME 8		Rapeseed	63.3%	50.1	55
	89.0%	Palm oil	12.4%	63.65 ³	55
		Soybean	4.7%	47	55
		Sunflower	3.1%	44.7	55
		Waste cooking oil	4.3%	14.9	
		Animal fats	1.2%	20.8	
HVO	11.0%	Palm oil	11.0%	60.65^4	55
French					
average 2017	100%		100%	50.9	52
biodiesel					

³ Mean of the two proposed technologies in REDII: open effluent pond and process with methane capture at oil mill.

⁴ Mean of the two proposed technologies in REDII: open effluent pond and process with methane capture at oil mill.

		Agricultural resource		REDII GHG emissions, default value, without iLUC (in g CO2 eq./MJ)	REDII provisional estimated iLUC mean value
		Wheat straw	0.9%	15.7	
		Wood	4.1%	15.25	
Ethanol	Sugar cane	1.3%	28.6	13	
	Maize	27.6%	50.85^{6}	12	
	Sugar beet	27.2%	33.457	13	
		Wheat	38.7%	51.55	12
French average 2017 ethanol	100%		100%	44.2	11.6



Thus, the fuels delivered at the pumps used in this study were: unleaded 98 fuel, 95-E10 fuel 314 containing up to 10% ethanol, super-ethanol E85 (gasoline containing up to 85% ethanol), or 315 biodiesel B7 (containing up to 7% biodiesel in volume), and B100 (100% biodiesel), the 316 317 emission factors for the selected products were calculated as presented in Figure 5. Expected future advanced biofuels have also been simulated as they are close to being industrially 318 produced and are compatible with current vehicles, these were: advanced E85, called E85 G2, 319 320 and advanced biodiesel, named XtL G2. The same resources were modeled for advanced biofuels, accounting for the energy required for the conversion of waste wood. 321

312

⁵ Mean of the two wood resources in REDII: waste wood and farmed wood.

⁶ Mean of the four proposed processes for ethanol production from maize

⁷ Mean of the six proposed processes for ethanol production from sugar beet



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Figure 5 : Well-to-wheel CO₂ emissions according to biofuel incorporation as energy pathway

Vehicle consumptions were adapted for biofuels, especially E85, E85 G2, B100, and XtL G2, from their equivalent fossil consumptions. Indeed, LHVs of these products are significantly lower than their fossil counterparts (European Commission 2014), leading to an increase in fuel consumption.

For liquid fossil fuels, no differences in the biofuel production processes were considered between 2019 and 2030; only vehicle engine improvements were modeled through a decrease in consumption.

331 Gas and biogas

Emissions relative to NGV production and combustion were based on the emission factors of the Ecoinvent database and the ADEME carbon database (13.2 and 56.7 g CO₂ eq./MJ, respectively). The two databases use the same emission factor for NGV production: 12.9 g CO₂ eq.MJ. The Ecoinvent data were preferred, given its implementation in the software used.

GHG emissions for bioNGVs were based on the GHG emission default values of REDII. As four default values were proposed for biomethane from wet manure production, we decided to model the upper value range: 22 g CO_2 eq./MJ, representing the technological option of open

digestate and no off-gas combustion, and the lower value range of -100 g CO₂ eq./MJ (negative 339 value, European Union 2018), representing the technological option of closed digestate with 340 off-gas combustion. In both cases, manure credits were considered, but an important difference 341 remains in terms of the process stage contribution. For open storage of digestate, additional 342 emissions of CH4 and N2O occur. For close storage, no GHG emissions were included in the 343 process. The CO₂ emitted during the combustion of biomethane is fully offset upstream by the 344 CO₂ captured from the atmosphere (by photosynthesis) during plant growth, as for liquid 345 biofuels (IPCC 2013): carbon neutrality principle. 346

347 Consumption improvements for liquid fuels, fossil fuels, and bio-based fuels, between 2019348 and 2030 were considered for the future predictions.

