

Methane emissions reduction in the energy sector

2021/0423(COD) - 09/05/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 477 votes to 53, with 98 abstentions, **amendments** to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on methane emissions reduction in the energy sector and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/942.

The matter was referred back to the competent committees for inter-institutional negotiations.

The main amendments adopted in plenary concern the following points:

Union target for methane emissions reduction

In order to achieve the long-term temperature objective of the Paris Agreement, the objective of zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and **the objective of the global methane commitment to reduce global anthropogenic methane emissions by at least 30% by 2030** compared to 2020 levels, the Commission should propose, by 31 December 2025 at the latest and on the basis of an impact assessment, a binding EU methane emission reduction target for 2030, covering all relevant emitting sectors.

Member States should jointly ensure that methane emissions from the energy sector in the Union are reduced to a level that achieves the social benefits of methane mitigation at least cost by 2030 at the latest. Member States should set national methane emission reduction targets as part of their integrated national energy and climate plans.

Verifications

Verifiers should assess the conformity of the emissions reports submitted to them by operators, mine operators or importers, insofar as those importers are required to do so. Where no European or international standards are available, operators or mine operators should provide information to the verifiers on the standards or methodologies used by the operators, mine operators or importers for the purpose of verification activities. Verifiers should conduct **announced and unannounced site checks** to determine the reliability, credibility and accuracy of the data sources and methodologies used.

Monitoring and reporting

No later than 10 months from the date of entry into force of the Regulation, operators should submit to the competent authorities, for all sources, a **report** containing the quantification of source-level methane emissions estimated using at least generic emission factors for all sources.

Operators and undertakings established in the Union should submit a report to the competent authorities containing a quantification of source level methane emissions: (i) for operated assets no later than 12 months from the date of entry into force of the Regulation; and (ii) for non-operated assets no later than 24 months from the date of entry into force of the Regulation, provided that these assets have not already been reported by an operator.

Monitoring and reporting should refer to the global warming potential, which is on a 100-year time scale 29,8 times greater than carbon dioxide and 8,5 times more potent than carbon dioxide on a 20-year time scale.

Mitigation

Operators should take all appropriate mitigation measures available to them to prevent and minimise methane emissions from their operations. No later than 6 months after the entry into force of the Regulation, the Commission should present a report on the impact of the introduction of an ambitious upstream performance standard for methane emission intensity for the oil and gas imported into or extracted from the Union.

Detecting and repairing leaks

No later than **6 months** from the date of entry into force of the Regulation, operators should submit a leakage detection and repair programme to the competent authorities. Not later than 9 months from the date of entry into force of the Regulation, operators should carry out an investigation of all relevant components under their responsibility in accordance with the leakage detection and repair programme.

Thereafter, leak detection and repair surveys should be carried out at the following frequencies:

- **once every two months** for all above-ground components using detection devices with the minimum detection limit of 17 grams per hour of methane at standard temperature and pressure;
- **once every four months** for all above-ground components using detection devices with a minimum detection limit of 50 ppm by volume of methane or 1 gram per hour;
- **once every five months** for all underground components using detection devices with the minimum detection limit of 500 ppm or 5 grams/hour of methane for underground components.

Operators should repair or replace all methane leaking components. The repair or replacement of the components should take place immediately after detection, or as soon as possible for a first attempt but **no later than five days after detection**. Repairs or replacements should use state-of-the-art technologies and materials that provide long-term protection against future leakage.

Where operators can demonstrate that the repair is not successful or possible within five days due to safety or technical considerations, the operators should provide evidence for the delay to the competent authorities and shall establish a **repair and monitoring schedule** no later than 5 days after detection. The repair and monitoring **schedule** should be set so that the found leakages are repaired within **30 days** after detection.

Operators should establish, maintain and make fully available to the competent authorities, a record of all decisions to delay repair. Every year, operators should submit a report summarising the results of all the surveys completed and all corresponding repair and monitoring schedules during the previous year to the competent authorities of the Member State where the relevant assets are located.

Prohibition of methane venting

Venting of methane through ventilation shafts in coal mines emitting more than five tonnes of methane /kilotonne of coal mined , other than coking coal mines, should be prohibited from 1 January 2027, except where it would pose a direct threat to the health and life of working miners and would increase the work-safety risk in mining plants. Venting of methane through ventilation shafts in coal mines emitting more than three tonnes of methane/kilotonne of coal mined, other than coking coal mines, should be **prohibited from 1 January 2031**.

Importer requirements

As of 1 January **2026**, importers of coal, oil and gas, should demonstrate that exporters of coal, oil and gas into the Union comply with the requirements for the measurement, monitoring, reporting and verification, leak detection and repair, and venting and flaring established in this Regulation.