

1 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL MOTORCYLES IN**
2 **KATSINA METROPOLIS: IMPLICATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL**
3 **SUSTAINABILITY**

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5
6 **Abstract**

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8 The pattern globally nowadays is to reduce environmental pollution by all means as part of
9 sustainable development goals. However, daily increase in the number of commercial
10 motorcycles in Nigeria does not help in achieving this objective. It is for this reason, this study
11 assessed the environmental impact of commercial motorcycle in Katsina metropolis with special
12 emphasis on air and noise pollution. A structural questionnaire and interviews were formulated,
13 stratified random sampling technique was used in obtaining data. Ten (10) wards were selected
14 from the twelve (12) wards in the local government area from which 150 completed
15 questionnaires were received from randomly selected households. Also, a structured interviews
16 were used to collect relevant data from fifty (50) households respondents, (5) respondents from
17 each of the ten (10) wards. Furthermore, a noise dosimeter was used to detect noise pollution in
18 five (5) selected locations within Katsina metropolis namely; Katsina central market, Kofar
19 kwaya round about, Batsari round about, a long Kofar Soro road and Kofar Marusa road. A
20 descriptive analysis and dosimeter readings were used to present the results. The findings
21 revealed that 72% of the respondents reported motorcycle as a source of air pollution and the
22 level of pollution created is very high. Only 1% of the respondent contended that air pollution
23 caused by motorcycle is very low. Also, 78% of the respondents reported noise pollution to be
24 very high, and results of noise dosimeters showed that Katsina central market location recorded
25 89.7dB (highest), while Kofar Soro road recorded 84.1dB (lowest). This result is higher than
26 55dB maximum permissible limit set by NESREA Act, 2007, and closer to 90dB permissible
27 limit set by World Health Organization (WHO). The findings of the study has important
28 implication on environmental sustainability in Nigeria.

29 **Keywords:** Environment, Impact, Commercial motorcycles, Katsina metropolis, Environmental
30 sustainability.

34 **INTRODUCTION**

35

36 Commercial motorcycle popularly known as “Ahaba” in the north and “Okada” in the South, is
37 one of the cheapest mode of transport system in Nigeria. The popularity and wide spread
38 acceptance of commercial motorcycle over other modes of transport is because of its ability to
39 reach areas where commercial vehicles may not reach due to bad road. In fact there is no road
40 that is too narrow and there is no area too remote for motorcycles to reach. Unlike motor cars,
41 they are able to take passengers to their door steps because of their capability to maneuver their
42 way (Oladipo, 2012:233). Beyond all these, commercial motorcycles consumes less fuel than
43 motor vehicles, cheaper to maintain than a taxi or bus, cheaper and readily available spare parts
44 than other forms of commercial transport. Another important factor that contributed to wide
45 spread use of commercial motorcycles in Nigeria was the unfriendly socio-economic policies
46 which manifested in the rate of urban unemployment, poverty and decayed social infrastructure
47 in the area of public transport system (Christopher et al., 2013:206).

48 Over the years there have been some research into commercial motorcycles as a means of public
49 transportation system in Nigeria. According to the literature, commercial motorcycles operation
50 is seen to be associated with both positive and negative implications: income (Arosanyin et al.,
51 2011; Ogunrinola, 2011; Yakubu, 2012, Hassan et al. 2017); accident predisposition (Oluwadiya
52 et al., 2009; Solagberu et al., 2006; Iribhogbe and Odai, 2009; Morenikeji and Umaru, 2012,
53 Manasse, 2013); socio-economic characteristics of drivers (Olvera et al., 2012; Mahlstein, 2009;
54 Beekers, 2009); public passenger traffic (Ogunsanya A. and Galtima A.,1993); poverty
55 (Abdussalam and Adio, 2014); criminality (Cristopher et al., 2013). However, many of these
56 studies felt short of identifying the environmental impact of commercial motorcycles, and
57 concomitant effect on environmental sustainability. It is therefore the intention of this study to
58 establish whether commercial motorcycles have any negative environmental impact in Katsina
59 metropolis. Oladipo (2012:237) supports this effort by arguing that “the emission from bikes is
60 adding to the pollution of the environment and suggested for the need of scientists to conduct
61 research to measure the actual effect of this pollution. The life expectancy in Nigeria is put at
62 46/47years compared to over 70years in Britain and America and even over 80years in Canada.
63 The pattern globally nowadays is to reduce environmental pollution by all means. Daily increase
64 in the number of commercial motorcycles in Nigeria does not help in achieving this objective”.

