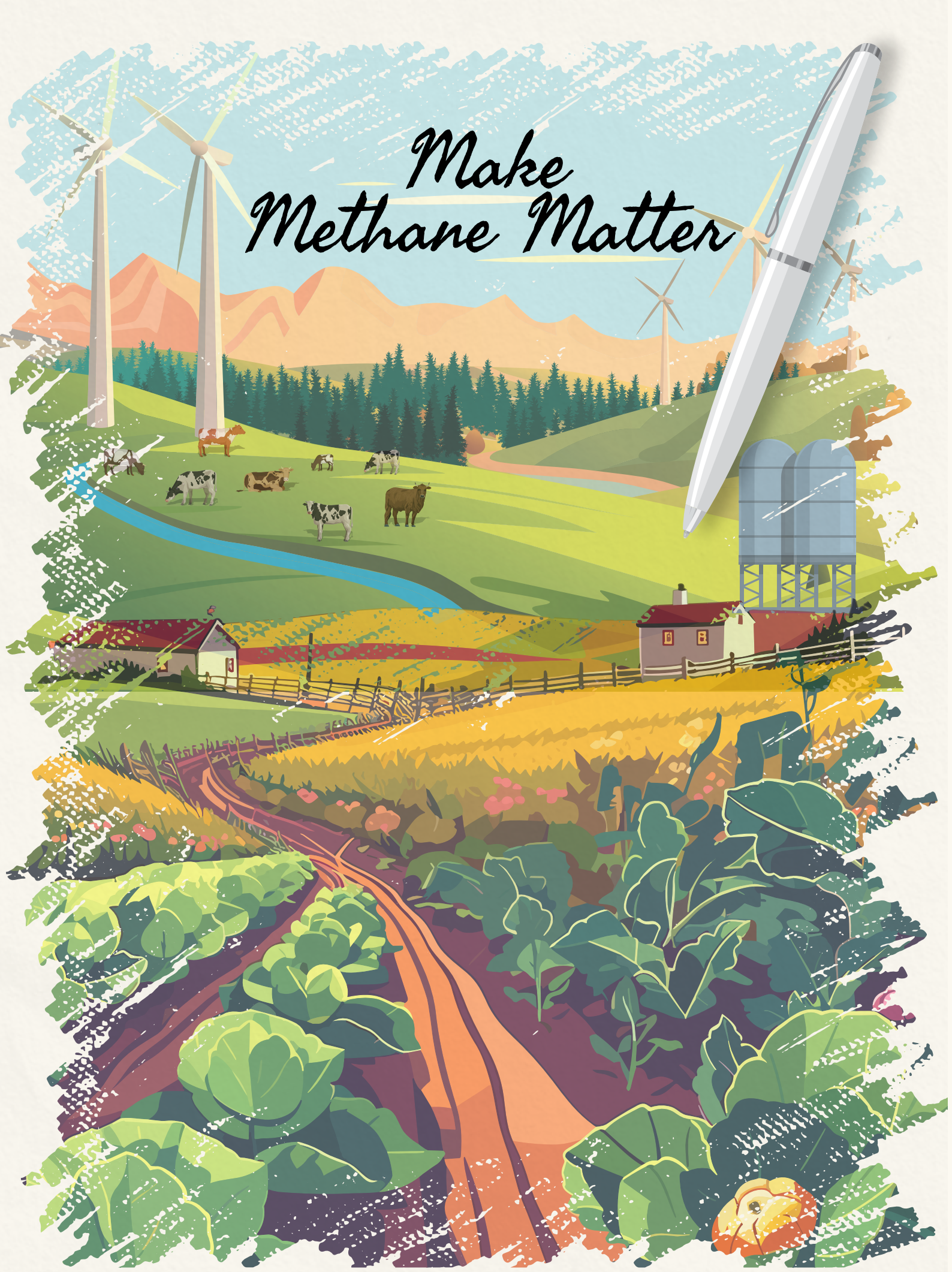


# Make Methane Matter



## What is methane and why care?

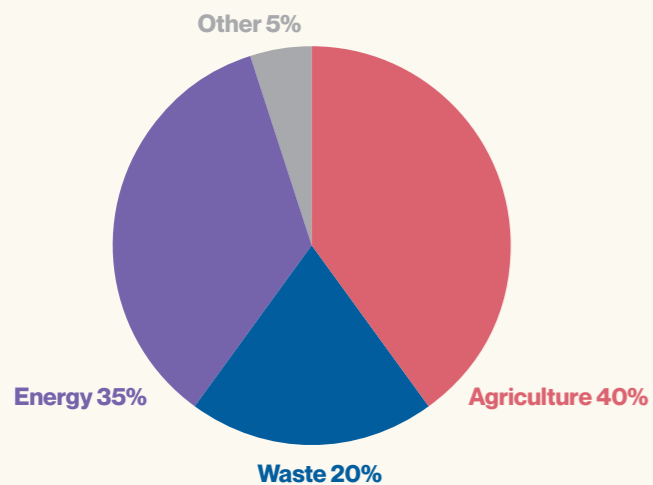
Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) is a potent greenhouse gas (GHG) with significant environmental and health impacts. It warms the planet around 30 times more than CO<sub>2</sub> over a 100 year period and over 80 times more over a 20 year period.<sup>1</sup>

