

Meeting: Managing Methane in Extractive Industries

Time: 07:45 –08:45, March 29, 2016

Location: Global Methane Forum, Room C, Washington D.C.

Attendees:

- Felicia Ruiz, International Team Lead, US EPA and GMI Coal Sub Committee
- Michael Stanley, Sector Lead for Energy and Extractive Industries, World Bank
- Scott Bartos, International Program Manager, US EPA and GMI Oil and Gas
- Phillip Swanson, Administrator, CCAC Oil and Gas Methane Partnership (OGMP)
- Pamela Franklin, Team Leader, Coalbed Methane Outreach Program, US EPA and GMI
- Ray Pilcher, Chair of UNECE Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane
- Pierce Riemer, Director General, World Petroleum Council
- Francisco Sucre, Regional Coordinator, World Bank's Global Gas Flaring Reduction Partnership (GGFR)
- Scott Foster, Director, UNECE Sustainable Energy Division
- David Elzinga, Economic Affairs Officer, UNECE Sustainable Energy Division

Conclusions/Action Items:

- UNECE will circulate a short document on terms of reference or a table of contents for a report to be developed on Managing Methane in Extractive Industries and will request comment.
- UNECE can coordinate current activities, but under current resource constraints (both financial and personnel) this will be challenging.
- Based on the positive response from the meeting, bilateral coordination will begin with the respective coal, gas and oil sectors. Based on the general structure of the industries, a hybrid structure was proposed (leads shown in brackets):
 - Coal (CMM)
 - Upstream Oil and Gas (WPC)
 - Downstream Oil (WPC)
 - Downstream Gas (GEG)

The three-legged stool has turned into a four-legged stool. While each of the expert groups and WPC can lead the work on their respective topics, the higher level task force on Methane Management in Extractive Industries will require a chair. The remainder of the higher level task force will comprise the chairs of the groups working on each leg.

- Agreement on the following next steps for the respective groups, across the 3 sectors:
 - **Step 1:** Develop a sort of survey
 - Academia, companies, countries?
 - Get a good understanding of who is active and who is doing what in this area so we know who needs to be under the tent
 - **Step 2:** Develop a roadmap for each group to produce a plan as to where, what and when – focusing on phase 1..and allow the subsequent phases to take shape as we have more information
 - **Step 3:** Best practice guidance
- Under the auspices of UNECE, an update of progress on Methane in Extractive Industries will be given at the next Committee on Sustainable Energy, scheduled for 26(pm)-28 September 2016 in Geneva.

Discussion:

1. Scott Foster thanked attendees and provided an introduction to the meeting:
 - Described briefly the paper on methane management in extractive industries that had been prepared for the last meeting of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. As noted in that report, the information that is available regarding methane is relatively sporadic and often based on estimates/guesstimates. There is neither a common technological approach to monitoring and recording methane emissions, nor a standard method to reporting them, which means that the extent of the challenge and opportunity remains undefined. There is also a need with respect to each of the fossil fuel extraction industries for a discussion of the best remediation approaches and technologies.
 - Suggested a structure across extractive industries as “three legs of a stool: coal, gas and oil”, with an integrative piece that brings all the pieces together as the “seat of the stool”.
 - Pointed out the stakeholders in the room and respective areas of focus and expertise, noting the input that UNECE could have into efforts needed on this topic. Focused on the need for collaboration, the lack of high quality data needed for methane management.
 - Proposed several ideas – with the overarching objective make progress in a consistent manner across coal, gas and oil, such as working to the same table of contents:
 1. Set of surveys for each leg, but consistent across the legs, as to what countries are doing
 2. Defining best practice for monitoring and reporting, across the 3 sectors
 3. Develop a best practice guide for abatement.
2. Discussed how duplication could be avoided and how to leverage past efforts and existing programmes:
 - Question was asked as to the additional value of UNECE compared to existing stakeholders and programmes and how this could be organized to ensure clear definitions of tasks and responsibilities.
 - UNECE is a regional inter-governmental body, with the ability to easily expand messages/reports/initiatives to other UN regional commissions, adding to impact.
 - UNECE’s membership include important countries whose engagement could advance this agenda in important ways.
 - As a UN body, UNECE offers a platform for intergovernmental consensus that can rise up to the ECOSOC level, it has convening power to assemble all relevant stakeholders, and its outputs have the credibility of its platform and its process.
 - With respect to resourcing: Most of the groups of experts in UNECE work without additional funding – the work is the result of experts collaborating directly. This model can be effective, but increases the time needed for meaningful progress. The issue of methane management is compelling and it is expected that funding can be found. If there is agreement, a process could be put in place to seek additional funding.
3. DG of World Petroleum Council (WPC) gave a summary of the organization and work.
 - WPC was formed in 1930’s – aim was to promote petroleum for the benefit of mankind.
 - Membership is country based, not company based - includes 75% of global oil production and includes 70 countries. WPC does partner with other organisations – it is working with IPIECA for example.
 - Climate change is high on agenda – including the topics of CCS and methane.
 - Practically – working on energy poverty projects with money from membership:
 - One methane related project is to deliver methane into homes instead of venting.
 - Do have members hip in the UNECE region and have been involved with the UNECE for years through UNFC.

4. Administrator of the CCAC Oil and Gas Methane Partnership (OGMP) highlighted efforts under its initiative
 - CCAC OGMP is a public private partnership – with company partners who, by joining, agree to monitor/survey their assets according to a given protocol
 - There have been a series of technical docs for 9 important sources of emissions (based initially on work by GMI)– for monitoring, reporting, and verifying (MRV) as well as best practice for mitigating
 - Going to put this out to public comment in June
 - Other organizations have expressed interest in this (such as IPIECA) and UNECE and others could be engaged in this
 - Quite interested in cooperating, with input to the OGMP from stakeholders. Very interested in a forum where people are sharing the work
 - The Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) is on their steering committee – in addition to the work they have done in the US (in part in partnership with the OGMP) – is planning similar series of studies outside the US.

5. Discussion of global engagement and practical steps forward.
 - Engagement and cooperation of a broad set of countries and other stakeholders across coal, oil and gas will be critical. There is an increased interest from companies and countries – this is a positive indication.
 - The first step is a gap analysis to help understand the problem and the gaps across data and abatement methods. It will be important to include other players such as the UNFCCC who may have data and may be able to contribute.
 - MRV and mitigation are distinct and the starting on MRV could be a good starting point – to see what is out there.
 - The lack of current data is problematic and also makes forecasting difficult. Without such forecasting it is difficult to understand what the impact of mitigation could be.
 - It will be very important to determine how to monetize it mitigation - emitters are often quite impoverished. This is difficult and but it is essential to put a price on the cost of abatement. Monetization is an important means of getting both engagement and ownership.
 - It will also be important to understand what “best practice” means. There is some lack of clarity on this matter.
 - The work by EPA with their partners has been kept within the companies, for their own purposes. Discussions have begun to ask for information to be released (if consolidated and or aggregated) – there is growing support.
 - EPA has some Mitigation Best practices – this is on their website – this should NOT be overlooked
 - Discussed whether efforts would this include methane sources only – or incomplete combustion, venting, unknown sources, flaring, etc. Under UNECE, mandates are flexible, but clarity is needed on this aspect.

6. Discussion on the leadership/coordination of such a collaborative initiative.
 - US leadership was discussed but for the regional aspects of such efforts, it will be important for defining who leads and coordinates – especially in the eastern parts of the UNECE region.
 - Support of UNECE as a convener and highlighting the existing and growing relationships between UNECE and GMI could ensure that it is really a collaborative effort.