

PRESS RELEASE - STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 06:01 JAKARTA 12 MARCH 2024

Indonesia's coal mines emit up to eight times more methane pollution than latest official estimates

[Jakarta, 12 March] Coal mine methane emissions in Indonesia are often overlooked and have been underreported as official estimates rely on inaccurate and outdated measurement methods, according to a [new report](#) by global energy think tank Ember.

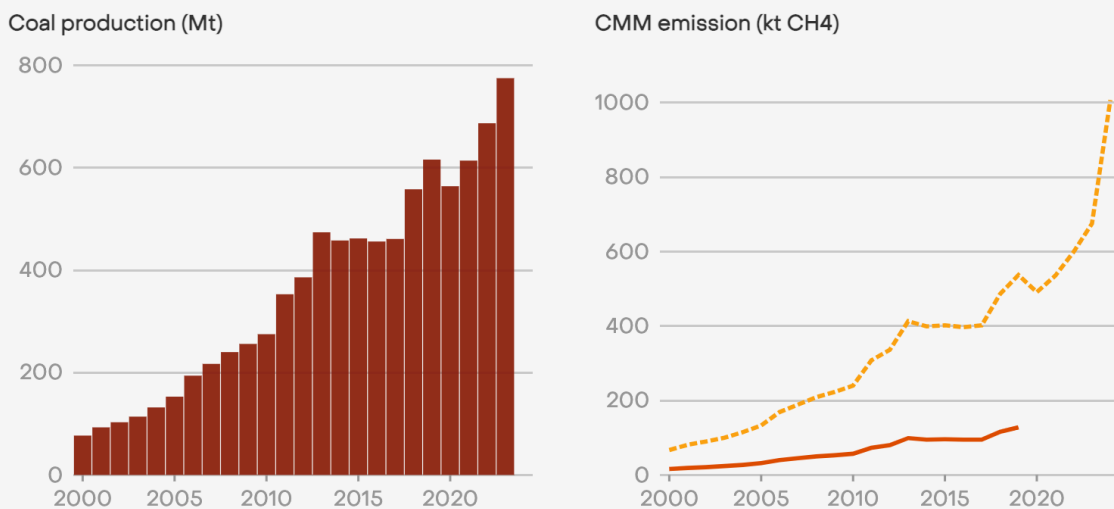
Methane, a greenhouse gas pollutant, is 30 times more potent than carbon dioxide in warming the planet over a 100-year period according to the [IPCC's](#) updated figures. However, Indonesia has yet to use this latest figure, **significantly underplaying the impact of methane** in its recent biennial update report to the UNFCCC.

Indonesia's coal mine methane (CMM) pollution is **six to seven times higher** than the official figures, based on independent studies using satellite and mine-level data. Meanwhile, Ember's estimate raises this figure to as much as eight times the official estimates. This discrepancy risks undermining the Global Methane Pledge, which Indonesia has signed, committing to slash 30% of global methane emissions by 2030.

Methane emissions from coal mining might be up to eight times higher than the latest official estimate

Coal production (Mt) and coal mine methane emissions (kt CH₄)

■ Coal production (Mt) ■ Reported CMM emissions (kt CH₄) ■ Estimated CMM emissions (kt CH₄)



