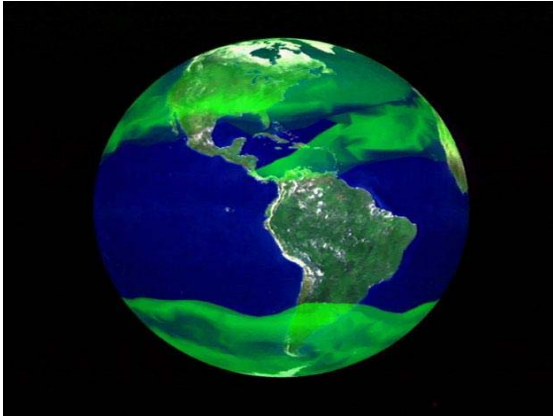




# Going Green



Picture from worldoxygenbank.com showing the earth's Methane gas cloud.

## METHANE, A GREENHOUSE GAS

What do we know about methane? Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) is a greenhouse gas that remains in the atmosphere for approximately 9-15 years, while carbon dioxide remains in the atmosphere for hundreds of years. Methane is over 20 times more effective in trapping heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) over a 100-year period and is emitted from a variety of natural and human-influenced sources. Human-influenced sources include landfills, natural gas and petroleum systems, agricultural activities including cattle farms, coal mining, stationary and mobile combustions, wastewater treatment, and certain industrial process.

Methane is formally in the “basket” of six gases targeted by the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

Methane is also a primary constituent of natural gas and an important energy source. As a result, efforts to prevent or utilize methane emissions can provide significant energy, economic and environmental benefits. In the United States many companies are working with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in voluntary efforts to reduce emissions by implementing cost-effective management methods and technologies.

For most of the sources of methane, relatively cheap “end of pipe” technologies are available to collect methane and convert it to useful energy rather than venting it to the atmosphere. Methane projects,

which are typically small scale, can move fast. Construction time of 6 to 8 months are possible for landfill gas projects once financing has been secured.

Methane's short life makes it especially interesting in the short run, given the pace of climate change. If we need to suppress temperature quickly in order to preserve glaciers, cutting methane requires only modest investment. Where we stop methane emissions, cooling follows within a decade, not centuries.

## WORKING TO END MOUNTAIN TOP REMOVAL METHOD OF COAL MINING

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta passed a resolution that seeks to end dependence upon coal that is mined through mountain-top removal (MTR). The resolution specifically supports a bill currently before the Georgia legislature (HB 276) that would ban mountain top removal coal and cease funding for future coal-fired power plants in Georgia. The effort was led by Earth Covenant Ministry and its supporting churches.