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66 **LITERATURE REVIEW**

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68 Critics of commercial motorcycles have posited that the business has increased the number of
69 road accidents. This has led to the loss of lives and in many cases permanent disabilities to
70 victims. In Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria, Olabode et al. (2013) used simple percentages to
71 examine the socioeconomic challenges of road accidents among motorcyclists. Simple random
72 sampling technique was used to select 1,000 motorcyclists as the sample size. The results
73 showed that more than 70% of the respondents have at one time or the other involved in road
74 traffic accidents. Similarly, in Lokoja, Nigeria, Aderamo and Olatujoye (2013) applied Ordinary
75 Least Squares (OLS) model in the form of multiple regression analysis and examined the trends
76 of motorcycle accidents from the period 2000-2009. The results revealed a significant
77 relationship between the number of accidents, number of injuries, number of deaths and the
78 increasing number of registered motorcycles in the city. Still on accident, Manasse (2013) in
79 Makurdi, Nigeria, used data obtained from the police, hospitals and questionnaire for
80 commercial motorcyclists that were involved in accident as well as personnel of traffic law
81 enforcement agencies. Data analysis revealed that an average of 284 commercial motorcycle
82 accidents per year occurred in Makurdi metropolis, resulting in an annual average of 224 deaths,
83 and 188 injuries. Recklessness of commercial motorcyclists accounted for 28 percent of
84 accidents and 30 percent of deaths, over speeding accounted for 27 percent of accidents and
85 deaths respectively, non-adherence to traffic rules accounted for 18 percent of accidents and 16
86 percent of deaths, obstruction on the path of riders accounted for 17 percent of accidents and 16
87 percent of deaths. In Igbo-Ora community of Oyo state, Nigeria, Owagen, et al (2005) used Chi-
88 square and logistic model to examine the incidence of accidents and pattern of non-fatal injury
89 among 299 commercial motorcyclists in. The outcome showed that 45% of the respondents had
90 involved in road accident for at least once. In Calabar Metropolis, Nigeria, Christopher et al
91 (2013) used simple percentage and Chi-square test to examine the abolition of commercial
92 motorbikes and its implications on transportation and criminality. The findings revealed that
93 factors such as upsurge in criminal activities, rise in traffic accidents, traffic congestion and
94 recklessness on the part of the operators of commercial motorcycles among others account for
95 the abolition of motorcycles as a means of transportation.

96 However, despite problems and challenges of commercial motorcycle, the business has impacted
97 significantly on the Nigerian economy and society in many ways. One important positive impact
98 is the provision of employment for millions of unemployed people. Hassan et al (2017), in
99 Gombe metropolis, Nigeria used simple percentage and Chi-square test to appraise the socio-
100 economic impact of commercial motorcycle. The findings showed that commercial motorcycle
101 business is dominated by youth, majority of who are in the age bracket of 21-30 and that 74%
102 rely on the business to sustain their families. In Abeokuta and Adede local governments of Ogun
103 state, Nigeria, Adenike et al (2012) applied simple percentage and t-test on 100 randomly
104 selected respondents to examine the effect of socio-economic survival of commercial motor
105 cyclists (Okada riders). The finding shows that majority are engaged in the business because of
106 the pressing need to survive and sustain their families. Oladipo (2012) also, pointed out
107 commercial motorcycle (Okada) impacted positively on society in many ways. One important
108 positive impact is the provision of employment for thousands of unemployed people. According
109 to him, indeed, many unemployed youths and retired people have found gainful engagement in
110 the commercial motorcycle business. Some of those who are employed in the government
111 service still engage in this business either as owners or riders to augment their regular income.
112 Commercial motorcycle operators have also contributed to government revenue generation. For
113 example, in Lagos and Ogun states, Nigeria, Oluranti (2011) applies descriptive statistics and
114 Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method to examine the roles of commercial motorcycles towards
115 generating self-employment and income for the two states. The results show that commercial
116 motorcycle is one of the major source of revenue and employer of young school leavers.
117 Over the years, there has been some research into socioeconomic impact of commercial
118 motorcycles in Nigeria as highlighted in the literature above, but there has been little research
119 into the environmental impact, particularly from environmental sustainability perspective. It is
120 therefore the intention of this study to establish whether commercial motorcycles creates air and
121 noise pollution in Katsina Metropolis.

