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Boosting Project Network Recruitment and Participation

Discussion Paper

1. Purpose

This paper gives an overview of the status of the Methane to Markets Project Network (PN) and provides details on the number of organizations involved in each sector as of 31 December 2008. This paper also provides an update on discussions regarding recommendations (e.g., incentives) on possible ways to boost PN recruitment and increase its participation in the Partnership.

2. Background

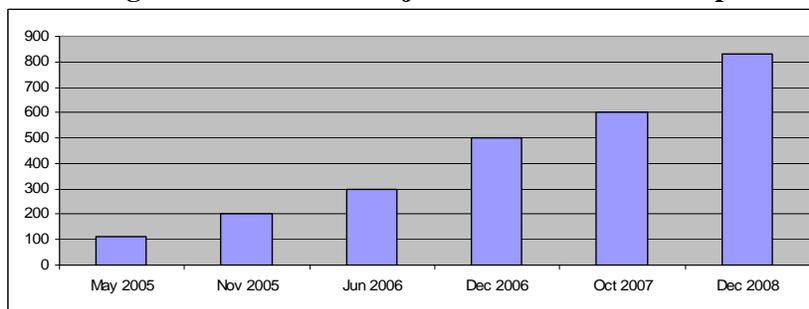
Section 3.6 of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Methane to Markets Partnership states that “A Project Network is to be created for each Subcommittee to serve as a mechanism to ‘facilitate communication, project development and implementation, and private sector involvement’ in the Partnership. Each PN is to be composed of individuals, groups, and organizations that have knowledge, experience, and interest in methane recovery and use. Active involvement by PN members, such as researchers, private-sector entities, financial institutions, and nongovernmental organizations, is vital to fostering development of methane capture and use projects, and ensuring the success of the Partnership.”

While becoming a PN member does not require a binding commitment to the Partnership, it is expected that these organizations will be actively involved in Methane to Markets activities. In order to facilitate their participation, PN members are notified of all Partnership activities and are encouraged to attend Subcommittee meetings, comment on and contribute to sector- and country-specific Action Plans, engage in project development in coordination with Partner Countries, and generate ideas for projects and activities that will advance the goals of the Partnership.

3. Status

As of 31 December 2008, there 829 organizations in the PN — up from 110 members in the first six months following the Partnership’s launch (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Growth in Project Network Membership



PN members represent a diversity of organizations with an interest in developing and supporting methane capture and use projects (see Figure 2). Many of the PN members are involved in more than one sector (see Figure 3).

Figure 2: Diversity of PN Organizations

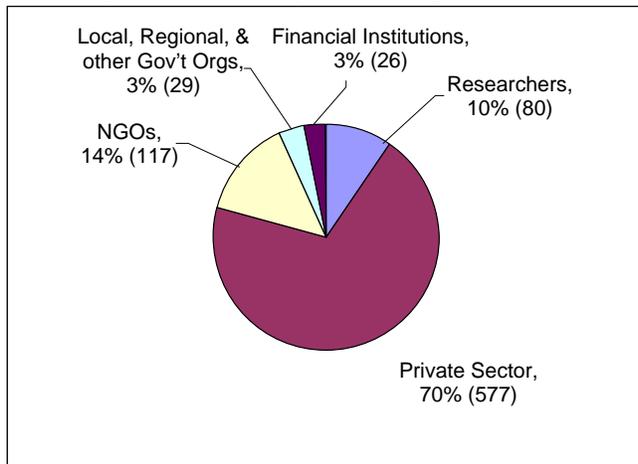
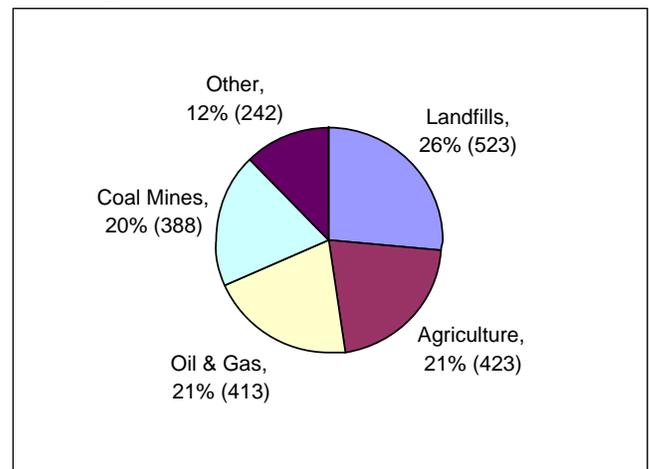


