



Atmospheric CO₂ and CH₄ Budgets to Support the

Global Stocktake

Part 2: Creating Top-Down Atmospheric Budgets of CO_2 and CH_4 on Policy-Relevant Scales

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May 18, 2022

Course Materials and Q&A

- Webinar recordings, PowerPoint presentations, and the homework assignment can be found after each session at:
 - <u>https://appliedsciences.nasa.gov/joi</u>
 <u>n-mission/training/english/arset-</u>
 <u>atmospheric-co2-and-ch4-budgets-</u>
 <u>support-global-stocktake</u>
- Q&A: Following each lecture and/or by email:
 - <u>sean.mccartney@nasa.gov</u>





Homework and Certificate

- Homework Assignment:
 - One homework assignment submitted via Google Form
 - Due Date: Wednesday, June 8
- A certificate of completion will be awarded to those who:
 - Attend all live webinars
 - Complete the homework assignment by the deadline (access from website)
 - You will receive a certificate approximately two months after the completion of the course from: <u>marines.martins@ssaihq.com</u>







Part 2: Creating Top-Down Atmospheric Budgets of CO_2 and CH_4 on Policy-Relevant Scales

Brendan Bryne (NASA JPL)

Objectives



After participating in this session, attendees should be able to:

- Describe the processes that add/remove CO_2 and CH_4 to/from the atmosphere
- Explain space-based, airborne, and ground-based measurements of CO₂ and CH₄
- Understand how CO_2 and CH_4 emissions and removals (fluxes) are estimated globally using inverse modeling
- Understand how top-down CO₂ stock loss estimates can be compared to inventories
- Recognize methods for quantifying CO_2 and CH_4 emissions from localized sources



Review from Part 1: Bottom-Up Inventories and Top-Down Atmospheric Budgets



¹Prepared in accordance with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Guidelines for GHG inventories, as adopted by the Conference of Parties (COP).



Review from Part 1: A Few Definitions: Stocks, Fluxes, Sources, and Sinks

Consider a basin with faucet and a plug at its bottom.

- The amount of water in the basin is a measure of its stock.
- A processes that adds water to the basin is called a **source**.
- A processes that removes water from the basin is called a sink.
- If the faucet is turned on, water accumulates in the basin, increasing the stock.
- The *rate* of increase of the stock in the basin is called the *flux*.
 - Sources yield positive fluxes.
 - Sinks yield negative fluxes.





Similarities and Differences Between Top-Down CO₂ and CH₄ Methods

Top-down methods are used for quantifying CO_2 an CH_4 budgets. The approaches for these two gases have many similarities but also important differences:

Similarities:

- Atmospheric CO₂ and CH₄ can be measured using similar remote sensing methods.
- Surface-atmosphere fluxes can be estimated from atmospheric measurements with inverse methods

Differences:

- Different natural processes and human activities emit and remove CO₂ and CH₄
- Often different applications, such as land carbon stock change (CO₂) vs natural gas leaks (CH₄), that have different precision, accuracy, and spatial resolution requirements.



Outline

Part 2.1: Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)

- 2.1.1 Processes that emit and remove atmospheric CO₂
- 2.1.2 Space-based, airborne, and ground-based measurements of CO₂
- 2.1.3 Inverse modeling for estimating CO_2 emissions on regional/national scales
- 2.1.4 Estimating carbon stock loss for comparison with national inventories

Part 2.2: Methane (CH₄)

- 2.2.1 Processes that emit and remove atmospheric CH_4
- 2.2.2 Estimating CH₄ emissions on regional/national scales
- 2.2.3 Estimating CH_4 emissions from intense, localized sources





Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)

• Plants pull carbon out of the atmosphere as they grow and release carbon as they rot.

