Equinor welcomes the communication of the European Commission published 14th October 2020 on an EU strategy to reduce methane emissions. We appreciate the Commission’s inclusive stakeholder approach during the development of the document, which has resulted in a strategy that includes the essential building blocks to develop a future proof and ambitious framework for methane emission reductions.

The Commission pays attention to immediate actions alongside medium- and long-term efforts, which aligns very well with Equinor’s operational approach. We have achieved a near-zero methane emission intensity for our oil and gas operations by continuously improving our procedures, implementing new available technologies to detect and reduce methane emissions from our operations, while at the same time enhancing the quality and transparency of our reported emission data.

We therefore acknowledge the need for compulsory standards for methane monitoring, reporting and verification and support the development of such standards based upon the UN Oil and Gas Methane Partnership reporting framework. Mandatory leak detection and repair (LDAR) programs across the entire gas value chain will reduce fugitive emissions, and continued science-based investments in innovative methane measurement technologies, including satellite detection and the Copernicus program, will further improve methane emission detection and quantification. The proposed international methane emission observatory will be important to enhance global data quality. This independent governing body can instill trust and provide transparency in the reported data which is a key requirement for the evaluation of more advanced measures.

The Oil and Gas Climate Initiative (OGCI) has set an ambition to reduce by 2025 the collective average methane intensity of its aggregated upstream gas and oil operations to below 0.20%, which should serve as an inspiration for a methane intensity based performance standard for the EU.