



TOWARDS A METHANE ABATEMENT FRAMEWORK

Coordinating action in the
energy sector.

INTRODUCTION

With the climate clock ticking, translating political commitments into implementation has never been more urgent. Without rapid action, the window to avoid the worst impacts of warming is closing fast.

Cutting methane emissions represents one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to slow the rate of global warming in the near-term, making it a critical lever for immediate climate action.¹

The Global Methane Pledge (GMP), launched at the 26th Conference of the Parties (CoP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2021 and now endorsed by 160 countries, sets out a collective commitment to reduce methane across the waste, energy and agriculture sectors by 30 per cent by 2030.

The GMP sparked a surge in political attention on methane and mobilised a community of actors committed to abating emissions. However, halfway through the timeline, progress remains uneven. While membership continues to grow, most countries have yet to translate their commitment into concrete action.

A key challenge delaying implementation is that methane continues to be treated as a single, homogenous issue. In reality, the mitigation measures needed are very different across sectors. The tools required in the fossil fuel sector are not the same as those needed in agriculture or waste, yet many of the conversations still operate at a high level, without sector-specific spaces for technical exchange and regulatory coordination.

This lack of granularity slows progress – governments and stakeholders cannot share best practices, identify feasible interventions or design and align policies tailored to the specific challenges of each sector. Without these spaces, the GMP risks remaining a broad political objective rather than a driver of implementation and, ultimately, mitigation. Attention must now shift from pledges to regime-building, developing the rules, governance and accountability frameworks that can support implementation for each sector.

This briefing highlights how the UK-led panel of governments, established through the CoP30 statement on “Drastically reducing methane emissions in the Global Fossil Fuel Sector” can provide the coordinating structure that is missing and evolve from a political signal into a driver of action.²

IMPLEMENTATION IN THE ENERGY SECTOR

The energy sector is the most advanced candidate for a coordinated implementation framework.

On one hand, the scale and urgency of emissions reductions required are significant. To align with the International Energy Agency (IEA) Net Zero Emissions Scenario, global fossil fuel-related methane emissions must fall by 75 per cent by 2030.³ On the other hand, the sector already benefits from a growing ecosystem of regulatory and voluntary initiatives targeting emissions reductions across the full fossil fuel supply chain. These include:

- **Europe.** The European Union (EU) Methane Regulation (EUMR) introduces measurement and mitigation requirements for fossil fuels placed on the EU market, including imports⁴

- **Asia.** Japan leads the Coalition for LNG Emission Abatement towards Net-zero (CLEAN) initiative to monitor emissions linked to LNG imports, supported by the Republic of Korea, Australia, European Commission and the USA⁵
- **Latin America.** The Latin American and Caribbean Energy Organization (OLACDE) launched the Community of Practice on Methane Emissions in Latin America and the Caribbean (COEMLAC), a regional platform aimed at strengthening technical cooperation and promoting concrete solutions for methane emissions mitigation in the energy sector.⁶

While these initiatives show important political momentum, they are developing in parallel rather than as part of a coordinated approach. This fragmentation leads to three major challenges.

First, requirements risk regulatory divergence. Different importing regions are exploring their own methodologies, transparency requirements and definitions. Without alignment, this can create confusion rather than convergence.

Second, structured exchange between governments is limited. Lessons on regulatory design, enforcement challenges, data collection and engagement with exporters are not systematically shared. As a result, countries may duplicate efforts, repeat avoidable mistakes or miss opportunities to build on emerging best practices.

Third, the signal to producer countries remains uneven. While individual measures may be ambitious, fragmentation weakens the overall demand signal. For producers making longer-term investment decisions, clarity and predictability are critical. In the absence of coherent expectations across markets, incentives to invest in systemic methane abatement are reduced.

At the same time, international organisations with significant expertise on methane emissions are operating various initiatives that seek to build capacity in producer countries, providing both financial and technical assistance, including:

- **Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC).** The Fossil Fuel Regulatory Programme (FFRP) provides developing countries with tailored solutions for capacity development, regulatory frameworks and compliance with existing frameworks
- **International Methane Emissions Observatory (IMEO).** The Oil and Gas Methane Partnership 2.0 (OGMP2.0) offers a comprehensive, measurement-based international reporting framework for the fossil-fuel sector
- **World Bank.** The Global Flaring and Methane Reduction Partnership provides funding and technical expertise to governments and state-owned oil companies to reduce methane emissions.

These initiatives provide valuable support but are not systematically coordinated. This can lead to overlap in some areas and gaps in others. For countries seeking to reduce emissions, the myriad of actors in the space can lead to initiative fatigue, as navigating this landscape can be complex and resource intensive.