Spring – trees start to grow, and take CO₂ from atmosphere

Fall- trees not growing, leaves start to die. When they decompose CO₂ goes back to atmosphere



Summer – strong growth, strong removal of CO₂ from atmosphere

Winter – decay finishes, then plants are dormant

https://www.freepik.com/free-vector/tree-each-season-design_1041974.htm



- The biosphere continuously exchanges large amounts of CO₂ with the atmosphere
- Oceans also absorb and release a lot of CO₂ each year
- Fossil fuel use, land use change, and other human activities add CO₂ to the atmosphere



Gross CO₂ Fluxes:

Land Biosphere

- Emissions ~550 Pg CO₂ yr⁻¹
- Removals ~560 Pg CO_2 yr⁻¹

Ocean

- Emissions ~330 Pg CO₂ yr⁻¹
- Removals ~340 Pg CO₂ yr⁻¹

Human Activities

- Emissions ~39 Pg CO_2 yr⁻¹
- Removals ~0 Pg CO_2 yr⁻¹

(1 Pg = 1 petagram = 1 billion metric tonnes $= 10^{15} \text{ arams}$





 Fossil Fuel (FF) consumption and Land Use Emissions (LUE) have been releasing CO₂ from the geological and biosphere reservoirs to the atmosphere.



FF and LUE data from Friedlingstein et al. Global Carbon Budget 2021, Earth Syst. Sci. Data Discuss. [preprint], https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-2021-386, in review, 2021.



- Fossil Fuel (FF) consumption and Land Use Emissions (LUE) have been releasing CO₂ from the geological and biosphere reservoirs to the atmosphere.
- However, measurements of atmospheric CO_2 show only about half of this CO_2 stays in the atmosphere.



FF and LUE data from Friedlingstein et al. Global Carbon Budget 2021, Earth Syst. Sci. Data Discuss. [preprint], https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-2021-386, in review, 2021.



Emissions and their Partitioning since 1850



Source: Friedlingstein et al 2021; Global Carbon Project 2021

41% of anthropogenic CO_2 emissions remain in the atmosphere [Friedlingstein et al., 2021].

Natural **sinks** that remove CO_2 from the atmosphere:

- Oceans have absorbed 26% of anthropogenic CO₂ emissions [Friedlingstein et al., 2021].
 - largely driven by the atmosphere-ocean partial pressure difference (due to increasing atmospheric CO_2).
 - Terrestrial ecosystems have absorbed 30% of anthropogenic CO₂ emissions [Friedlingstein et al., 2021].
 Anthropogenic activities (deforestation, reforestation) impact the land sink, but other processes (CO₂ fertilization, climate change) also contribute.
 - Main drivers of carbon uptake by terrestrial ecosystems are not well understood, and likely vary by region.

Friedlingstein et al.: Global Carbon Budget 2021, Earth Syst. Sci. Data Discuss. [preprint], https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-2021-386, in review, 2021.

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Goals of Top-Down Global Stocktake (GST) CO₂ Datasets:

Driving Questions:

- 1) What are the net CO_2 emissions and removals for countries?
- 2) What is the change in terrestrial carbon stocks for countries?

Method:

- 1) Measure atmospheric CO_2 at high spatial and temporal resolution over the globe.
- 2) Perform flux inversion to estimate the surface-atmosphere flux from variability in atmospheric CO_2 .
- 3) Calculate loss of land carbon stock loss using ancillary datasets.



Concept behind a CO_2 flux inversion:







Concept behind a CO₂ flux inversion:

415 ppm



Concept behind a CO_2 flux inversion:





Concept behind a CO_2 flux inversion:







- Variations in atmospheric CO₂ are caused by a combination of emissions/removals and transport by winds.
- To estimate emissions/removals, we need dense measurements of CO₂ and knowledge of winds.



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Goddard Global Modeling and Assimilation Office



2.1.2 Space-Based, Airborne, and Ground-Based Measurements of CO₂ Datasets of Atmospheric CO₂:

- 1) In Situ Measurements
- → Advantages: Measurements are precise and accurate, and records extend over 60 years.
- → Disadvantages: Coverage is sparse outside of North America and Europe.





