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South Korean carmaker Hyundai on Wednesday presented the first 7 hydrogen-powered trucks to customers in Switzerland, out of 50 such vehicles scheduled this year to bring zero-emission commercial vehicles to European roads

For long haul, proponents say hydrogen-powered trucks have an advantage over electric rivals as they have a greater range and require less charging times but their uptake and mass production has been slow because they are expensive

However, a McKinsey study in January said that once relative efficiencies of the power sources and lifetime costs of a truck are factored in, green hydrogen could reach cost parity with diesel by 2030

PARITY WITH DIESEL ???

Hyundai has been partnering with Swiss companies to build a value chain covering the production of green hydrogen from hydropower, hydrogen charging stations and the service and maintenance of the trucks

The customers, which include supermarket chain Migros, will be leasing the trucks from Hyundai Hydrogen Mobility HHM to transport goods around the country, backed by the new hydrogen infrastructure

Leases are on a pay-per-use basis that does not require an initial investment

Hyundai plans to put 1,600 trucks on Swiss roads by 2025

Its H2 Xcient trucks have a 190 kW fuel cell stack and seven high-pressure tanks holding 32 kgs of hydrogen, giving them a longer range than comparable vehicles powered by electric batteries on the market now

HHM was set up by Hyundai and Swiss startup H2 energy last year to partner with Hydrospider, a joint venture of H2 Energy, industrial gas maker Linde and Swiss power utility Alpiq

Hyundai plans for production capacity of 2,000 units of Xcient fuel cells per year by 2021 to support its expansion plans as demand for clean transport grows

It views Switzerland as a test case for hydrogen fuel cells in heavy goods transport, said Lee In Cheol, executive vice president and head of the commercial vehicle division at Hyundai Motor Company

“With successful delivery of the first H2 Xcient fuel cell trucks, we proudly announce our plan to expand beyond Europe to North America and China, where we are already making great progress,” he said

In Europe Hyundai has said it will next target Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway