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**UNITED NATIONS METHANE REPORT UNDERSCORES NEED TO REGULATE EMISSIONS FROM BIG MEAT AND DAIRY COMPANIES TO RESPOND TO CLIMATE CRISIS**

*Report downplays role of emissions from the factory farm system of animal production*

**MINNEAPOLIS/BERLIN**—Today, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) released a [Global Methane Assessment](#) providing alarming global data on rising emissions from fossil fuels, agriculture and waste management. According to the [Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy](#) (IATP), with livestock contributing 32% of the methane footprint, the new report’s findings reinforce the urgent need to regulate and mitigate methane emissions from global meat and dairy companies.

“Disappointingly, the assessment calls for more technological fixes, such as feed additives and biodigesters, to reduce agriculture’s methane footprint rather than addressing the core of the problem. Untenable growth of animals in the food chain is spurred on by a powerful meat and dairy industry that bears no costs for this environmental debacle but passes it on to farmers and consumers. Without addressing this giant in the room, we are still doomed to far overshoot a 2 degree Celsius goal, rather than reach the 1.5 degree goal we know gives humanity a fighting chance,” said Shefali Sharma, director of IATP’s European office.

In the U.S, the Environmental Protection Agency has identified the factory farm system of hog and dairy operations with large, liquified manure lagoon systems as responsible for rising agriculture-related methane emissions. This system is driven by global meat companies and is being adopted around the world. In the EU, 53% of methane emissions come from agriculture, according to the European Commission.

Ben Lilliston, IATP director of climate strategies, said, “The rise of the factory farm system in the U.S. has been enabled by a series of policy decisions to prop up the industry, whether through the Farm Bill or regulatory exemptions for protecting water, air and health. The report provides additional evidence that we need a new policy framework that accounts for the factory farm system’s emissions, while aiding a transition to more scale-appropriate agroecological systems of animal production that are better for people and the climate.”

IATP has published [recent reports](#) on the rising greenhouse emissions of global meat and dairy companies. The UNEP and CCAC assessment must serve as a wakeup call for governments to hold agribusiness accountable. Big meat and dairy companies are partnering with the fossil fuel industry to market factory farm gas (so-called “biogas”), but this dubious false solution only further incentivizes the factory farm system associated with water and air pollution, public health and animal welfare concerns, and the loss of small and mid-sized farmers.

Sharma said, “The EU’s ‘Fit for 55’ package of revisions to its climate laws includes several entry points to regulate methane on farms. For instance, the EU’s Renewable Energy Directive should not consider biogas from mass animal production as renewable in the new revision, nor should an EU proposal to regulate methane incentivize a market for biogas. A market for factory farm gas not only plays into the hands of agribusiness but also the gas industry. The EU should heed the message from the Global Methane Assessment: Methane must be regulated. This also means that the EU should bring emissions from large animal farms down by reducing animal numbers and helping farmers to make a just transition.”

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Based in Minneapolis with offices in Washington, D.C., and Berlin, Germany, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. To learn more, visit: [www.iatp.org](http://www.iatp.org).