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BP CEO Signals Potential Partnership With EV Manufacturers

BP CEO Bob Dudley told reporters that the London-based oil major is in talks with electric vehicle (EV) manufacturers to equip its global retail distribution network with EV charging installations.

"We have discussions going on with a lot of the EV manufacturers to have a tie-up with our retail network for charging," Dudley told Reuters in an interview on Tuesday.

While estimates place less than a million EVs currently on the road, BP expects that number to reach 100 million by 2035.

News of the potential tie-up comes as a number of oil majors dip their toes into the fast-growing EV market. Dutch oil major Shell announced earlier this year that it would begin outfitting its retail stations in the U.K. and the Netherlands with EV chargers. The major followed that up with news in mid-July that it would partner with Allego to install an undisclosed number of level 3 50kW fast chargers to Shell-branded stations throughout Greater London, Derby and the western portion of the Netherlands.

Level 3 chargers, while expensive (estimated \$100,000 per installation), are widely seen as the standard as they are able to provide up to an 80% charge in around 30 minutes.

French major Total also announced early this year that it was in the midst of exploring the viability of installing EV charging points at its retail station in France, adding that its plan was focused on a network of around 300 retail stations located near highways.

Italian oil major Eni also has also deployed a small number of EV charging points at its retail stations throughout Italy as part of a pilot program in conjunction with multinational gas and electricity distributor ENEL.

In the U.S., Tesla has pursued deals with East Coast gas station operator Sheetz to partner on EV charging ports at its retail stations. Tesla currently has charging ports in eight Sheetz locations throughout Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

Tesla has also partnered with retailer QuickChek to provide Supercharger docks at a gas station in Kingston, N.Y., with the potential to expand its reach throughout QuickChek's more than 150 stations IN New York and New Jersey.

Meanwhile, Japanese automaker Nissan has also secured partnerships with convenience store chains to provide charging infrastructure. Indiana-based Ricker Oil and Nissan, alongside the Greater Indiana Clean Cities Coalition, introduced nine level 3 50 kW fast chargers in the Indianapolis area in 2015. Nissan also extended its "No Charge for Charge" program to adopters of the Nissan Leaf beginning in April 2015. The program allows for two years of complimentary charging at the nine Ricker's locations.

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