122 **STUDY AREA**

123 Katsina is located between the latitude $12.24^{\circ}\text{C W}-70.12^{\circ}\text{C E}$ and longitude $6^{\circ}25^{\prime}\text{E}-9^{\circ}2^{\prime}\text{E}$. Katsina
124 metropolis is the local government headquarter and capital of Katsina state. It shared border
125 with four local government areas, among which are Rimi to the east, Batsari at west, Batagarawa
126 to the south and Kaita to the North. The 2015 projected population put Katsina local government

127 at 452,065. In the recent times, the area has experienced a lot of developmental activities which
128 include building of two universities, road dualization, ring road, housing estates and a modern
129 stadium. The spade of development in the city have been so high and has increased human
130 activities given rise to more number of commercial motorcycles movement from one location to
131 another.

132 **METHODOLOGY**

133 A structural questionnaire and interviews were formulated to assess the environmental impact of
134 commercial motorcycles transportation in Katsina metropolis. Stratified random sampling
135 technique was used in obtaining data. Ten (10) wards were selected from the twelve (12) wards
136 in the local government area from which 150 completed questionnaires were received from
137 randomly selected households. Each questionnaire was checked for errors to ensure
138 completeness and readability of the data. Also, a structured interviews were used to collect the
139 relevant data from fifty (50) households respondents, (5) respondents from each of the ten (10)
140 wards. Additionally, a noise dosimeter was used to detect noise pollution in some selected areas
141 of Katsina metropolis namely; Katsina central market, Kofar kwaya round about, Batsari round
142 about, a long Kofar Soro road and Kofar Marusa road. A descriptive analysis and dosimeter
143 readings was used to present the results.

144 **FINDINGS**

145 **Demographics**

146 Table 1 below showed that 78% of the respondents are males and 22% are females. This
147 indicates that more males responds to the studies. This is partly due to the fact that males
148 dominate activities in all sectors in the area.

149 **Table 1: Gender of respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	117	78
Female	33	22
Total	150	100

150 Source: Field Survey, 2013.

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152 According to table 2 below, 76% of the respondents are married and 24% are single.

153 **Table 2: Marital status of the respondents**

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	114	76
Single	36	24
Divorced	-	-
Widowed	-	-
Total	150	100

154 Source: Field Survey, 2013.

155 As noted in table 3 below, 37% of the respondents were in the middle age group while 32 %
156 were in the age group between 31- 39 and only 3% are below 18 years. This indicates that
157 middle age dominate the study.

158 **Table 3: Age category of the respondents**

Age group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 18 years	5	3
19-24	9	6
25-30	33	22
31-39	48	32
40 and above	55	37
Total	150	100

159 Source: Field Survey, 2013.

160 Respondents were asked in table 4 below to indicate whether commercial motorcycles (Kabu-
161 kabu) augment the inadequate mode of commercial transportation within Katsina metropolis. 46
162 % indicated that to some extent commercial motorcycles augment transportation while 32% of
163 the respondents said commercial motorcycles have augmented transportation. 22% reported that
164 commercial motorcycles does not augment inadequate transportation in the area. Implying that
165 there is a positive impact.

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Table 4: Means to augment inadequate mode of transportation

Augment in adequate mode of commercial transportation	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	32
No	33	22
To some extent	69	46
Total	150	100

170 Source: Field Survey, 2013.

171 Respondents were asked whether commercial motorcycle (kabu-kabu) is a convenient mode of
172 transportation.

173 Table 5 below shows that 44% of the respondents were of the view that commercial motorcycles
174 are not a convenient mode of transportation and 41% have agreed to some extent while 15%
175 have indicated that it is a convenient mode of transportation.