NOAA's Mauna Loa Atmospheric Baseline Observatory is perched high atop Hawaii's largest mountain in order to sample well-mixed background air free of local pollution. Credit: Susan Cobb, NOAA Global Monitoring Laboratory.

Downloaded from https://research.noaa.gov

2.1.2 Space-Based, Airborne, and Ground-Based Measurements of CO₂

Datasets of Atmospheric CO₂: 2) Satellite Measurements

- → Satellites measure sunlight reflected off the Earth's surface.
- → Some wavelengths of light are absorbed by gases in the atmosphere (e.g., CO₂). From the amount of absorption, the total amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere is estimated.
- → Retrieve "X_{CO2}", which is the average concentration of CO₂ throughout the atmosphere (often referred to as the column-average dry air mole-fraction of CO₂).





2.1.2 Space-Based, Airborne, and Ground-Based Measurements of CO₂

O₂

The Orbiting Carbon Observatory 2 (OCO-2):

- Polar orbiting satellite, traveling from south-to-north crossing the equator at 13:30 hours Mean Local Time (MLT).
- Continuously collects observations of reflected sunlight over a narrow band (~10 km) near orbit ground track.
- X_{CO2} can be estimated from measurements collected in clear-sky conditions (e.g., not blocked by clouds).
- High latitude measurements can also be limited due to low-light conditions during winter.



NASA OCO-2 Team



2.1.2 Space-Based, Airborne, and Ground-Based Measurements of CO₂

OCO-2 Land X_{CO2} Retrievals – Land Nadir and Land Glint (LNLG)

- → Advantages: Spatially extensive (cover many remote areas with no in situ measurements)
- → Disadvantages: Subject to biases in retrieval algorithm (moderate concern)

OCO-2 Ocean X_{CO2} Retrievals – Ocean Glint (OG)

- → Advantages: Spatially extensive, more precise than land measurements
- → Disadvantages: Subject to biases in retrieval algorithm (major concern)



Distribution of OCO-2 Ocean Retrievals



Inverse Modeling:

• Inverse modeling allows us to estimate the surface-atmosphere flux that matches atmospheric CO₂ obs.

Approach:

- Simulate atmospheric CO₂ using prior estimate of surface-atmosphere fluxes and realistic winds.
- Compare "measurement" of model atmosphere with real measurements.
- Correct flux estimates to make model atmosphere agree with real measurements, within uncertainties.





OCO-2 Model Intercomparison Project (MIP)

- No model is perfect (and no flux inversion is perfect).
 Using ~12 models helps quantify systematic errors
- Estimate CO_2 fluxes for six years (2015–2020).

Includes four MIP experiments that use different datasets:

- In situ (IS): uses in situ CO₂ measurements.
- Land nadir + land glint (LNLG): uses OCO-2 land X_{CO2} retrievals.
- Land nadir + land glint + in situ (LNLGIS): uses OCO-2 land X_{CO2} retrievals and in situ CO₂ measurements.
- Land nadir + land glint + ocean glint + in situ (LNLGOGIS): uses OCO-2 land and ocean X_{CO2} retrievals and in situ CO₂ measurements.

Each experiment has advantages and disadvantages that impact flux estimates.





- In situ data undergoes direct validation and has high accuracy and precision.
- Observations are sparse over much of globe (outside North America and Europe).

LNLG:

- OCO-2 land data is less precise and accurate than IS data but is generally high quality (remaining regional biases may be present).
- Global land coverage (particularly during the summer), but seasonal data gaps.

LNLGIS:

- Combined information of in situ and OCO-2 land data, which betters fills observational gaps.
- Main concern is intercalibration errors between IS and LNLG datasets.

LNLGOGIS:

- Combines all data providing very dense observation constraints.
- Still significant concerns about OCO-2 ocean data which means great caution is needed.