Figure 3: Distribution Across Sectors*



*includes overlap of many PN members in more than one sector

4. Participation in Partnership Events

Although the Partnership has been successful in engaging more than 800 organizations in the PN, attendance at Subcommittee meetings and sector-specific workshops by these organizations could be improved. On average, PN participation levels typically range from 15 to 25 percent of the total participants. Attendance at the Methane to Markets workshops is generally higher than Subcommittee meetings and is attributable to additional local representation from Partner and/or nearby countries as well as the added value of a technical agenda or program. The Partnership Expo garnered the most significant PN participation, equating to nearly 40 percent of the total attendees.

The following organizations have been involved in renewable energy issues similar to Methane to Markets, but have not been active in the Partnership (i.e., are not Project Network members, do not attend meetings). It might be beneficial to have Steering Committee members identify contacts within these organizations and other appropriate organizations with which they are familiar and/or would be willing to recruit their participation in Partnership events.

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Indonesia): <http://www.aseansec.org/>
- Business Council for Sustainable Energy (USA): <http://www.bcse.org/>
- European Federation of Waste Management and Environmental Services (Belgium): <http://www.fead.be/>
- Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (Austria): <http://www.reeep.org/>
- Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (France): <http://www.ren21.net/>
- The Energy and Resources Institute (India): <http://www.teriin.org/index.php>
- The Wuppertal Institute (Germany): <http://www.wupperinst.org/en/home/>
- World Coal Institute (United Kingdom): <http://www.worldcoal.org/>
- World Resources Institute (USA): <http://www.wri.org/>

5. Current Strategies for Enhancing PN Recruitment and Participation

Recruitment

PN member involvement in past meetings and their contributions to Partnership activities have been substantial and are a key component of the Partnership's success. Recognizing this, over the past few years, the Steering Committee has charged the Subcommittees and the ASG to increase PN recruitment and participation in a variety of ways, including:

Conducting targeted outreach efforts at key meetings and conferences (e.g., Carbon Expo, Point Carbon, International Solid Waste Association [ISWA]).

Encouraging Subcommittees to schedule their meetings in conjunction with broader industry- or climate-related workshops/conferences.

Encouraging Partners to recruit more PN members from their own countries.

Developing outreach materials targeting potential PN member organizations (e.g., brochure).

Participation

Several Subcommittee meetings have been held in conjunction with another industry- or energy-related meeting or conference at which Methane to Markets Partners and/or PN members were also present. In particular, the Landfill Subcommittee has held its meetings immediately following the Carbon Expo in May 2006 and May 2007, and the Coal Subcommittee was held in conjunction with the International Coalbed Methane Symposium in May 2006 and immediately following the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane in April 2007. Unlike the usual 20 percent PN participation in most Subcommittee meetings, PN attendance at these meetings was nearly 40 percent. For the Coal Mine meeting held in conjunction with UNECE, overall attendance was more than double previous meetings with more than half of the attendees present coming from Europe.

6. Recent Subcommittee Discussions

While the recruitment efforts described above have been highly successful in growing PN membership from 110 to 829 in four years, at the 2007 Steering Committee meeting in Beijing, members considered additional options for enhancing PN engagement. During the early 2008 Subcommittee meetings, participants and PN members discussed these options for increasing PN involvement:

Issuing meeting invitations to PN members from meeting host countries.

Conducting Subcommittee meetings in conjunction with technical workshops.

Acknowledging PN member attendance at Subcommittee meetings.

Increasing the appeal of Subcommittee meetings to PN members.

Providing formal PN recognition through incentives such as awards and/or highlighting PN members on the Web site.

Providing informal PN recognition by enhancing the PN portion of the Web site, developing case studies to feature PN members or projects, or highlighting PN contributions at the next Expo.

During each Subcommittee meeting, the following key points were raised:

Agriculture: Participants indicated the Subcommittee already made a concerted effort to address the first three options. To further increase appeal, attendees suggested inviting PN members to make presentations at Methane to Markets workshops and including PN success stories in

Coal Mines: Meeting participants believed formal awards could be viewed unfavorably (i.e., create division among members) but agreed with the concept of informal recognition of successful PN projects. The Subcommittee also suggested setting aside time for PN presentations or focused discussion.

