



# What Is the UAE’s Methane Reduction Plan?

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The UAE is aiming to deploy the latest in advanced technologies and sustainable energy generation systems to reduce its environmental impact as part of its methane reduction plan. First announced in the wake of the COP26 summit in Glasgow last year, the plan will help the country (and by extension, the global community) to achieve its target of slashing methane emissions by 30% by 2030.

The plan itself is part of a wider drive by the UAE to become a regional and international leader in enhancing food security and curbing emissions in inhospitable conditions. This means investigating new methods of agriculture, switching to greener means of energy production and implementing the most forward-thinking techniques in waste disposal.

## A potent greenhouse gas

Although carbon dioxide might hog the headlines when it comes to climate change, methane actually has [a far stronger global warming potential](#) (albeit over a shorter timescale). In fact, it has the ability to retain up to 86 times more heat in the atmosphere than carbon over a 20-year period.

This makes it a prime target for achieving short-term gains with minimal impact, since the technologies to make a difference already exist. In fact, if the key areas of energy generation, agriculture and waste disposal are targeted and treated all over the world, it’s believed that 0.2°C of global warming could be averted.

## Signing up to the pledge

It’s for this reason that the UAE has joined the COP26 pledge to curb methane emissions by almost a third by the end of the decade, as compared to the levels recorded at the start of it. To date, more than 100 countries (including the USA and the UK) have signed up to the pledge, accounting for over half of methane emissions worldwide.

The UAE is already a leader in this industry and as such, its assignment can grant the country the opportunity to provide a blueprint for others to follow. Since the opening of the nation’s first LPG extraction site some 50 years ago, the government has overseen a reduction of more than 90% in natural gas flaring. That has



contributed to its hydrocarbon sector having one of the lowest methane intensities in the world, at just 0.01%.

## **Building for the future**

Despite the country’s already impressive performance, the UAE government are not content to rest on their laurels and wish to further clean up their environmental credentials across a variety of sectors. One means of improving their energy-related emissions performance is to pioneer the use of blue hydrogen as an additive to natural gas.

Elsewhere, the UAE is also busy overhauling its agricultural industry. The hot and arid conditions of the Emirati desert make cultivating crops a highly challenging endeavour, which is why the country currently imports some 85% of its food. But by investing in new smart agri-tech ventures such as vertical farming, drones and precision farming, it hopes to set an example for other inhospitable countries to follow.