349 *Electricity*

Electricity was modeled in accordance with the Ecoinvent v.3.5 process for French production 350 in 2017 (IEA 2017). For France, this model provided an average emission factor of 351 55.4 g CO₂ eq./kWh, using the global warming potential methodology from the IPCC over a 352 100-year period. This value was used in the 2019 scenario. For the 2030 value, the objectives 353 of both RED II (The European Parliament and the Council 2018/2001) and French forecast 354 355 energy multi-annual programming (Ministère de la Transition Ecologique et Solidaire 2018) were considered, as presented in Table 5. A 40% renewable energy incorporation rate for 356 357 French electricity in 2030 was assumed: 11% hydraulic, 14% onshore, 9% photovoltaic, 4% 358 offshore wind, and 2% biomass. These values are in line with the projections of the French government for 2028. Meanwhile, the share of nuclear energy in the electricity mix in France 359 will decrease from 78.8% in 2019 to 53.9% for 2030, in line with the goal of 40% renewables 360 361 by 2030 and the forecasted scenario proposed by the French government for 2028. Meanwhile, the contribution of gas to the French electricity mix will increase from 0.6% in 2019 to 4.6% in 362

2030. These changes combined will mean that by 2030, electricity emissions in France will
average at 69.6 g CO₂ eq./kWh, compared to the current 55.4 g CO₂ eq. / kWh.

		2019	2030
Fossil	Coal	1.6%	0.0%
	Nuclear	78.8%	53.9%
	Gas	1.5%	5.5%
	Oil	0.1%	0.0%
Renewable	Hydro	12.9%	10.7%
	Wind, onshore	3.0%	13.9%
	Wind, offshore	0.0%	3.6%
	Photovoltaic	0.0%	9.1%
	Biomass	0.2%	1.7%
	Imports (BE, CH, DE, ES, GB, IT)	1.5%	1.5%

365

 Table 5: French electricity mix by sources for 2019 and 2030 (projected)

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367 The same methodology was used for the European electricity mix based on the JRC report (Banja and Jégard, 2017). The renewable energy rate for electricity production is projected to 368 be 54.5%, according to EU targets. To assign the average carbon intensity for each electricity 369 production source in Europe, representative countries were chosen to represent each pathway. 370 These were French nuclear electricity, German wind, Italian gas, German solids, French 371 372 hydropower, German solar, biomass and waste, and French oil and other renewables. The 2030 European electricity mix is predicted to be 233.3 g CO₂ eq./kWh, compared to the current 439.7 373 g CO₂ eq./kWh. Even if European electricity may appear high, it is not compared with the 374 375 values for other countries or other primary energies. For example, the current electricity mix productions for Japan and the US are at 714 and 563 g CO₂ eq./kWh, based on Ecoinvent data 376 assessed using the IPCC 2013 methodology (Frischknecht et Rebitzer 2005; IPCC 2013). 377 Regarding 100% coal-powered electricity, the carbon intensity would be 1060 g CO₂ eq./kWh. 378

379 End of life

380 The stage "end of life" was simulated in accordance with the avoided burden allocation 381 methodology (Allacker et al. 2017), meaning that the product is given credit for the potential recycled material included. The end of lives of vehicles were based on manufacturers' data and
European directives. The end of lives of wheels and tires were modeled based on data from the
ADEME report (ADEME 2017). The end of lives of batteries follow the European directive
2006/66/CE. It considers two different technologies in equal proportions: hydrometallurgical
treatment and pyrometallurgical treatment, from the Ecoinvent database.

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2.3.3 Functional Unit

389 The functional unit adopted for the comparative assessment of passenger transportation is 390 represented by one assumed average kilometer within a given traffic context, here the WLTP 391 cycle is "one kilometer driven'.

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2.3.4 System boundaries

The steps considered are those shown in Figure 6. On the horizontal axis, all stages of the fuel production cycle are considered, from raw material extraction to the vehicle's fuel tank (WTT) to the use of the fuel (TTW). On the vehicle-specific vertical axis, there are two components: the life cycle of the vehicle and vehicle operation using fuel. Therefore, the present study is well-to-wheel as the vehicle life cycle is also taken into account.

