



Statement by President von der Leyen for the Super Pollutants Summit at COP28

Dubai, 2 December 2023

Excellencies, Colleagues,

Two years ago, in Glasgow, the United States and the European Union, with the support of many other countries, launched the Global Methane Pledge. Who would have thought that it would become this successful. Back then, many regarded methane emissions as a significant but also complicated aspect of tackling emissions.

Today, 150 countries have joined this pledge. We all know why this is the case: methane has a warming potential 86 times bigger than that of CO₂! It is rightly called 'a super pollutant'. The good news is, action to reduce methane emissions has immediate impact.

This is thanks to its short lifetime. Action on methane significantly slows down the climate crisis. Therefore, it is good that we are here today to take stock of what still needs to be done, but also to share policies that work. Let me give three examples:

- Regulation
- Finance
- And international cooperation.

First, regulation. Two weeks ago, the European Union adopted our first-ever law to cut methane emissions – and to stop the release of methane into the atmosphere. It is a very comprehensive law, covering the oil, gas, and coal sectors. It sets out standards for measuring, detecting, and mitigating methane leaks, whether accidental or deliberate. And it deals with everything from long-abandoned coal mines to undersea pipelines. This law will ensure a major drop in our methane emissions from the energy sector.

But the EU only accounts for 6% of global methane emissions in energy. That is why we have also focused on our role as an oil and gas importer. The law requires that producers who want to export to the EU to be transparent and to measure their methane emissions.

We are helped by technology. We will use satellites to identify and notify super emitters. As we continue to phase out fossil fuels.

We are also doubling down on other superpollutants. These greenhouse gases, which are used in old air conditioners are up to 25,000 times worse than CO₂. So next, a new European law will come into effect that will cut their emissions by 95% this decade.

Second, we are stepping up our global funding in this area. Today I can announce that together with our Member States, as Team Europe, we will provide over 175 million euros for effective action on methane emission reduction. For instance to support the International Methane Emissions Observatory in the collection of the data. Or to fund research into even better data collection on cutting emissions.

Third, international cooperation. We will work even closer with international partners to capture methane from the atmosphere. Globally, more than 260 billion cubic meters of natural gas is wasted through flaring and methane leaks per year. This is 5 times the volume of gas that the EU imported from the US last year. With the new "You Collect, We Buy" initiative, we are therefore incentivising oil and gas companies to collect and resell methane that would otherwise be wasted. Because when collected and commercialised, methane can sustainably power our industry. So, it is a win-win. It is good for the planet and for our energy security.

We are starting with our partners in the Mediterranean. And I would like to thank Algeria and Egypt in particular for their close cooperation. By COP29, we want to see "You Collect, We Buy" implemented worldwide for the benefit of all.

Today's Summit sends a powerful signal. There has been so much action in recent months. New

technologies finally give us a clear picture of emissions. We can track and act. Many different countries and companies have recently announced their plans.

I particularly welcome China's intention to cover methane emissions in its energy, waste, and agriculture sectors.

We all need to do our part to reach - or better yet - to exceed the 30% emissions reduction target by 2030 we set ourselves in the Global Methane Pledge. Let's make it happen, together.

Thank you very much.

STATEMENT/23/6259

Press contacts:

[Eric MAMER](#) (+32 2 299 40 73)

[Arianna PODESTA](#) (+32 2 298 70 24)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)