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Table 5: Level of convenience

Convenience	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	23	15
No	66	44
To some extent	61	41
Total	150	100

177 Source: Field Survey, 2013.

178 Respondents were asked to indicate whether they use commercial motor cycles in a situation of
179 traffic congestion to fasten their movement, 80% of the respondents agreed that they use it as
180 means of transport in the situation of congestion. 20% also shows to some extent and none of the
181 respondents disagree. This shows that despite the inconveniences, people use commercial
182 motorcycles to ease their movement as shown in table 6 below.

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Table 6: Motorcycle and fast mobility in situation of traffic congestion

Permits fast mobility	Frequency	Percentage
True	120	80
False	-	-
To some extent	30	20
Total	150	100

187 Source: Field Survey, 2013.

188 Respondent were asked whether commercial motorcycles (kabu-kabu) is one of the causes of air
189 pollution. 72% of the respondents indicated that the air pollution tendency of commercial
190 motorcycle is high, 27% indicated that it is moderately high and only 1% indicated that it is very
191 low as shown in table 7 below.

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Table 7: Air pollution caused by commercial motorcycle

Air pollution	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	108	72
Moderately high	40	27
Very low	2	1
Total	150	100

193 Source: Field Survey, 2013

194 In the aspect of noise pollution, as shown in table 8 below, 78% respondents have indicated that
195 the rate at which commercial motor cycle caused noise pollution is very high.

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Table 8: Noise pollution caused by commercial motorcycle

Noise pollution	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	117	78
Moderately high	33	22
Very low	-	-
Total	150	100

197 Source: Field survey, 2013.

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201 **RESULTS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW**

202 This study used triangulation in order to cross-validate data obtained from the respondents. The
203 main purpose of triangulation is to enhance the credibility of the data by providing multiplicity
204 of perspectives from respondents.

205 In the present times, many people embrace commercial motorcycle business due to economic
206 down turn and financial difficulties to make ends meet. Katsina state being second poorest state
207 in Nigeria, having poverty level of more than 70% (NBS, 2013), many people are into the
208 business to augment a meager compensation earned from employers while some youth are into it
209 due to unemployment. Recently, politicians often purchase motorcycles in hundreds and
210 distribute to supporters in order to gain patronage. These motorcycles are in turn used for
211 commercial purpose. Housewives also purchase and convert them into hire service in order to
212 improve their living status. All these contributed into an upsurge of motorcycles used for
213 commercial transportation in Katsina metropolis and has direct bearing on human and
214 environment.

215 A structured interview with 50 respondents was carried out with a view to acquire more
216 information to support the information earlier obtained.

217 As earlier mentioned that the popularity and wide spread acceptance of commercial motorcycles
218 over the other modes of transport in Nigeria is because of its ability to reach areas where
219 commercial vehicles may not reach due to bad road and take passengers to their door steps. It is
220 vital to stress that, there is no road that is too narrow and there is no area too remote for
221 motorcycles to reach. Also commercial motorcyclists have the capability to maneuver their way
222 to beat traffic congestion.

223 When asked about these advantages, one of the respondents has this to say;

224 *Traffic congestion is presently very high in the metropolis, and there are quite number of areas that do*
225 *not permit free movement of cars or other bigger vehicles, therefore people in need fast mobility usually*
226 *ride on commercial motorcycle.*

227 Table 5 and 6 have corroborated with the above assertion, that to many people, commercial
228 motorcycle is a convenient mode of transport that fasten and ease transportation challenges,
229 especially for those that are living in the areas that are difficult to access by cars and bigger

230 vehicles as a result of poor urban and regional planning that is common in the developing
231 countries.

232 Part of environmental hazard of a road usage is the vehicular air pollution. Exhaust fumes from
233 motorcycles are major source of atmospheric pollution. The fumes which are emitted contains
234 four main types of pollutants namely; carbon dioxide, unburnt hydrocarbons, aldehydes and
235 other gaseous.