399 Infrastructure was not included in the scope of this study (roads and charging stations).



- 401Figure 6: Life cycle stages considered in the study: Well-to-Wheel assessment and vehicle life
cycle402cycle
- 403

The impact assessment methodology used to estimate the potential impact on climate change is the one recommended by the European Commission, Global Warming Potential, which calculates radiative forcing over a time period of 100 years using the IPCC 2013 methodology (IPCC 2013).

408 **3 Results**

3.1 Energy consumption simulation

The vehicles were simulated over the WLTP cycle, which replaced the NEDC cycle in 2018 to better represent the overall usage of a given vehicle. The energy results for the C-segment vehicles are shown in Figure 7. Fuel consumption corresponding to biofuels was the same as the results of the equivalent 100% fossil fuel, because they are expressed in kWh/100 km and not in liter/100 km (same vehicle and powertrain efficiency).



Figure 7: Energy consumption [kWh/100 km] of C segment vehicles – 2019 & 2030

3.1.1 Analysis for 2019

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The energy consumptions of conventional internal combustion gasoline and NGV vehicles are
similar because of the similarity of the engine mappings used in the study. Manufacturers use
a "gasoline" engine baseline to develop NGV technological solutions.

Figure 7 also shows the gains made through electrification: the components detailed in Figure2 reduce fuel consumption by up to 20% for standard hybrids (HEVs).

The PHEV shows higher consumption than the HEV owing to the weight of its on-board 424 425 battery, with the cycle based on identical battery-charge levels at the start and end of the cycle. This finding alone shows that the electric mode for a PHEV, and thus regular recharging, is the 426 preferred option. In this mode, the PHEV behaves like an electric vehicle with an energy 427 consumption of less than 20 kWh/100 km for both battery capacity assumptions envisaged: EV 428 and EV+. This low energy consumption is achieved by the high efficiency of the components 429 in the powertrain, specifically the electric engine, whose average cycle performance is 94%, 430 compared to 34% for the combustion engine of a conventional gasoline vehicle. 431

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3.1.2 Projected energy consumption by 2030

The planned changes for 2030, in terms of reducing the component weights, reducing the forces exerted on the vehicle, and increasing device performance, would lead, according to the simulations, to a lower consumption by 20% for conventional vehicles and up to 30% for electric vehicles benefiting from increases in battery energy densities, despite their capacity increase.

Analysis of the mid-range car results do not reveal an energy benefit from using natural-gas engines versus liquid fossil-fuel engines because the converter performance is of the same order of magnitude. To see any differences, the entire energy chain must be looked at: from well to wheel. This is the purpose of the next part: the life cycle analysis, which uses the component characteristics and the energy results of the cars modeled via the simulation platform as input data.

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446 **3.2 GHG Emissions results**

A large sample of vehicle technologies and energy pathways were assessed, but some combinations are not shown in this paper, as we decided to represent the most common and representative combinations of vehicle technology and energy carrier. This leads to supplementary combinations for 2030, as we considered HEVs and PHEVs that run using gas.
Figure 8 and Figure 9 present the results of the potential impacts of the various vehicles on climate change in terms of GHG emissions in grams of CO₂ equivalent per kilometer in 2019 and 2030.

The distribution of global emissions from each life-cycle stage is represented. The dark blue portion represents emissions related to the vehicle shell and powertrain type (engine, gearbox, etc.), also known as the glider. This portion is relatively similar for the various engines; however, it has a slight disadvantage for hybrid powertrains that integrate two engines: thermal and electric. Thermal gas powertrains are also emit slightly more because of the heavier gas tank.

The life cycle stage with the highest GHG emissions for combustion vehicles is fuel (in gray), including WTT and TTW emissions. TTW emissions represent the combustion of fuel by the vehicle during its 150,000 km of use, which constitutes a major part of the impact on global warming.

464 NGVs produce less CO₂ than their fossil combustion-based equivalents, gasoline and diesel,
465 owing to a lower emission factor (favorable H/C ratio for CH₄ compared to the longer carbon
466 chains of liquid hydrocarbons).

BioNGV, produced with open digestate and no off-gas combustion process, has an emission
factor approximately 75% lower than its fossil GNV counterparts and produces very favorable
results: 71.2 g CO₂ eq./ km, which is approximately 60% less than that of the equivalent diesel
vehicle. The results were almost identical to those of EVs running in France.

