

Erasmus CSI: translated article

With Scooters against climate change



Lawrence Leuschner is the owner of 65.000 e-scooters in Europe. Are the scooters just resource-intensive toys? Leuschner sees it as a contribution to climate protection.

Nobody here knows Leuschner. But everyone knows his product: He launched the black and green scooter on which he is currently speeding through the park. Leuschner is co-founder and managing director of Tier Mobility. The company has been offering electrically powered scooters for hire via app since 2018, and has also been available in Germany since summer 2019. 65.000 scooters with the brand's logo are currently available in European cities. But many see the Tier, Lime, Voi and Circ e-scooters as a useless toy that blocks footpaths, contests space for cyclists and uses up a lot of unavailable resources in production. Leuschner, on the other hand, claims that they could make a decisive contribution to climate change. How believable is this motivation?

“Millionaire is giving away his company shares”

Today you rarely see Leuschner in a shirt in front of the camera, instead in a T-shirt with a three-day beard and bun. He likes to tell the story of his change of heart, in podcasts, at industry meetings and in interviews. He knows its effect: it rounds off the image of an businessman and his personal mission. An important narrative for credibility?

Leuschner gives the impression that he actually stands behind what he says. Some of his statements sound unusually political for an businessman, for example: “Besides football, Germans love cars. But we all notice that we have to change something.” With the concept of an

ecological traffic turnaround he has dealt intensively, that becomes clear in discussion. And he is firmly convinced that companies have to make an important contribution in the fight against climate change. He also sees his previous company in this tradition: "We have given more than 100 million products a new life at reBuy," says Leuschner. This clearly sets the scale for Tier Mobility: the company only helps to reduce emissions if people actually leave their cars behind because of the scooter. But it is precisely on this point that there are doubts.

"Does Tier lag behind Leuschner's claims?"

Tier has commissioned the market research company YouGov to investigate the usage behavior of customers in Germany. 33 percent of those said that a scooter ride had already replaced a private car, car sharing or taxi ride. However, it was not asked often users had already chosen scooters instead of cars. This means that a car trip may only have been replaced in individual cases. The Federal Environment Agency has so far seen more disadvantages for the environment. The scooters would make walking and cycling less attractive, as they would further reduce space on the already narrow bike paths and sidewalks.

Does Tier Mobility fall short of the demands that Leuschner imposed on himself? The boss counts how much Tier does for sustainability: The batteries would be charged with green electricity. They are interchangeable, which saves the detour via a charging station. The life of the scooters has been extended to 36 months, according to the company. Discarded devices would be overhauled and resold. Leuschner's conclusion: "We have saved all emissions that could be saved." Tier compensated for the production in China and the transport by protecting the rainforest through the services provider Climate Partner. "In the end, we are even climate-positive because we are climate-neutral as a company and replace 30 percent of car rides," says Leuschner.

Sooner or later, people in the cities would get used to the scooters, integrate them more often in their everyday lives and do without their own cars, says Leuschner. His long-term goal is that 40 to 50 percent of scooters are used to replace car rides.

I have kept the article short and picked the most important aspects for our topic.

source: [Tier Mobility: Mit Rollern gegen den Klimawandel | ZEIT ONLINE](#)