Landfills: Attendees agreed with co-locating Subcommittee meetings and also suggested that regional meetings or roundtables focused on sector-specific issues could help increase appeal for PN members. No firm decision was made regarding formal recognition, although participants expressed willingness to look to EPA's Landfill Methane Outreach Program award process for lessons learned in that experience. Participants agreed informal recognition (e.g., via newsletter, Web site) would be beneficial.

Oil and Gas: The Subcommittee agreed to implement several informal mechanisms for increasing involvement (e.g., hosting workshops concurrently with Subcommittee meetings or other events, regional meetings tailored to a specific focus) and for acknowledging PN members (e.g., success stories). Attendees also suggested that PN presentations be given greater prominence on the Web site and that the Web site might be redesigned to have more project- rather than process-focus. However, participants preferred to coordinate with other Subcommittees before making a decision on formal recognition.

Overall, the discussions regarding the more formal recognition options (e.g., Partner/Project of the Year) revealed that there are some challenges and concerns about this approach. In particular, issues such as the difficulty of establishing objective criteria to recognize certain projects or PN members over others given the diversity of project types and roles of various members. Subcommittees believed, however, that providing mechanisms for additional PN recognition and involvement is critical. Moreover, there are a number of other possible strategies that could effectively increase PN participation and enhance the overall success of the Partnership that should be considered.

7. Potential Future Strategies for Enhancing PN Recruitment and Participation

Based on the Subcommittee discussions, there are several opportunities to enhance PN engagement and further advance the Partnership's goals. The following are potential actions the Steering Committee might wish to consider to ensure both the continued growth of the PN and its contribution to the Partnership.

Providing Recognition of PN Accomplishments and Contributions

The ASG could develop PN member or project features (e.g., case studies, success stories) for inclusion on the Web site and/or in the quarterly newsletter.

The ASG could pursue a Methane to Markets Web site redesign to incorporate a stronger project focus.

The ASG could enhance the existing PN listing to include a more robust service/technology provider directory to help Partner countries identify potential project support.

Increasing Participation in Partnership Meetings

The ASG could also work with the Subcommittee co-chairs to implement mechanisms to receive PN input on key agenda items to ensure topics are relevant to them.

In cases where it is not possible for PN members to attend and participate directly in Subcommittee meetings, the ASG could request advance or subsequent input from PN members via email and teleconferences.

Subcommittees could encourage additional PN participation at their meetings by providing greater attendance incentives such as speaking opportunities for key PN organizations, as appropriate.

Subcommittees could organize regional meetings, perhaps with a focus on sector-specific issues of that region (i.e., anaerobic digestion in South America, oil and gas technology transfer in Eastern Europe) to encourage or attract additional PN participation.

8. Issues for Consideration and Decision

PN Recruitment – Charge to Partners and ASG: Does the Steering Committee wish to ask each Partner and the ASG to continue outreach efforts to recruit PN members? Does the Steering Committee also wish to charge Partners with identifying contacts within non-PN organizations (listed previously) for recruitment?

PN Recruitment – Charge to Subcommittees: Does the Steering Committee wish to task the Subcommittees with continuing their existing outreach efforts to recruit new PN members?

PN Participation – Charge to Subcommittees: Does the Steering Committee wish to task the Subcommittees with encouraging stronger PN participation in Subcommittee meetings and Methane to Markets-sponsored workshops (e.g., agenda input, teleconferencing, speaking opportunities)?

— Hold Subcommittee Meetings in Conjunction with Other Conferences: Does the Steering Committee wish to continue encouraging Subcommittees to schedule their meetings in conjunction with other sector-related or climate change conferences (e.g., ISWA, Carbon Expo)?

— Coordinate Regional or Sector-Specific Roundtables: Does the Steering Committee wish to charge the Subcommittees with exploring the possibility of coordinating at least one regional (versus two global) meetings per year to attract greater participation within a particular region and/or to engage members or continue dialogue on issues pertinent to that sector (e.g., fugitive emissions from oil and gas systems)?

Formal PN Recognition – Charge to Subcommittees: Does the Steering Committee wish to task the Subcommittees with continuing to explore options for formal PN recognition (e.g., awards)?

Informal PN Recognition – Charge to ASG and Subcommittees: Does the Steering Committee wish to place greater emphasis on promoting PN success stories and/or activities in existing outreach venues (e.g., newsletter, Web site, Expo)?