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Figure 8: Potential impact on climate change for C-segment vehicles in 2019

The results for electrified vehicles, including PHEVs and BEVs, show that the battery manufacturing emissions are significant (red part). These are directly proportional to the capacity of the onboard battery (kWh). Technical advances (increase in energy density mostly) explain why the projected emission factor for batteries in 2030 is lower than in 2019.

Very different results can be observed for rechargeable hybrids when comparing all-electric use 479 versus all-combustion use, that is, without ever recharging the battery (100% gasoline or 100%) 480 gas). With the 100% electric mode, the result was 54.7 g CO₂ eq./km in 2019, in line with 481 combustion vehicles running on bioNGVs. With the 100% combustion mode, the PHEV results 482 were worse as emissions from battery manufacturing were added to those from fossil fuel 483 484 combustion. The way PHEVs are used by their owners, and their willingness to recharge their vehicles, are still relatively unknown, however the introduction of on-board fuel consumption 485 meters (OBFCM) in January 2020 will probably improve this. The two contrasting results 486

presented here make it possible to establish the lower and upper limits of use of this type of 487 vehicle. This shows that PHEVs can achieve their full potential only if their owners are willing 488 to do so.



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Figure 9: Potential impact on climate change for C-segment vehicles in 2030

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Hybridization (HEV) reduces the fuel consumption of vehicles and, therefore, their CO₂ 493 emissions. For a gasoline HEV, emissions are lower than those of an NGV combustion vehicle 494 (approx. 154 and 167 g CO₂ eq./km, respectively). A non-rechargeable NGV hybrid in 2030 495 (Figure 9), according to our assumptions, will perform even better, at 110 g CO₂ eq./km. 496 Finally, non-rechargeable bioNGV hybrids combine the advantages of hybridization and 497 biomethane, with emissions of 60.1 g CO₂ eq./km by 2030. For each powertrain running with 498 bioNGV, another result is possible considering the lower range value of the REDII GHG 499 emissions value for biomethane. Indeed, when close digestate with off-gas combustion is 500 considered as the technological option, the total net results are -115, -63, and -67 g CO₂ eq./km 501 for the ICE, PHEV, and HEV, respectively. 502

BEVs (EV and EV+ for those with a larger battery) emit much less CO₂ than internal 503 504 combustion vehicles, and even hybrids, depending on how and where the electricity is produced. While French electricity mix carbon intensity is very low as electricity is mainly of 505 nuclear origin, European electricity is more CO₂ emitting as some European countries still 506 produce electricity using coal. While emissions from battery manufacturing (in China) are 507 largely offset by the low emissions of French electricity production during the 150,000 km of 508 use, the same cannot be said for European electricity production, which is approximately eight 509 times higher than the French electricity mix, even if they are more sustainable compared to 510 vehicles running using fossil fuels. For an electric vehicle carrying a 40-kWh battery in 2019, 511 512 approximately 71.3 g CO₂ eq./km are produced. An EV+ carrying a 60-kWh battery, will produce approximately 85 g CO₂ eq./km. However, these results are higher than those of 513 bioNGV or XtL G2 combustion vehicles. The results demonstrate that the location where 514 electric vehicles are deployed is highly important regarding GHG emissions (Bouter et al., 515 2020). 516

517 **4 Discussion**

As expected, the results for CO₂ emissions depend strongly on vehicle powertrains. 518 Electrification brings interesting benefits in comparison with engines that use liquid fossil fuels. 519 Gas vehicles also have a slightly higher contribution owing to a heavier gas tank. The 520 521 manufacturing stage for both the battery and glider accounts for between 77% and 83% of the total impact of BEVs. The decrease between the current and future technology vehicles mostly 522 reflects improvements in future technologies, such as vehicle manufacturing, tailpipe 523 emissions, and battery efficiency. The impact of replacing steel glider production with 524 aluminum between 2019 and 2030 is an increase in the relative end-of-life, as steel is less 525 recyclable. 526

527 The use stage is significant for combustion engine powertrains and HEV vehicles due to fossil 528 liquid fuel use: between 67% and 85% of the total GHG emissions. For PHEV and BEV, the 529 use stages for vehicles and batteries are small contributors to GHG emissions due to the low 530 carbon electricity available in France.