From an industry perspective, progress is also advancing. OGMP2.0 coverage extends to more than 150 companies with assets representing roughly 45 per cent of the world's oil and gas production and more than 80 per cent of LNG flows.⁷ Assets responsible for 1,000 billion cubic metres of fossil gas are expected to reach Level 5 by 2030, a volume roughly equivalent to the entire global net trade of fossil gas.⁸ At the same time, under the Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter (OGDC), 50 companies representing more than 40 per cent of global oil and gas production have committed to achieving 0.2 per cent methane emissions intensity by 2030.⁹

In comparison, in 2024, assets reporting at OGMP2.0 Level 5 recorded an average methane-emissions intensity of approximately 0.1 per cent.¹⁰ Taken together, these parallel tracks show a clear trajectory towards greater reporting and transparency, alongside increasing volumes of low-methane-intensity fuels.

A large segment of the fossil-fuel industry, including the oil and gas majors, are well advanced in their efforts to abate methane emissions from operated assets. However, progress remains concentrated among major international companies; and regulatory backstops to lock in progress and extend coverage are lacking. Significant gaps persist in countries dominated by national oil companies where access to capital, technical capacity and governance structures may be more limited.

There is also work to be done on non-operated joint ventures. A CATF study on flaring found that seven of the 10 major oil companies analysed have higher flaring intensities at non-operated assets than operated assets.¹¹ Azul Energy is linked to approximately 90 per cent of all flaring in Angola.¹² The company operates and reports as an independent entity, despite being jointly owned by BP and Eni. Ownership structures should promote the sharing of best practices, rather than shield companies from responsibility.



THE CASE FOR A METHANE ABATEMENT FRAMEWORK

In light of the increased political attention, evolving regulatory landscape and the growing number of technical and financial initiatives, there is a need for a more structured approach to coordination in the energy sector.

At CoP30, the UK led a statement on Drastically Reducing Methane Emissions in Global Fossil Fuel Sector. The statement, signed by 11 countries and several international institutions, outlines six key actions to drive robust monitoring, transparent reporting, elimination of routine flaring and venting and stronger partnerships between producing and consuming nations.

Most importantly, the statement calls for the creation of a panel of governments to work towards the development of a near-zero methane intensity marketplace. This type of forum could help address the coordination gaps identified above. If properly designed, the panel could:

- transform parallel initiatives and regulations into a shared direction of travel
- create a community of practice to support peer-learning and knowledge transfer
- signal to producing countries that there is a demand for low-methane fossil fuels
- act as a one-stop-shop, ensuring individual initiatives amount to more than the sum of their parts.

To achieve this, the country-led panel should evolve into a Methane Abatement Framework (MAF) and go beyond market measures alone. To ensure it delivers on its full potential, the MAF should focus on the following priorities:

1. NATIONAL REGULATIONS

While market measures can be an effective lever, industry uptake of methane mitigation measures remains insufficient, even though most measures can be implemented at low- or no-cost. National policies are therefore essential, not only to enforce implementation and ensure robust monitoring, but also to provide coherence within the country and prevent a patchwork of uncoordinated industry initiatives.

A key task for the panel is to define what constitutes “near-zero” methane intensity across the entire fossil fuel value chain. This should be underpinned by a clear set of regulatory measures aligned with best available science and recommendations, including:

- harmonised monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) aligned with OGMP2.0 requirements
- regular leak and detection and repair (LDAR)
- bans on routine venting and flaring
- deployment of best available technologies across operations via technology standards.

Most importantly, these measures must apply across the full supply chain, from extraction and processing to transport and distribution. When importing countries adopt regulations that span the full supply chain, exporting countries are in turn incentivised to develop their own regulatory frameworks to maintain market access. This creates a ripple effect, encouraging the adoption of regulations in countries that might not otherwise have implemented them.

The EUMR is a case study of legislation addressing emissions both domestically and linked to imports. While each jurisdiction will require an approach adapted to the local regulatory and market context, it is essential that countries agree a common set of measures. Without alignment, exporting countries could face a burdensome patchwork of different requirements, undermining efficiency and the broader goal of creating a near-zero methane marketplace.

2. MARKET SIGNALS

Alongside robust measurement, monitoring, reporting and verification (MMRV) practices, the UK-led initiative seeks to effectively use market signals to accelerate methane emission reductions to achieve near-zero methane intensity. The creation of a marketplace for low intensity fuels will be a key driver of action, sending a clear signal to industry actors and fossil-fuel producers to reduce their supply-chain emissions.



