

The Methane to Markets Partnership



Methane to Markets Partner Countries represent more than 60 percent of the world's anthropogenic methane emissions.

The Methane to Markets Partnership is a multilateral initiative uniting public and private interests to advance the recovery and use of methane as a clean energy source. Currently, 18 national governments and over 350 Project Network member organizations have joined the Partnership. By engaging public and private sector partners, this initiative brings together the technical and market expertise, financing, and technology necessary for project development.

The Methane to Markets Partnership focuses on developing projects in four major methane emission source areas: agriculture,

landfills, underground coal mines, and natural gas and oil systems. In each of these areas, cost-effective methane emission reduction technologies are currently available to capture and use the methane gas as a fuel for electricity generation, onsite energy needs, or offsite gas sales. Despite the availability of proven technologies and the benefits of collecting and using this gas instead of releasing it into the atmosphere, methane recovery and use is not widespread. In many countries, project development has been stymied by legal, regulatory, financial, institutional, informational, and other barriers. By addressing these barriers,

the Partnership will advance methane recovery and use.

The Steering Committee guides the work of the Methane to Markets Partnership. Playing a supporting role is the Administrative Support Group (ASG), or secretariat, which is currently housed at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Four subcommittees (Agriculture, Coal Mines, Landfills, Oil and Gas Systems) are responsible for the technical work in each of the Partnership's target sectors. These subcommittees have developed action plans that identify key barriers and issues for project development, plan the actions needed to overcome these barriers, address market assessment and reform issues, facilitate investment and financing opportunities, and report on progress to the Steering Committee.

Each subcommittee operates as a partnership between government representatives and the Project Network, which comprises private sector entities, financial institutions, and other governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Methane to Markets Partnership encourages the active involvement of the Project Network in all meetings and activities of the Partnership as a means of building capacity, transferring technology, and promoting private investment. To this end, the Partnership's Project Network serves as an informal mechanism to reach out to and facilitate communication and coordination among these organizations.

To date, over 350 organizations have joined the Partnership. Currently, about half of the Project Network members are U.S.-based companies with an interest in expanding business opportunities internationally.

The Methane to Markets Partnership expects to achieve significant economic,

Why Is Methane Important?

Methane (CH₄) is a hydrocarbon and the primary component of natural gas. It is also a potent GHG that is over 20 times as effective at trapping heat in the atmosphere as carbon dioxide (CO₂). Methane also has a much shorter atmospheric lifetime than CO₂ (about 12 years compared to about 200 years). As a result, reducing methane emissions can achieve significant climate benefits over the next 25 years.

Methane accounts for 16 percent of all GHG emissions globally, with about 60 percent of total methane emissions coming from anthropogenic (human-related) activities, including agriculture (manure waste and enteric fermentation), rice cultivation, coal mining, landfills, and oil and natural gas systems. Non-anthropogenic sources include wetlands, gas hydrates, permafrost, and termites.

For many of the major emission sources, collection and utilization of methane is possible using currently available technologies. Methane recovery and use provides multiple environmental, energy, and economic benefits by capturing a valuable, clean-burning fuel while reducing GHG emissions.

environmental, and energy benefits. The United States estimates that by 2015, the Partnership could be delivering annual reductions in methane emissions of up to 180 MMTCO₂E. This is the equivalent of recovering 500 billion cubic feet of natural gas. If achieved, these reductions could lead to stabilized or even declining levels of global atmospheric concentrations of methane. These reductions would be equivalent to the annual emissions from 33 million cars or 50 500-megawatt (MW) coal-fired power plants.