Montevideo electric vehicle safety

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Talk of electric mobility may appear in the imagination as a few vehicles plotted to the extreme with green leaves and signs shouting loudly that they are 100% electric on the streets. But it is much more than that.

We are still going through a period of transition to electric mobility, in which mistrust and fear abound (with or without reason). Little by little, it is becoming clear that electricity in mobility is here to stay.

As Quantik Lab has been investigating, everything indicates that sooner or later we will have a large number of electric vehicles on our streets. In fact, the consulting firm BCG forecasts that by 2035 more than half of global vehicle sales will be electric.

But are the fears of potential buyers real, and is it possible to drive an electric vehicle in Uruguay? To answer these questions, I decided to embark on an adventure through Uruguay in adverse conditions, to understand if this is possible, in a trip of a few days and more than 1000 kilometers.

The only preparation for our trip was to load the vehicle 100% ready to go. I was accompanied by my wife and children, plus everyone"s belongings.

We took the trip in a BYD electric vehicle, model E2, which is supposed to have a range of 400 kilometers. First surprise: the theoretical framework, in certain scenarios, is only representative and tested by reality.

Another detail to take into account was the conditions of the trip, which were extreme for Uruguay: it was in July, in the middle of winter, with temperatures bordering zero degrees, wind and rain. To add some difficulty, we had the car loaded to the maximum, both with passengers and luggage.

Regarding vehicle charging, we proposed that the only way was to use the public or private posts available along the route. We did not carry an emergency charger, which allowed us to see first hand if a trip of this magnitude is possible and what real obstacles may arise.

With everything ready, we set off for Durazno. The ride went smoothly, but we discovered that the theoretical 400 km performance was quickly consumed. Driving at regulation speed, we arrived at our destination with only 20% of battery, well below the factory"s specifications.

When using the charging point at the Durazno gas station, we were faced with the first inconvenience. A couple of gasoline-powered vehicles were occupying the charging bays, which completely hindered the process. After a conversation with the management of the service station and a 30-minute wait, they moved the vehicles and we were able to charge the car for 4 hours at 7 kwh (slow charge), to continue the next day with the next trip.

The next stop was Tacuaremb?, 200 km from Durazno, and we met an electric vehicle on the road. What may seem nice turned into fear: if the vehicle were to charge at the only charger within the 100 km radius we intended to use, we would be forced to wait for its charging time and then our own, which would have complicated our trip. Fortunately, the car was diverted.

We finally arrived in Rivera, but with just enough, because unfortunately the steep slopes of the route in the north of our country made the engine work harder than expected, which reduced the load a lot. It didn"t help either that the Tranqueras charger was out of service, so, at 40 km per hour and with beacons on (for going on a national route at this speed), we traveled for 20 minutes until we reached our destination, remembering that, by going at a lower speed, the engine consumes less electricity and its performance is maximized.