Methane performance could become a differentiator in future markets as we work towards the phase-out of fossil fuels, but markets alone are unlikely to prioritise fuels of low methane intensity by default. Deliberate intervention will be required to set up the enabling conditions that will consider environmental attributes alongside price, thereby creating a demand for low-methane-intensity fuels. This may require adjustments to existing contractual structures, clauses linking purchase agreements to emission performance or a willingness from importers to offer price premiums.

At the same time, safeguards are needed to maintain environmental integrity. A critical risk in creating a marketplace for low-methane-intensity fuels is that operators could market these fuels as “green” or as a transition fuel, creating a false impression of environmental benefit.

To prevent this, the MAF must include clear rules that prohibit misleading claims, ensuring that low-methane fuels are recognised only for their relative emissions performance, not as environmentally clean or carbon-neutral. This protects the integrity of the market and ensures that incentives for methane reductions do not undermine the broader goal of phasing out fossil fuels.

While a variety of actors support an upstream intensity value of 0.2 per cent, as demonstrated by the 2030 industry target for OGDC members, consistent and interoperable methodologies should be prioritised as a first step to enable comparisons between fossil fuel flows from different regions based on environmental attributes. In an increasingly oversupplied LNG market, such comparisons will play an important role in guiding investment decisions.

3. CAPACITY-BUILDING AND COORDINATION

A MAF should also strengthen coordination across governments and supporting institutions via:

- **community of practice.** Countries should appoint both political and technical specialists to create a community of practice that enables structured peer learning and knowledge exchange. Regional hubs, made up of country focal points, could also be established to coordinate market signals across jurisdictions and ensure an aligned approach
- **partnerships.** Partnerships between importing and exporting countries are key to ensuring developing countries receive the support they need to implement the measures required to meet import requirements. The Methane Abatement Partnership Roadmap offers a framework for collaboration between importing and exporting countries.¹³ Based on existing trade relationships, importing countries would partner with export partners under a ‘buddy system’ to provide technical assistance, capacity-building and financial support.¹⁴ Bilateral agreements may involve clearly defined mitigation measures or targets and commitments to purchase low-methane fuels
- **collaboration.** Organisations such as the CCAC, IMEO, Oil and Gas Climate Initiative (OGCI), World Bank and other multilateral development banks and bilateral agencies should agree on a set of Terms of Reference and a clear Theory of Change to coordinate their activities effectively. Each organisation should have a sequenced and complementary role, ensuring that efforts are aligned, duplication is avoided and gaps are addressed. This coordination will make it easier for developing countries to access support and ensure resources are deployed strategically to accelerate methane abatement.

WHY JOIN THE PANEL AND DEVELOP A METHANE ABATEMENT FRAMEWORK?

The transition from a government-led panel to a government-led MAF will only be effective if it brings together a critical mass of participating countries across the fossil fuel value chain.

Joining the UK-led panel offers governments a practical pathway to shape and benefit from this emerging framework, while demonstrating leadership on methane mitigation.

Participation in the panel, and in what could eventually become the MAF, offers several advantages:

- **shape future regulatory frameworks.** Members can engage directly in discussions that will influence the design of emerging standards, methodologies and governance approaches. Early participation ensures that national priorities and sector-specific realities are considered as frameworks develop
- **visibility and credibility.** For both producers and consumers, joining the panel is a public commitment to methane performance that goes beyond pledges. In an LNG market that is becoming increasingly oversupplied, and where environmental attributes are beginning to influence procurement decisions, this signal has tangible commercial value



- **access to coordinated financial and technical assistance.** Developing countries navigate multiple programmes, reporting frameworks and bilateral relationships to access assistance. A MAF provides a structured entry point into this landscape, with clearer pathways to technical and financial support from the CCAC, IMEO, World Bank and bilateral agencies
- **market prioritisation.** For fossil fuel exporting countries, joining the panel signals a clear commitment to methane mitigation. Engagement creates opportunities for agreements with importing countries, helping secure market access and preferential consideration for low-methane-intensity supply as frameworks and procurement practices evolve.

CONCLUSION

The energy sector has the tools, the regulatory momentum and industry engagement to deliver on the GMP. What it lacks is the coordinating structure to ensure these efforts amount to more than the sum of their parts.

Evolving the panel into a MAF would allow it to use the full range of available tools, including peer learning, regulatory alignment, coordination of technical and financial support and market mechanisms – filling a coordination gap without creating a new parallel initiative.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

JACK CORSCADDEN
Climate Campaigner
Environmental Investigation Agency
jackcorscadden@eia-international.org

KIM O'DOWD
Senior Climate Campaigner
Environmental Investigation Agency
kimodowd@eia-international.org

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EIA UK
62-63 Upper Street, London, N1 0NY, UK
eia-international.org
+44 (0)20 7354 7960