Another important result is that BEVs are not the smallest contributors to GHG emissions, and PHEVs seem to be more competitive if they are mostly used in electric mode. This is mostly due to adequate sizing of the battery for daily use and thus the capability of the PHEVs to rely on their battery during their daily cycles of use (battery charges were considered to be every night). Some manufacturers have configured their PHEV vehicles in order to switch automatically to electric mode when they enter a low emission zone.

It is also noteworthy that the electricity mix used for the study is that produced in France, which 537 538 corresponds to an average of 55.4 g CO₂ eq./kWh, currently. In the European context, the electricity mix is approximately 439.7 g CO₂ eq./kWh. Thus, the use stage for both the PHEV 539 and BEV would be approximately eight times higher for the European average. This would lead 540 to fewer differences between electrified and thermic vehicles. This highlights the importance 541 of location and electricity production for the use of electrified vehicles. The same trend is 542 543 observed for midsize cars both for 2019 and 2030, since an "electric +" vehicle with an extended range emits CO₂ emissions as an HEV. The location of the electricity production is 544 consequently a very important parameter to be aware of, and sensitivity analysis must be 545 546 performed. The improvement of the impact on the climate change of electrified vehicles requires low-carbon electricity sources. These LCA results demonstrate the importance of 547 considering the vehicle's life cycle when considering electrified vehicles. The smart use of 548 549 PHEVs presents a high potential for climate change mitigation.

For biofuels (liquid or gas), the results depend strongly on the incorporation rate and the 550 551 pathway (conventional or advanced biofuels). Figures 8 and 9 show a low incorporation rate (E10 and B7, that is, gasoline with 10% ethanol and diesel with 7% biodiesel) led to small 552 benefits, as expected. However, this solution is available today, and has been widely adopted. 553 This method brings interesting benefits without any powertrain change. Regarding the E85 and 554 B100 fuels, the gains in CO₂ emissions are impressive, even if E85 is produced from 555 556 conventional biofuels (ethanol). The results using biofuels are close to BEVs with extended range ("EV +") in 2019: 103 vs 85 g CO_2 eq/km. In 2030, this is predicted to be 91 vs 83 g CO_2 557 eq/km. These improvements can be obtained at a lower cost and without the need to adapt 558 559 engine hardware; only a few setups must be implemented inside the engine control unit.

The last alternative low carbon fuels investigated in this paper were bioNGV and liquid biofuels 560 exclusively produced from advanced pathways (XtL). E85 produced from advanced biofuels 561 reduces GHG emissions by 15% compared with standard E85. Consequently, this pathway is a 562 realistic option. The gap with electric vehicles equipped with an extended range "EV+" (in 563 order to compare similar range) is very small: 91 vs 85 g CO₂ eq/km in 2019, and the results 564 are even closer in 2030: 80 vs. 83 g CO₂ eq/km. In addition, when considering European 565 electricity production, E85 with advanced biofuels is clearly a better option. Advanced biodiesel 566 represents a very good opportunity to reduce GHG emissions from the global fleet. Indeed, 567 vehicles using this type of low-carbon fuel represent the lowest GHG emissions value in 2019, 568 569 considering the LCA approach, although no CO₂ emissions at the exhaust pipe are taken into account. Finally, bioNGVs produced exclusively from agricultural waste constitute another 570 interesting pathway with immediate environmental benefits. Combined with a hybrid 571 powertrain, this solution has the best results in 2030, and consequently has to be considered as 572 a credible alternative option. 573

