



clean air farming

Reducing Ammonia and Methane Emissions from Agriculture

Report on Conference

FOR CLEANER AIR AND CLIMATE PROTECTION: Reducing Agricultural Methane Emissions Windows of Opportunity in the EU policy and beyond

11. July 2022 Brussels/Hybrid

Mitigating methane emissions from all relevant sources is essential to comply with the Paris Agreement and to achieve the goals under the European Green Deal. Furthermore, it is an important component to reduce air pollution, as methane is a precursor of harmful ground-level ozone. However, given the short-term lifetime of methane in the atmosphere, a significant reduction of methane emissions has short-term benefits for the climate – and the power to avoid reaching irreversible tipping points in climate change.

Reducing methane emissions requires concrete reduction targets and binding legislation, especially from the agricultural sector, which contributes to about 55 percent of total EU methane emissions.

At the EU level, several legislative instruments with potential to methane mitigation in agriculture are currently proposed or revised – the Methane Regulation, the Effort Sharing Regulation, LULUCF Regulation or the Industrial Emissions Directive. In addition, the Gothenburg Protocol addressing long-range transboundary air pollution is under review now. Moreover, the EU and signatory member states are working on concrete measures to fulfil their commitment under the Global Methane Pledge. This gives us the momentum to finally regulate agricultural methane emissions and integrate reduction obligations into EU policy.

We discussed with a broad audience the current course for a sustainable reduction of agricultural methane emissions and had a look at the "Windows of Opportunity" that European policy is currently providing us.

The informative event was divided into two sections. At the beginning, different aspects of the necessity of methane reduction were highlighted. Furthermore, it was indicated where our so-

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ciety must get the encouragement to move forward ambitiously with methane reduction, especially in agriculture. Beyond that, it was explained which technical, consumption-side, social and political options are available for an effective and targeted methane reduction and how these must be implemented in order to achieve the greatest possible effects. Special focus was placed on the synergy effects that can result for climate protection and air pollution control.

The second part was characterised by a panel discussion. The participants were Margherita Tolotto (European Environmental Bureau), Rob Maas (Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling, UNECE), Niels Peter Nørring (European Farmers' Union, COPA-COGECA), and Nusa Urbancic (Changing Markets Foundation). The panel agreed on the importance of methane reduction for climate protection and the responsibility of the agricultural sector. Methane mitigation has a key role to play over the next 30 years. Reducing the emissions can prevent us from reaching irreversible tipping points in the climate system and a share of 55% in the EU comes from agriculture. We need policy change at the EU level. The European Union must establish a framework for regulating methane in agriculture. Besides technological solutions, a more extensive production, fewer animals, and less meat and dairy in our diets are essential aspects - these go hand in hand and imply a system change in agriculture and our societies. This system change creates multiple benefits such as for cleanair, biodiversity conservation, animalwelfare and humanhealth.

The panel discussion shows different perspectives to the agricultural methane reduction topic, but all participants agree on the consensus, we need to reduce methane! For this, all parties show the commitment to keep the discussion on track, to find solutions *together* and to inform about them and their implementation, to create awareness and to communicate in a transparent way.

Presentations:

- » **Patrick Ten Brink** (*Secretary General, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)*):
“Clean Air Farming Project Wrap-up and thematic placement in the political context”
- » **Rob Maas** (*Co-Chair of Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling (TFIAM) at UNECE*):
“Methane mitigation and agriculture: towards an integrated approach”
- » **Prof. Hermann Lotze-Campen**, (*Head of Research Department 2 "Climate Resilience", Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)*):
“The chance of methane regulation for climate protection”

List of participating Institutions

#SustainablePublicAffairs
Administration of Technical Agricultural Services (LU)
Air Quality Consultants (GB)
Airclim
BNP Paribas Exane
Brunswick Group
Changing Markets Foundation
COPA-COGECA
Danish Agriculture & Food Council
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (IE)
Deutsche Umwelthilfe
DSM
European Commission - DG Agriculture
European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
European Parliament
German Environment Agency
German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection
German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture
German Ministry for the Environment
Global Strategic Communications Council (GSCC Network)
medienbuero eco
Ministry of Agriculture (HU)
Ministry of Technology and Industry (HU)
Ministry of the Environment of CZ
National Institute for Public Health and the Environment
NEEMO
Permanent representation of Lithuania to the EU
Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)
Thuenen Institute