236 According the respondents,

237 *The thick smoke and other gaseous emissions being noticed is from commercial motorcycle which tend to*
238 *emit more than other vehicles and one find it very difficult in breathing and sometimes pain in the eyes.*

239 Another respondent corroborated,

240 *The reason for the thick smoke emitted by commercial motorcycles is that, the motorcyclists are in the*
241 *habit of mixing engine oil with fuel. Their belief is that, it permits greater lubrication of the engine and*
242 *also help to economize the fuel usage.*

243 Table 7 agree with this assertion that commercial motorcycle creates a high level of air pollution.

244 Added to the above hazard is the noise pollution. Noise pollution is also a major environmental
245 problem caused by traffic especially in urban areas. Environmental noise pollution has been
246 defined as an unwanted or harmful out door sound created by human activities. This includes
247 noise emitted by means of transport and from sites of industrial activities (Anomohanram et al.,
248 2008:2). Leventhall (2003) in his view of published research work on low frequency noise and
249 sound are similar acoustic waves carried on oscillating particles in the air. In a nut shell, noise is
250 sound that is too loud or that is unpleasant or disturbs the listeners. The noise levels can also
251 disturb domestic life like sleeping and relaxation and may well affect the hearing of people.
252 Motorcycle noise disturb people through blowing of horns and sound of engines.

253 Respondents have shown concern on the high level of noise pollution caused by motorcycle
254 especially on the road, around roundabouts, and hold ups.

255 Respondents pointed out that,

256 *The frequency of noise pollution by commercial motorcycles is indeed high and people get disturbed by*
257 *the many sound of motorcycle engines and the frequent blow of horns.*

258 Table 8 also corroborate with this statement when respondent were asked to comment on the
259 level of noise pollution in the study area.

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DETECTION OF NOISE POLLUTION USING NOISE DOSIMETER READER

To detect the level of noise pollution in Katsina metropolis, five locations were strategically taken to give a good coverage of the areas where people experience high level of noise in the metropolis. Noise dosimeter reader was used. In all the locations, noise dosimeter was set on automatic mode to run continuously for thirty minutes at every instance and it was recorded five times in each location. Afterwards the average mean equivalent noise level was calculated by the instrument in each location. The recording was done between 5: pm- 5:30pm in each location. The rationale behind the timing was 5: pm to 5.30Pm used to be the busiest period in Katsina metropolis. Many people close shops, western and Islamic schools close around that period.

Table 9: Noise pollution in some selected areas of Katsina metropolis

S/N	Location	Area/Road	Time	Noise pollution reading
1	L ₁	Katsina central market	5:00-5:30pm	89.7dB
2	L ₂	Kofar Kwaya round about	5:00-5:30pm	85dB
3	L ₃	Batsari Round about	5:00-5:30pm	87.1dB
4	L ₄	Kofar Soro road	5:00-5:30pm	84.1dB
5	L ₅	Kofar Marusa road	5:00-5:30pm	85.7dB

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Source: field measurement, 2013.

According to the results in table 9, the level of noise for all the five locations measured by dosimeter reader fell above the National Environmental Standard and Regulation Enforcement Agency (NESREA) ACT, 2007 maximum permissible noise limit for the day time from 6am- 10pm in a mixed residential and commercial areas which was pegged at 55dB. When compared with the World Health Organization (WHO) standard of 90dB, the results fell below the permissible limit set by WHO. In fact the value of the results in the five location are closer to the permissible limit of WHO and above the NESREA permissible limit, and Katsina central market location recorded 89.7dB (the highest), while Kofar Soro road recorded 84.1dB. The reason central market location recorded the highest level of noise is because it is the meeting point

283 where people from different locations within and outside Katsina metropolis meet for
284 commercial purpose.