Each modeling group estimates the Net Carbon Exchange (NCE) = Fossil Fuel + Net Biosphere Exchange

- Estimates provided on a 1° x 1° grid.
- We aggregate to country totals.
- Take model median as best estimate.
- Uncertainty is estimated as the standard deviation across model estimates.

NCE fluxes Aggregated to Country Totals



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Enabling Comparisons with Inventories

- The global stocktake examines changes in land carbon stocks (for AFOLU sector).
- Land carbon stock loss (ΔC_{loss}) estimated by combining top-down NCE with other carbon flux datasets.
- Calculate:

$$\Delta C_{loss} = NCE - FF - Fcrop_{trade} - Fwood_{trade} - Frive_{rs export}$$

FF: CO_2 emissions from fossil fuels and cement production.

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F<sub>crop trade</sub>: lateral flux of carbon due to farming.
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F_{wood trade}: lateral flux of carbon due to wood harvesting.

F_{rivers export}: lateral flux of carbon due to rivers.



2.1.4 Carbon Stock Loss Calculation of Land Carbon Stock Loss (Δ C) and Uncertainties $\Delta C_{loss} = NCE - FF - Fcrop_{trade} - Fwood_{trade} - Frivers_{export}$ Best Estimate of ΔC_{loss} for LNLG Experiment $\begin{bmatrix} LNLG \ \Delta C_{loss} \\ (gCO_2 \ m^2 \ year^1) \\ (gCO_2 \ m^2 \ year^2) \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} Model medial LNLG \ NCE \\ (gCO_2 \ m^2 \ year^2) \\ (g$

Uncertainty in <u>AC_{loss} for LNLG Experiment</u>

300

-300

-200

-100

0

100

200

300

-200

-300

-100

Ω

100

200



-300

-200

-100

0

100

200

300

-300

-200

-100

100

200

300

-300

-200

-100

100



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2015 – 2020 ΔC for Each MIP Experiment

- ΔC_{loss} shows many consistent signals across the experiments.
 - Negative (land carbon gain) across northern high latitudes
 - Positive (land carbon loss) across tropics.
- However, some important differences appear
 - OCO-2 vs IS differences in tropics
 - Factors driving differences:
 - Lack of in situ data
 - Retrieval biases in OCO-2 XCO₂ retrievals
- We have the highest confidence in ΔC_{loss} estimates when they are consistent across all experiments (excluding LNLGOGIS).

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Example 2015–2020 Carbon Budgets for Four Countries

- Recall: $FF + Fcrop_{trade} + Fwood_{trade} + Frivers_{export} + \Delta C_{loss} = NCE$
- Figure below shows how each component contributes to the NCE for a few specific countries, constrained by atmospheric CO₂ measurements.
- Increasing land carbon stocks decrease NCE relative to FF emissions for USA, but the opposite occurs for Indonesia.



Example Carbon Budget Time Series for Four Countries

- Provide annual net fluxes for six years covering 2015 through 2020.
- Interannual variations in NCE are driven primarily ΔC_{loss} due to climate variability and trends in FF.
- Droughts reduce carbon uptake by the ecosystem. Variability associated with El Niño in the tropics is a strong driver of variability in ΔC_{loss} .



Dataset overview

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- ✓ Annual net fluxes for six year (2015-2020)
- Provided for each country and regions (African Union, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, European Union)
- ✓ NCE, NBE, and ΔC_{loss} for four experiments (IS, LNLG, LNLGIS, LNLGOGIS)
- ✓ Bottom-up fluxes used to derive ΔC_{loss} : FF, $F_{crop trade}$, $F_{wood trade}$, and $F_{rivers export}$
- ✓ Quantities for interpreting robustness of flux estimates: Z-statistic, Influence Assimilated Data (IAD) See Part 3 for details.



