Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development

China announces actions to promote the development and utilization of coalbed methane

5 August 2022 — The China National Energy Administration (NEA) highlighted a number of actions that China will take to promote the development and utilization of coalbed methane. The actions were described in a document posted on the NEA website, available here. These actions are expected to be further incorporated into and implemented through national policies and plans.

Methane plays an increasingly important role in China's responses to climate change. An LBNL analysis, resulting from a joint LBNL-IGSD project, shows that 438.1 $MtCO_2e$ of methane emissions could be reduced annually in 2030 at an average abatement cost of US$22/$tCO_2e$. The lion's share of methane mitigation potential resides in the coal-mining sector. According to a 2019 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency analysis, China has the potential to reduce 403 Mt CO_2e of coal-mine methane emissions by 2030, which represents 69% of the global methane mitigation potential in coal mining.

During the 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020), China set targets for coalbed methane extraction. In particular, the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Development and Utilization of Coalbed Methane (Coal-Mine Gas) (2016) provided that "by 2020, the coalbed methane (coal-mine gas) extraction volume shall reach 24 billion cubic meters, within which the production of on-ground coalbed methane shall reach 10 billion cubic meters with a utilization rate of over 90%; the extraction of coal-mine gas shall reach 14 billion cubic meters with a utilization rate of over 50%." Further details on the implementation status of the above targets will be provided when China releases the coalbed methane development plan, including related policies and targets, for the current 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025).

For the next steps, China will carry out the following actions to promote the development and utilization of coalbed methane:

- The NEA will lead drafting and implementation of coalbed methane policies and targets, including the coalbed methane development and utilization targets for the 14th Five-Year Plan period.

- The Ministry of Science and Technology will lead promotion of coalbed methane development technology innovation; and

- The Ministry of Ecology and Environment will lead research on incorporating coalbed methane development and utilization projects into China's voluntary greenhouse gas emissions trading system.

Additional IGSD Resources:

- China's New Urban and Rural Development Carbon-Peaking Plan Contributes to Energy-Efficiency Improvements and Measures to Curb Emissions of Non-CO_2 Greenhouse Gases (30 June 2022).

- Xiaopu Sun, Pu Wang, Tad Ferris, Hui Lin, Gabrielle Dreyfus, Baihe Gu, Durwood Zaelke & Yi Wang, *Fast Action on Short-lived Climate Pollutants and Nature-based Solutions to Help Countries Meet Carbon Neutrality Goals*, Advances in Climate Change Research (23 June 2022).

- China's Plan on Energy Conservation and Emission Reduction Guides Action to Address non-CO_2 Climate Pollutants (24 January 2022).

- China's Zero-Waste Cities Plan to Mitigate Methane and Other Waste-Sector Emissions During the 14th Five-Year Period (15 December 2021).

- China Announces Next Steps on Methane Emissions Control During the 14th Five-Year Period (25 November 2021).

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