Methane also acts as a precursor of air pollution, specifically to ground-level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), which poses severe health risks, including respiratory problems and aggravation of asthma. It also affects ecosystems

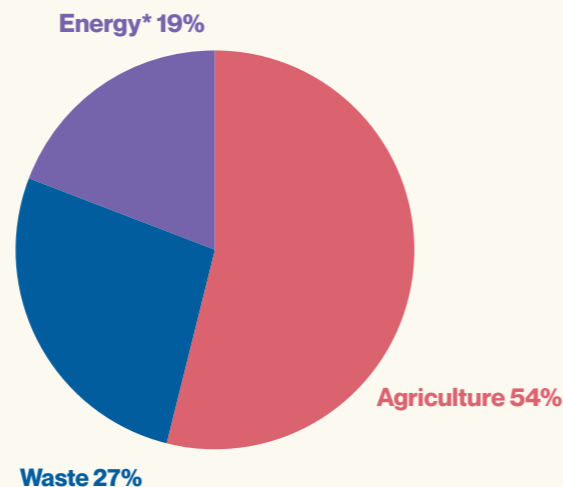
and the economy by harming sensitive species, and damaging crop harvests.

Recent surveys reveal that 77% of EU citizens are worried about climate change,<sup>2</sup> and 89% are concerned by respiratory health issues.<sup>3</sup> This highlights the urgency for Europe to act on methane emissions thereby mitigating climate change, protecting public health and the environment. This is where you come in.

Global Emission Sources of Anthropogenic Methane<sup>A</sup>



EU Emission Sources of Anthropogenic Methane<sup>B</sup>



\*This does not include methane emissions linked to fossil fuel imports. (The EU relies on imports for 70% of its coal consumption, 97% of its oil consumption and 90% of its fossil gas consumption.)

A [UNEP - Global Methane Assessment 2021](#)

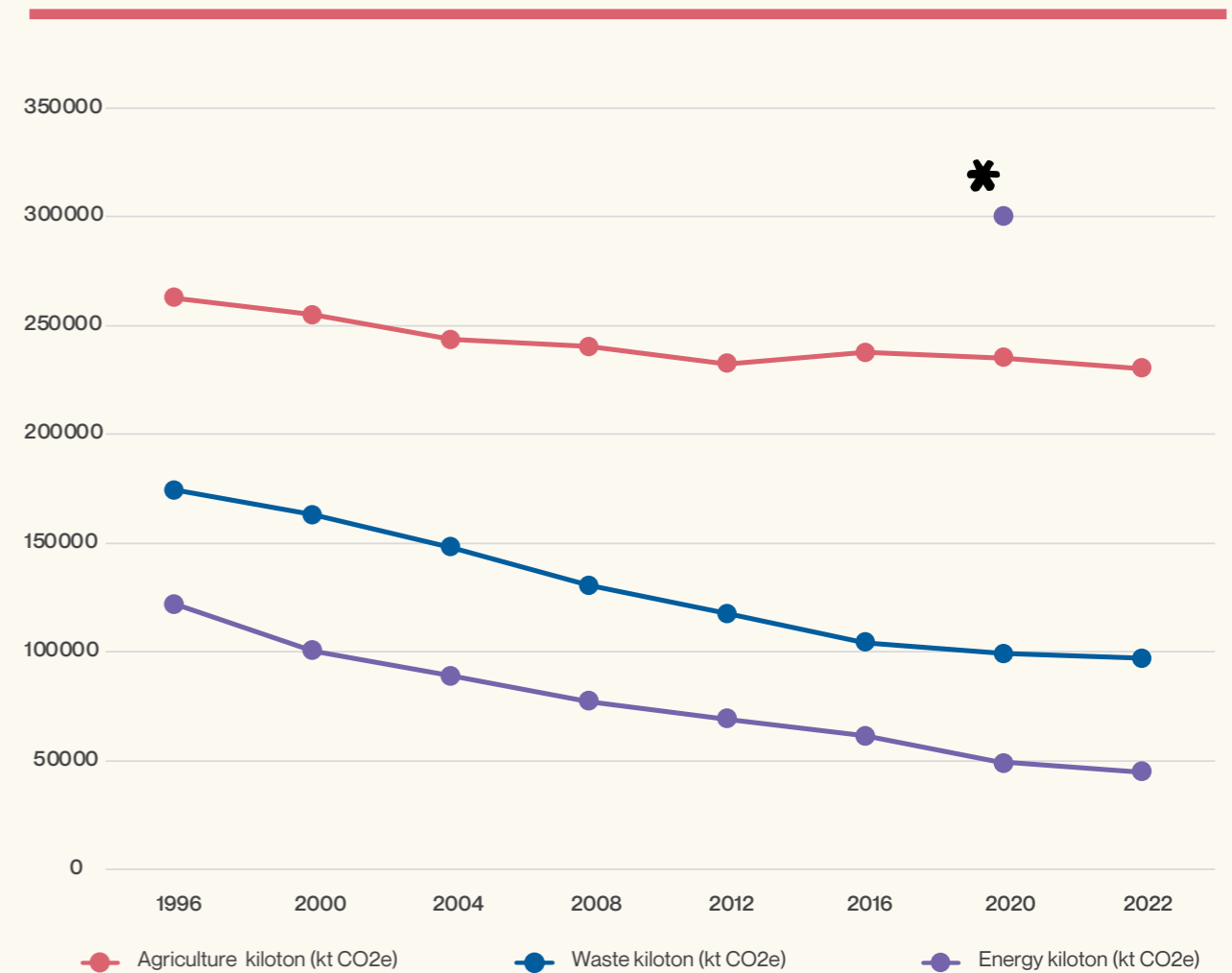
B [EU - Methane Action Plan 2022](#)