285 **IMPLICATIONS OF COMMERCIAL MOTORCYCLES TRANSPORTATION ON** 286 **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

287 Making reference to public perception on the impact of commercial motorcycles as means of
288 transportation on the environment of Katsina metropolis, a greater 72% of the respondents
289 observed that commercial motorcycles are source of air pollution and the level of pollution
290 created is very high. Only 1% of the respondent showed that air pollution caused by motorcycle
291 is very low. This confirmed the general perceptions that vehicles cause pollution and vehicular
292 air pollution contribute to global warming and atmospheric ozone depletion and acid rain. The
293 emitted hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide caused or contributed to adverse
294 health problem in humans and aquatic ecosystem. Even though transport is believed to be one of
295 the worst defilers of the environment. Its effect on the health of people and ecology to say the
296 least is deplorable. Accordingly, the impact of emitted hydrocarbons by automobiles
297 (motorcycles inclusive) was projected to increase the average global temperature by about 3.5⁰C
298 by 2100 (Climate Action Tracker, 2012), well above 2⁰C of warming considered by many as
299 threshold for triggering dangerous climate change (UK. Met office, 2010).

300 On the impact motorcycle on the level of noise pollution, majority of the respondents 78%
301 perceived that the level of pollution caused by commercial motorcycle is very high and none of
302 the respondents disagree. Also the results of noise dosimeter in some selected locations where
303 there is high traffic of motorcycles shows that the level of noise is very high. This is in line with
304 Onuu (1999) observation that road traffic noise constitutes the largest proportion of
305 environmental noise in Urban areas. Therefore the implication of noise pollution
306 according to Ochsner (2003), “depending on the amount and length of time one is
307 exposed to, noise damage hearing ability of people”. She contended that sounds that are
308 louder than 85 dB are potentially hazardous. Menkiti (1976) also shared the same
309 opinion, and indicated that there were many deaf people in Nigeria caused by exposure to
310 loud noise but it is not known that their deafness is caused by exposure to loud noise
311 because often hearing loss occur gradually. For this reason many people do not become
312 aware until it is too late.

313 Overall, this implies that one best way to ensuring environmental sustainability is to
314 develop more policies that will tackle the issue of environmental pollution caused by
315 commercial motorcycles in Nigeria.

316

317 **CONCLUSION**

318 This article intended to establish whether commercial motorcycle mode of transport has any
319 environmental impact in Katsina metropolis. Air and noise pollution were identified among the
320 causes environmental degradation. The study seek the public perception and found that 72% of
321 the respondents said motorcycles are source of air pollution and the level of pollution created is
322 very high. It was also found that noise pollution in the study area is very high. 78% of the
323 respondents attested. The findings of noise dosimeter also concurred with the respondent's
324 perception.

325 We have to note that quite a number of people have called for the outright banning of
326 commercial motorcycle transport due to its negative impact on the society. States like Lagos,
327 Rivers, Abia, Borno, Adamawa, Gombe, Plateau, Yobe, Kaduna, Federal Capital Territory-
328 Abuja and even Cross River (the state that started commercial motor cycle business) have all
329 banned the use of motorcycle as a means of public transportation. Even though some believed it
330 has provided people jobs and easy access to various destinations that are difficult to access by
331 cars and buses. Based on this, the study posits that, since commercial motorcycles use in Katsina
332 metropolis is becoming inescapable. It is recommended that government should discourage the
333 commercial motorcyclists from using the motorcycle that permit the mixture of engine oil and
334 fuel. The mixture produce too much smoke and pollutants that are dangerous to the environment.
335 This can be achieved by enlighten the motorcyclists through the agencies of government namely;
336 Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and National Environmental Standard and Regulation
337 Enforcement Agency (NESREA). Also through these agencies, government can stop the
338 motorcyclists from instilling and blowing horn unnecessarily. Furthermore, motorcyclists can
339 also be compelled to service their engine regularly for better performance and less engine sound.
340 Finally, government may decide to introduce a levy to motorcyclists as polluter pay and the levy
341 collected can be used to protect the environment through growing forest that can absorbs the
342 emitted gases. From an environmental point of view, studies have shown that managed forests
343 provide climate change mitigation benefits over time through sequestering carbon, and thus

344 reducing the amount of carbon dioxide released in the atmosphere (Ruddell et al., 2007, Nosiru
345 et al, 2013).

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