

Electric Cars To Hit South Africa In 2010

Written by Rudi Prinsloo
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A pilot fleet of electric cars are due to hit South Africa's roads by 2010, the company which builds them said on Thursday.

Optimal Energy, the company which manufactures the electric-powered 'Joule', had received financial backing from the Department of Science and Technology and issued shares to the Industrial Development Corporation, said spokeswoman Diana Blake.

"This investment helps us to drive the industrialisation process, taking us to the next level," said Optimal Energy CEO Kobus Meiring.

"Optimal Energy is capitalising on South Africa's technological prowess, its track record of building premium cars for the export market, the current sea of change in transport technology brought about by climate change, pollution and energy security issues, and the immense progress in battery technology," said Meiring.

After the pilot fleet is launched, the company plans to begin mass production in 2012.

Meiring said this meant the company would not be hindered by the current economic situation and there was "enormous interest" in the Joule.

"Current market conditions are slowing down the traditional manufacturers' efforts while the market, especially for clean vehicles, is predicted to be in a strong upward swing from 2012 onwards," said Meiring.

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