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## Oil and Gas Sector Should Seize Opportunity to Shape Methane Regulations

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Yesterday, President Obama announced that Canada would join the United States in its goal to reduce methane emissions in the oil and gas sector. [The President said](#) that the countries together would “move swiftly to establish comprehensive standards to meet that goal.”

The specific goal, originally [announced](#) by the Obama Administration in January 2015, is to cut methane emissions from the oil and gas sector by 40 to 45 percent from 2012 levels by 2025.

[A joint statement](#) issued yesterday by President Obama and Prime Minister Trudeau states that the countries will work toward that goal by:

- — regulating existing sources of methane emissions in the oil and gas sector;
- — working collaboratively on federal measures to reduce methane emissions;
- — improving data collection, transparency, and research and development;
- — sharing knowledge of cost-effective methane reduction technologies and practices; and
- — jointly endorsing the [World Bank's Zero Routine Flaring by 2030 Initiative](#).

In the coming weeks, the US Environmental Protection Agency will begin an [Information Collection Request \(ICR\) process](#) as a first step in developing regulations for methane emissions from existing oil and gas sources. The ICR process will involve outreach to stakeholders and opportunities for public comment. Engaging in this process will enable interested parties to help shape the legal framework to address emissions and climate change. Stakeholders also should be aware of related rulemakings that are underway, such as [proposed amendments](#) to the new source performance standards for the oil and natural gas source category. In addition, stakeholders should remain mindful of the steps laid out in the March 2014 [Climate Action Plan Strategy to Reduce Methane Emissions](#), in which the Obama Administration stated that it would seek to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector by:

- — working with states;
- — building on “common-sense” federal standards;
- — enhanced partnerships and stakeholder engagement;

- — minimizing venting and flaring on public lands;
- — identifying policy recommendations for reducing emissions from energy infrastructure;
- — supporting development of new technologies to reduce emissions; and
- — continuing to prioritize pipeline safety.

To advocate for the most appropriate action, stakeholders should develop a holistic legal strategy, thinking through all three branches of government. With Canada's joint commitment to emission reductions, the best strategies also should include an international perspective.

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