Methane is 28 times more powerful than CO2, and it’s increasing in the atmosphere. Here’s why and what must be done

The greenhouse gas methane is 28 times more powerful than CO2, and its presence is increasing in the atmosphere.

The main reason for the increase in methane is emissions from wetlands, which are expanding as the world warms, according to a research report from the Norwegian Institute for Air Research (NILU).

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According to the report, the main reason is that more methane has been released from wetland areas such as bogs, shallow ponds, and lakes in tropical regions. And as it gets warmer, more is released.

“The temperature change leads to increased microbiological activity,” researcher Stephen Matthew Platt says. He is one of the researchers behind the new study.

Processes like decomposition in wetlands happen faster when it gets warmer.

Another reason for the increase in methane emissions is that permafrost has begun to thaw in the north.

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Platt points out that because it is difficult to do something about methane emissions from wetlands, the consequence is that these emissions must be more significantly reduced from other sources.

“Methane is a very potent greenhouse gas and is about 28 times more powerful than CO2. If emissions from wetlands continue to rise, we need greater cuts in methane either from man-made sources or in CO2 emissions to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement,” he says.

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