

# Gas industry Declaration on the EU strategy to reduce methane emissions



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We, the signatories, welcome the Communication from the Commission on the EU Strategy to reduce methane emissions as we agree with the need to accelerate methane emissions reductions. We support the EU's climate-neutrality objective by 2050 upon the implementation of enabling measures. The energy transition will require substantial investments and behavioural changes, and our industry is ready to actively contribute to these.

We welcome the Methane Strategy's holistic approach, covering not only the energy sector, but also agriculture and waste with the aim to have an inclusive approach towards methane and to better exploit the synergies between sectors (e.g. injection of biomethane – produced from manure and waste - into the European gas grids) thereby helping to avoid emissions in other sectors.

The gas industry has successfully been working for many years to reduce methane emissions through mandatory and voluntary programmes, and remains strongly committed to undertake even stronger steps to further minimise methane emissions along the entire gas value chain.

We support the design and deployment of appropriate and cost-effective methane mitigation tools that take into account, among other things, the following principles and elements to achieve effective reductions:

- **Flexibility** is key for industry to implement the tools and available technologies enabling the highest emissions reduction at the lowest cost and in the shortest time. A **wide distribution of best practices** and **best available techniques** is already available. For example, the gas industry is deploying the Methane Guiding Principles' best practice toolkit<sup>1</sup>, that could be used as a starting point.
- A **well-structured, fit for purpose MRV** (monitoring, reporting and verification) **system**, as adequately outlined by the strategy, will be core for more accurate detecting and quantifying methane emissions along the gas value chain and will allow better evaluation of the results of mitigation measures in place.

<sup>1</sup> <https://methaneguidingprinciples.org/best-practice-toolkit/>

- We welcome the initiative of the European Commission to define a **methane emissions reporting framework for the full gas chain**. Its establishment will contribute to improve the transparency of the emissions data as well as the National Inventory Reports (NIR).
- We welcome that the strategy considers that investments undertaken by infrastructure operators in methane emissions reduction should be recognised within the scope of regulated activities, in order that MRV and mitigation **costs** are **allowed and actions accordingly incentivised** by the Regulatory Authorities. In the case of non-regulated operators, authorities should also ensure the investments and efforts through European and national incentives.
- We are **ready to support** the European Commission **in exploring the feasibility and added value of possible performance targets or standards** for natural gas as means to further incentivise methane emission reduction in the EU.
- Companies along the gas value chain should **account for** the methane emissions from the **assets under their control**.
- The previous long term efforts of the gas companies who took **early action** in measurement and mitigation should be **recognised** and fairly accounted for.
- The **innovation, development, improvement and implementation** of fit-for-purpose and appropriately targeted **technologies and practices** to improve MRV and to mitigate emissions are at the backbone of effective reduction of methane emissions. Therefore, these technologies and practices should be further **supported**. The gas industry, together with the European Commission, should consolidate and develop specific reference instruments to ensure best practice.
- The **global dimension** of methane emissions should be taken into account by **establishing an international methane emissions mechanism** (observatory) aimed at improving credibility and transparency. The gas industry supports the European Commission's intent to create with other intergovernmental organisations (e.g. UNEP) an international methane emissions mechanism. This initiative should be funded, scoped and governed by Governments and Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs), ensuring a level playing field for all stakeholders and should take into account the NIR to avoid emissions reporting duplication. Innovative ways to involve small operators and national stakeholders should also be pursued.
- **Cooperation with non-EU countries should be fostered** as it is key to address methane emission reductions along the chain of gas imported into the EU. The EU should share, strive for consistency and foster the impact of EU methane emission policies and help to disseminate best practices for cost-effective methane emission reductions across value chain segments. We fully support that the European Commission continues its active involvement in international initiatives on reducing emissions.

We, the signatories of this Declaration, collectively welcome and support the European Commission's work on this global issue and we stand ready to offer our expertise in this field to help achieving the climate neutrality objective. Methane emissions management and reduction is among the top priorities for the gas industry to contribute to the EU's climate-neutrality objective and to ensure that gas plays its role.