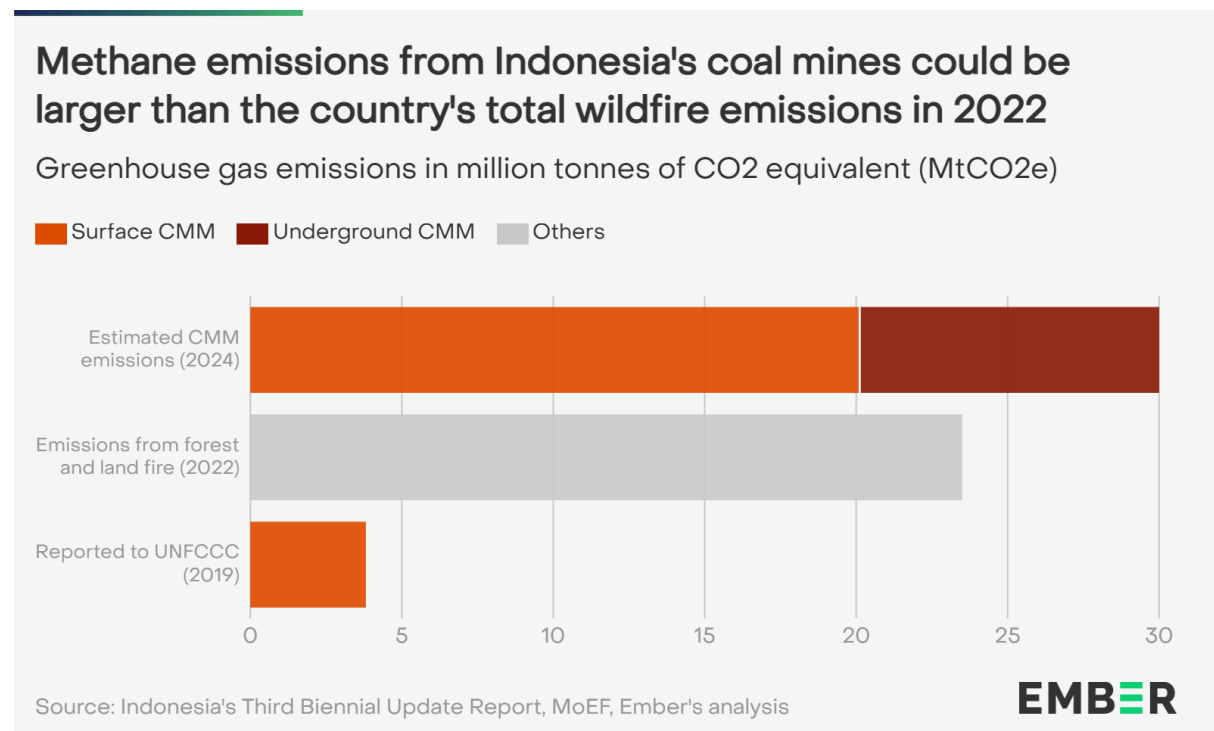
Source: Handbook of Energy and Economic Statistics of Indonesia (HEESI), The Third Biennial Update Report (BUR) of Indonesia, Ember's analysis

Ember's Senior Indonesia Climate and Energy Analyst, Dody Setiawan, said:

“The use of outdated methane estimation methods risks undermining the scale of Indonesia’s coal mine methane problem. Consequently, Indonesia could jeopardise its international standing as it is committed to slashing methane globally. The first step is recognising this hidden issue and updating Indonesia’s coal mine methane estimate in the upcoming Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) to the UNFCCC. This could be an important step in devising effective strategies to mitigate methane emissions.”

Ember’s report also highlights that Indonesia’s estimates for surface coal mines, which are abundant in the country, would increase by four times when employing a corrected emissions factor—the multiplier recommended by the IPCC to more accurately estimate methane gas emissions for every tonne of coal produced.

Moreover, the emissions from 15 companies engaged in underground mining activities are not accounted for in the [country’s climate report](#). With surface CMM emissions increasing by about 12% annually since 2000, the inclusion of underground mines would substantially raise the total emissions. For instance, the underground coal mine project by Qinfa alone is projected to add 332 kilotonnes of methane (ktCH₄), effectively tripling the officially reported CMM emissions of 128 ktCH₄ in 2019. When converted to a carbon dioxide equivalent, the CMM emissions that include underground and surface mines would be greater than total wildfire emissions across Indonesia in 2022.



Indonesia stands to gain benefits from improving its CMM emissions management, particularly within the framework of the Global Methane Pledge. Addressing its

underreporting would help the country better understand its methane problem, implement effective mitigation measures, ensure heightened safety for mine workers and increase support for project developers.

The **Global Energy Monitor's (GEM)** Project Manager of Global Coal Mine Tracker, Dorothy Mei, said:

"As a major coal producer, Indonesia's active participation in methane reduction is essential to reduce global emissions. But the lack of transparency and the absence of a robust Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system poses substantial challenges to effective evaluation of its coal mining activities. Indonesia must plan to monitor its emissions, and improve the accessibility of its coal mining and methane data, to help fully achieve the goals of the Global Methane Pledge."

The **Institute for Essential Services Reform's (IESR)** Green Economy Program Manager, Wira A. Swadana, said:

"Indonesia is a signatory to the Global Methane Pledge, which aims to reduce methane emissions by 30% by 2030. The importance lies in the fact that it is the "underestimated" cause of greenhouse gas emissions after CO2. Knowing this fact, it is important to have this report to analyse the actions that the government and all relevant stakeholders need to take to mitigate climate change, especially in relation to methane emissions."

-ENDS-

Notes to editor

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Media Pack - includes:

- Report in English (Indonesian version will be available on Monday, 11 March 2024)
- Graphics
- Press Release in English and Indonesian

The report will be published online on 12 March at:

<https://ember-climate.org/insights/research/uncovering-indonesias-hidden-methane-problem/>

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About Ember

Ember is an independent, not-for-profit climate and energy think tank that produces cutting-edge research and high-impact, politically viable policies that aim to accelerate the global transition to clean electricity. ember-climate.org