2.1 CO₂ – Takeaways

Key Takeaways: Top-Down CO₂ Estimates

- ~50% of anthropogenic CO_2 emissions are absorbed by the land biosphere and oceans.
- Flux inversions provide regional emissions and removals of CO₂ from atmospheric CO₂ measurements using a transport model and data assimilation techniques.
- The OCO-2 MIP provides estimates of net carbon exchange (NCE) between the land and atmosphere for four experiments that assimilate different CO₂ datasets.
- We estimate the land carbon stock loss (ΔC_{loss}) by combining OCO-2 MIP NCE with inventories of fossil fuel emissions and lateral fluxes.
- Download the CO₂ dataset and try plotting some country totals in preparation for Part 3.
- Research paper accompanying this dataset coming in June.





Methane (CH₄)

Dan Cusworth (University of Arizona)



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Diffuse emission sources that occur over large spatial areas require precise measurements.

Model Estimate: Mean Wetland CH4 Emissions During 2010–2012



For wetlands, clouds in the tropics and low solar backscatter at high latitudes complicate measurements from space.





Some anthropogenic sectors consist of both diffuse "area sources" and strong localized "point sources".

Examples in Gas Sector:

Diffuse Source: Residential gas distribution system

Point Source: Leak in a gas storage tank at a production site

Scarpelli et al. (2022)



The main sink of CH₄ is a chemical reaction with atmospheric hydroxyl, **OH**. But our understanding of the global OH distribution and its trends remains uncertain.

Modeled OH Production and Loss Mechanisms

Chemical reaction	$\text{Mean}\pm\text{SD}$	%
Production	209 ± 12	_
$O(^{1}D) + H_{2}O$	96 ± 2	46 %
$NO + HO_2$	63 ± 4	30 %
$O_3 + HO_2$	26 ± 3	13 %
Other	24 ± 7	12%
Loss*	209 ± 12	_
CO + OH	82 ± 4	39 %
$CH_4 + OH$	32 ± 1	15 %
$CH_2O + OH$	12 ± 1	6%
Isoprene + OH	13 ± 1	6%
Other	70 ± 5	33 %
Zhao et al. (2020)	Teramoles P Year	er



Long-term trends in OH still under debate (potentially due to increasing ozone, for example).

Inter-annual variability in OH may be due to ENSO -> variability in biomass burning, i.e., CO emissions.



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2.2.2 Estimating CH₄ Emissions on Regional/National Scales

High precision global satellites (e.g., GOSAT) can estimate average annual emissions at country scales.



2019 GOSAT Mean XCH₄

A lack of major land sinks simplifies CH₄ inverse problems compared to CO₂, though strong uncertainties remain (e.g., global OH concentration, vertical transport in tropics).



Worden et al. (2021)



Airborne studies have shown the prevalence of "super-emitting" point sources in certain emission sectors.

O&G Super-Emitters Plumes in Permian Basin



Power-Law Distribution of Super-Emitters



Cusworth et al. (2021)

These point sources/super-emitters can be highly sporadic/intermittent in nature.

Generally, follow power-law distribution: 1% of infrastructure can make up ~50% of total basin's CH₄ emissions.

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Super-emitters are a global phenomenon.



Global "Ultra-Emitters" Detected by Sentinel-5p TROPOMI

Lauvaux et al. (2022)

TROPOMI instrument sensitive to ultra-emitting CH₄ sources (>10,000 kg CH₄ h⁻¹)

Geolocation accuracy limited to spatial resolution of measurement (~5 x 7 km pixels)

These ultra-emitters estimated to make up 12% of global O&G emissions



Lower-precision, high-spatial resolution "plume mappers" quantify emissions from single facilities.

CH₄ Plume Detected in Shanxi, China by PRISMA Satellite



Plume Emission Estimation Algorithms

Guanter et al. (2021)

There is ongoing work to ground-validate these plume-scale emission estimation approaches.

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Current high-resolution plume mappers have limited temporal/spatial capacities, but **tip-and-cue** with coarser-resolution instruments can be employed to understand facility-scale emissions.

Mean 2018–2020 XCH₄ from TROPOMI in Turkmenistan



5000

PRISMA Plume Detections



When data are fused properly, current and future satellite missions can be used to jointly estimate global to regional budgets and identify large point sources.





