

The Methane to Markets Partnership



Methane to Markets Partner Countries contribute nearly 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. 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 emissions source areas: agriculture, underground coal mines, landfills, and natural gas and oil systems. In

each of these areas, cost-effective methane emissions 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, financial, institutional, informational, and other barriers have impeded project development. By addressing these barriers, the Partnership is advancing methane recovery and use throughout the world.

The Partnership now includes 21 Partners, with the European Commission, Poland, and Vietnam being the most recent additions. Together, these Partners represent nearly 60 percent of the world's anthropogenic methane emissions and 60 percent of emissions from the four target sectors.

The Methane to Markets Project Network also includes more than 600 private sector entities, financial institutions, nongovernmental agencies, and other organizations. This diverse group is active at Partnership meetings, present at workshops, and instrumental in moving project development from conception to implementation.

A 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 Mining, Landfills, Oil and Natural Gas Systems) are responsible for the technical work in each of the Partnership's target sectors.

Each subcommittee operates as a partnership of government representatives and the Project Network. The Methane to Markets Partnership encourages the active involvement of the Project Network in all its meetings and activities as a means of building capacity, transferring technology, and promoting private investment.

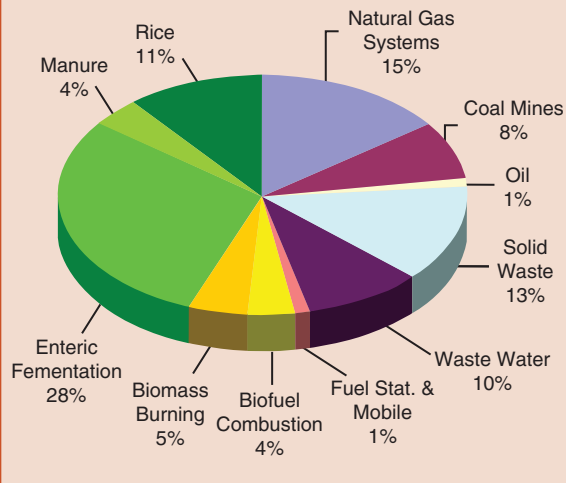
The Methane to Markets Partnership expects to achieve significant economic, environmental, and energy benefits. The United States estimates that within 10 years, if Partnership projects are fully implemented as planned, the Partnership could be delivering annual reductions in methane emissions of more than 180

Why Is Methane Important?

Methane is a hydrocarbon and the primary component of natural gas. It is also a potent greenhouse gas (GHG) that is more than 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 for CO₂). As a result, reducing methane emissions can achieve significant near-term climate, energy, and economic benefits.

Methane accounts for 16 percent of all GHG emissions globally, with about 60 percent of these emissions coming from anthropogenic (human-related) activities.

Global Anthropogenic Methane Emissions Sources, 2000



million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO₂E). This is the equivalent of recovering 500 billion cubic feet of natural gas, the annual emissions from 33 million cars, or the annual emissions from 50 500-megawatt coal-fired power plants. If achieved, these reductions could lead to stabilized or even declining levels of global atmospheric concentrations of methane.