

# REDUCING GHG EMISSIONS IN THE OIL & GAS SECTOR: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

The oil and gas sector currently accounts for **32%** of province-wide greenhouse gas emissions.

- 1.** Follow North Dakota's decision to **ban the venting of methane gas** during oil extraction. In the future venting of methane should only be permitted in Saskatchewan when it is advisable for safety reasons.
- 2.** Set strict regulations with respect to **monitoring for methane leaks and repairing those leaks**. Such regulations would need to take account of the limitations of doing repairs in bitter winter weather, but weather permitting, repairs should be done promptly.
- 3.** Follow North Dakota's example of working to **enable in-province pipeline and other infrastructure** as a means to fully utilize the commercial products contained in solution gas. Without this infrastructure too much natural gas will simply be "burned off" as a waste product. There are particularly good opportunities to develop infrastructure to capture associated gas in the Swift Current/Sh Shaunavon area.
- 4.** **Create greater incentives for using flare gas** for electricity generation purposes. This would involve encouraging companies to take waste flare gas from oil and gas operations and utilize it to produce electricity. By doing this, greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere would be reduced, and a resource that was previously wasted would be properly utilized. In this regard, it is encouraging to see SaskPower's announcement in May of 2018 that it will contract with the First Nations Power Authority to source 20 megawatts of flare gas power generation projects.
- 5.** **Establish regulations** which require consistent decreases every 3 to 4 years in the amount of gas that can be flared at oil extraction sites. North Dakota has such regulations.
- 6.** **Deny further permits to extract the heavy oil resources in the province with the highest carbon content** and the highest expected greenhouse gas emissions during the extraction process. Such policy reflects the reality that a very substantial portion of the world's fossil fuels will need to be left in the ground if the Paris Climate Agreement temperature targets are to be met.
- 7.** **Apply a supplementary provincial tax to methane emissions** from the oil and gas sector, over and above the federal carbon tax. Methane is 25 times more potent in its heat trapping potential than carbon dioxide. Taxing methane emissions heavily would create economic incentives to stop releasing methane into the atmosphere. It would also create economic incentives to fully and wisely utilize natural gas.

**Source:** "Prairie Resilience" is Not Enough, Peter Prebble, Margret Asmuss, Ann Coxworth and Bob Halliday, Saskatchewan Environmental Society, December 2018.

Read the **Saskatchewan Environmental Society's** other recommendations for the Government of Saskatchewan at:  
[www.environmentalsociety.ca](http://www.environmentalsociety.ca)