Examples of How CH₄ Information can be Used to Inform Inventories and Mitigation

Like CO₂, inversions at global and regional scales can be used to compare against bottom-up inventories.





Source $(Tg a^{-1})$	Prior estimate ^a	Posterior estimate ^b	Sensitivity ^c
Natural	15.7	11.8 (7.1–12.7)	0.63
Wetlands	14.2	10.2 (5.6–11.1)	0.71
Open fires	0.5	0.4 (0.4–0.5)	0.13
Termites	0.6	0.6 (0.6-0.6)	-0.02
Geological seeps	0.5	0.5 (0.5–0.5)	0.06
Anthropogenic	28.7	30.6 (29.4–31.3)	0.53
Livestock			
Enteric fermentation	6.7	6.9 (6.3–7.0)	0.16
Manure management	2.5	2.5 (2.1-2.5)	0.22
Oil and natural gas			
Gas production	4.4	5.4 (4.9–5.9)	0.28
Oil production	2.3	3.1 (2.7–3.6)	0.53
Gas transmission	1.1	1.1 (1.1–1.2)	0.03
Gas processing	0.9	1.1 (1.0–1.2)	0.41
Gas distribution	0.5	0.4 (0.4–0.4)	0.35
Landfills			
Municipal	5.2	5.0 (4.7-5.0)	0.26
Industrial	0.6	0.5 (0.5–0.5)	0.13
Coal mining			
Underground	2.2	2.4 (2.3–2.5)	0.22
Surface	0.5	0.5 (0.4–0.5)	0.30
Abandoned	0.2	0.3 (0.3–0.3)	0.10
Wastewater			
Municipal	0.5	0.4 (0.4–0.4)	0.09
Industrial	0.2	0.2 (0.1–0.2)	0.16
Rice cultivation	0.5	0.4 (0.3–0.5)	0.28
Other anthropogenic ^d	0.5	0.4 (0.4–0.5)	0.05
Total source	44.5	42.4 (37.0–42.9)	0.64

Maasakkers et al. (2021)



Examples of How CH₄ Information can be Used to Inform Inventories and Mitigation

For localized plume sources, information can be used for inventories and/or for direct ground follow-up.

Example: Leaking Pipeline Discovered from Aircraft in Colorado



"Hand-off" top-down information to agencies to prompt corrective action



Examples of How CH₄ Information can be Used to Inform Inventories and Mitigation

Localized point sources can be compared to regional inversions to contextualize impact of these few, but large emitters.



Summary of methane emissions for each surveyed basin

For example, in many U.S. basins, local point sources make up 20–60% of total CH₄ budget.

What have we learned from CH₄?

- Like CO₂, global emission budgets can be derived from satellite observations.
- The main sink of CH_4 is atmospheric OH.
- CH₄ emitters tend to be either diffuse (e.g., wetlands) or localized point sources (e.g., gas leak).
 - High-precision/coarse-resolution satellites are best suited for global/regional inversion estimation.
 - Low-precision/fine-resolution satellites are best suited for detecting, geolocating, and quantifying localized point sources.
- Information from CH₄-sensing satellites can be used to compare against bottom-up inventories and can be used to motivate action for localized point sources that are unexpected (e.g., leaks).



Contacts

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 - Sean McCartney: sean.mccartney@nasa.gov
- Training Webpage:
 - <u>https://appliedsciences.nasa.gov/join-mission/training/english/arset-atmospheric-co2-and-ch4-budgets-support-global-stocktake</u>
 - Check out our sister programs:

- ARSET Website:
 - <u>https://appliedsciences.nasa.gov/arset</u>
- Twitter: <u>@NASAARSET</u>





Questions?

- Please enter your questions in the Q&A box. We will answer them in the order they were received.
- We will post the Q&A to the training website following the conclusion of the webinar.







Thank You!



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