## EU commitments

The EU has set a number of objectives to tackle climate change, improve air quality, and protect ecosystems. Central to these goals is the EU's commitment to achieving climate neutrality by 2050, with intermediate targets to cut GHG by at least 55% by 2030. The EU is also the co-creator of the Global Methane Pledge, which sets an objective of reducing global methane emissions by 30% by 2030. The EU also aims to

improve air quality, by significantly reducing pollutants, and thereby ensuring a reduction of premature deaths caused by air pollution by 55%. Additionally, the EU's biodiversity strategy seeks to restore degraded ecosystems and enhance natural habitats, aiming to safeguard 30% of the EU's land and sea areas. Action on methane emissions can support the EU in achieving these goals and commitments.

1 [IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report - 2023](#)  
 2 [EU Special Eurobarometer 538 - May 2023 Climate Change](#)  
 3 [EU Barometer - Attitudes of Europeans towards Air Quality 2022](#)



[European Environment Agency \(EEA\) - Greenhouse gases data viewer 2024](#)

## Agriculture:

In the agriculture sector, methane emissions primarily come from enteric fermentation in ruminant animals like cows and sheep as a by-product of their digestion, and manure management.

## Waste:

In the waste sector, methane is released during the anaerobic decomposition of organic waste in landfills. Wastewater treatment facilities also contribute to methane emissions through the breakdown of organic matter in sewage.

## Energy:

In the energy sector, methane is emitted through the extraction, processing, and transportation of coal, oil, and gas. Significant methane leaks can and do occur along the entire fossil fuel supply chain which has major implications for imported fossil fuels. In fact 75-90% of the methane emissions associated with EU fossil fuel consumption are emitted before reaching EU borders.<sup>4</sup>

\* EU METHANE EMISSIONS FROM THE ENERGY SECTOR WHEN IMPORTED OIL AND GAS ARE INCLUDED

4 [European Commission - Inception Impact Assessment 2020](#)

## How to make methane matter

Methane's short lifespan makes it an attractive target for reducing climate warming quickly. Reducing human-caused methane emissions by up to 45% within a decade could prevent nearly 0.3°C of global warming by 2045 according to UNEP. This would support limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C, aligning with the Paris Agreement goal and prevent health issues and premature deaths from ground-level ozone (air pollution). In addition, global crop yields could increase by more than 25 million tonnes per year.<sup>5</sup>

As an incoming MEP we are asking you to work on closing these policy gaps to protect the health of EU citizens and our climate.

### You can:

- **Define binding EU and national methane emission reduction targets, including EU and National Methane Action Plans focused across all three sectors**
- **Ensure binding approaches to tackle methane reductions include agriculture as the most polluting sector, promoting dietary shift and sustainable farming practices**
- **Set a target to reduce the landfilling of untreated waste to zero and set binding targets for bio-waste collection, limiting its presence in mixed waste**
- **Ensure the Methane Regulation is strengthened via its implementing and delegated acts to effectively address the methane emissions linked to fossil fuel imports**
- **Include methane in air quality legislation like the National Emission reduction Commitments Directive and the UNECE Gothenburg Protocol as a key air pollution precursor**
- **And promote efforts by the international community to reduce methane emissions globally**

## About Us

Methane Matters is a consortium of European non-governmental organisations working across the energy, agriculture and waste sectors to secure emission reductions. The project aims to catalyse EU leadership in the implementation of the Global Methane Pledge (GMP), advocating for additional mitigation measures, strong enforcement of existing regulatory frameworks, the definition of new legal and policy instruments and the adoption of national action plans implementing the GMP in key European countries.