Finally, it is important to underline that the global trend towards electrification is not in 574 575 competition with low-carbon fuels, and biofuels in particular. Clearly, in order to achieve the objectives of the European Green Deal in 2050, electrification represents a very efficient 576 solution. However, it will require significant investments, including improvements in European 577 renewable electricity production and the development of new infrastructure across Europe 578 (charging stations). Moreover, beyond the indicators stated in this paper, the constraint from 579 battery manufacturing is a substantial concern. Hache et al. (2019) detailed a bottom-up study 580 on raw material supply and showed that the cumulated lithium demand will be 53% of the 581 current resources in a 2 °C scenario by 2050. Nevertheless, the absence of geological criticality 582 583 does not hide certain forms of vulnerability, whether economic, industrial, geopolitical, or environmental. A study by Hao (2019) considered heavy-duty electrification growth. The large 584 single-vehicle battery capacity required by heavy-duty vehicles and the expected battery 585 586 replacement would substantially increase lithium demand in the future. A study by Seck (2020) showed that raw material production will be deeply impacted by the penetration of low-carbon 587 technologies in transport, such as copper. The cumulative primary copper demand between 588 2010 and 2050 is expected to be 89% of known copper resources in 2010. 589

Low-carbon fuels and biofuels represent an alternative to rapidly reducing global GHG emissions from an LCA perspective. By increasing the incorporation rate of standard biofuels and advanced biofuels in the short term, it is possible to reduce CO₂ emissions with very little adjustments for powertrains and for manufacturers. Of course, investments are also necessary, particularly for the development of biorefineries.

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596 **5 Conclusions**

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598 The transportation sector must reduce its greenhouse gas emissions over the next few decades, 599 starting with the passenger transportation sector. Consumers have a wide range of vehicle 600 powertrains and fuel choices today and in the near future, most of which offer effective 601 solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

602 This study examines the carbon intensities of mid-sized cars (from cradle to grave) in the French and European markets today and in 2030. The synthesis shows that conventional engines 603 (gasoline or diesel) struggle with low-carbon technologies. The full-hybrid architecture could 604 605 be an interesting solution to compete with current engine solutions. Plug-in Hybrid Vehicles (if driven in electric mode all the time) seem to be the most relevant solution owing to their limited 606 battery size perfectly adapted to the everyday use of the majority of vehicles. Battery electric 607 vehicles are effective solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, especially with low-608 carbon electricity as produced in France. 609

Nevertheless, without attractive costs for customers, these technologies will not enter the 610 market, and the objective of strong CO₂ reduction will be unreachable. Consumer behavior 611 should be considered when designing government policies. Consequently, another alternative 612 pathway could also be a part of the energy transition applied to the transportation sector over 613 614 the short term. Concerted efforts are needed to avoid global climate change until the hurdles preventing massive fleet electrification deployment are overcome. The study shows that 615 616 standard and advanced biofuels (liquid and gas) represent a very efficient way to quickly reduce 617 the greenhouse gas emissions of the global fleet, without important adjustments of powertrains and service stations across Europe. Increasing the incorporation rate of biofuels would yield 618 immediate results, and advanced biofuels or bioNGVs can avoid the biofuel controversy 619 620 regarding competing with food production for land. Of course, large investments are necessary to develop advanced biofuel production (all the value chains have to be taken into account) but 621 the global electrification in Europe will also require large financial support, with mid-term 622

return of investment. Both approaches (electrification and biofuel development) are
complementary and would represent the best way to reach the objectives of the European Green
Deal.

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631 Acronyms

- 632 B7: Diesel fuel with 7% vol. of biodiesel
- 633 BAT: Battery
- 634 BEV: Battery Electric Vehicle
- E10: Gasoline with 10% vol. of ethanol
- 636 ELE: Electric Engine
- 637 EV: Electric Vehicle
- 638 FAME: Fatty Acid Methyl Ester
- 639 GHG: Greenhouse Gas Emission
- 640 HEV: Hybrid Electric Vehicle
- 641 HVO: Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil
- 642 ICE: Internal Combustion Engine
- 643 iLUC: Indirect Land Use Change
- 644 LCA: Life Cycle Assessment
- 645 LHV: Low Heating Value
- 646 NGV: Natural Gas Vehicle

- 647 PHEV: Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle
- 648 TTW: Tank-To-Wheel
- 649 WLTP: Worldwide harmonized Light vehicles Test Procedure
- 650 WTT: Well-To-Tank
- 651 XtL: Synthetic Liquid Fuel

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