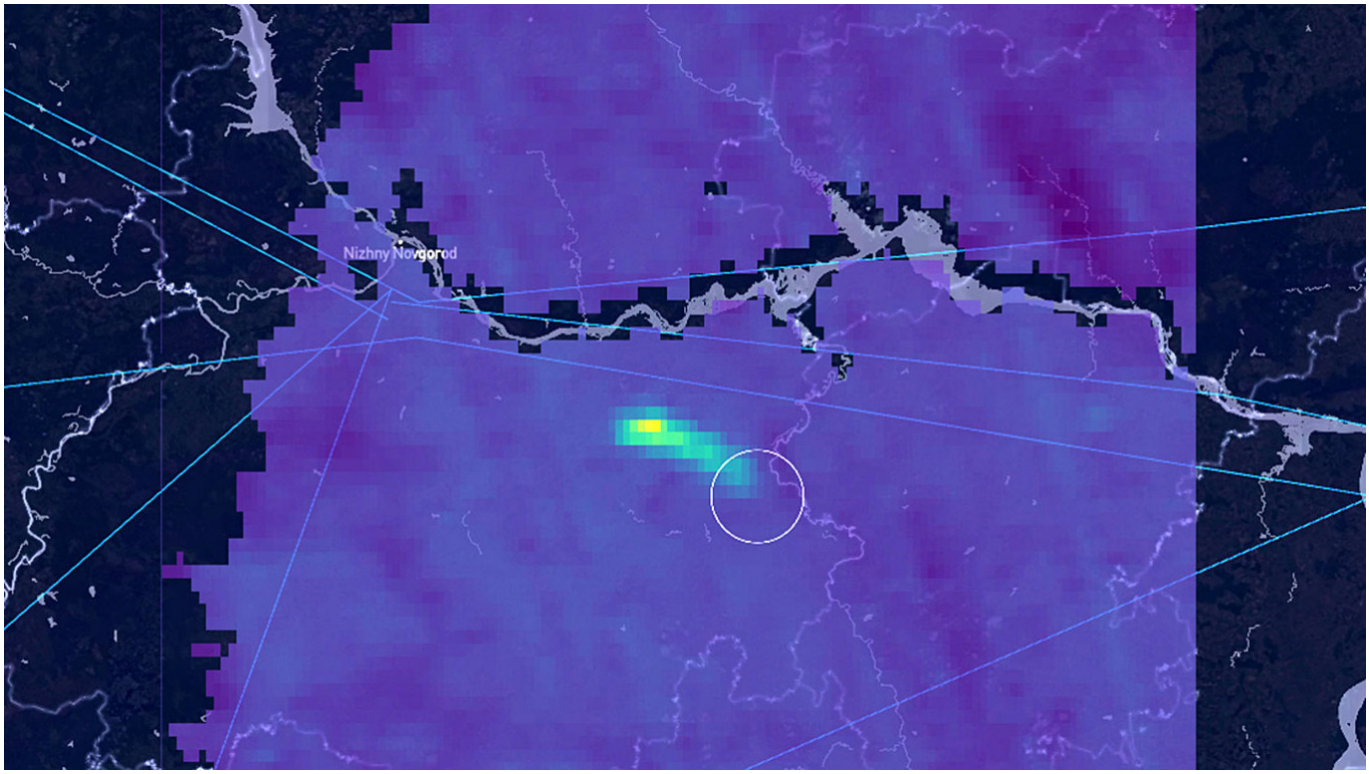
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Satellites Detect Massive Russia Methane Leak – Bloomberg

November 01, 2021



Kayrros

A recent leak at a pipeline owned by Russian state-controlled gas giant Gazprom pumped a huge cloud of potent greenhouse gas methane into the atmosphere, Bloomberg reported, citing satellite tracking data from geoanalytics firm Kayrros SAS.

Some 164 metric tons of methane (CH4) leaked into the atmosphere during a single hour of repairs on a pipeline owned by state-controlled gas giant Gazprom on Oct. 5 in the Nizhny Novgorod region roughly 400 kilometers east of Moscow, Bloomberg reported.

This amount of CH4 produces the same amount of warming as the CO2 emissions of 8,000 cars, Bloomberg reported. Gazprom has admitted the leak took place but said the emissions fell under government limits.

The incident is now one of the five largest methane leaks in 2021 linked to Russian firms.

Related article: Russia's Gazprom Behind Largest Industrial Methane Leak Since 2019 – Bloomberg

The leak follows another major leak spotted from space in the republic of Tatarstan some 600 kilometers east of Moscow. On June 4, 395 tons of CH_4 escaped into the atmosphere in the first hour of the leak, Kayrros' data showed. Gazprom acknowledged the leak two weeks after the incident.

So far, the Russian gas giant has admitted to just five methane leaks in 2021.

Russia reported 4 million tons in CH_4 emissions from the oil and gas sector in 2019, but a report by The Washington Post recently estimated that the real amount may have been two or three times higher. Satellite observation could become a key tool in spotting previously undetected methane leaks in Russia, the report said.

While methane's warming effect is roughly 80 times more potent than that of carbon dioxide (CO_2), it breaks down in years or decades, compared to CO_2, which can stay in the atmosphere for centuries.

UN scientists have pointed to global cuts in methane emissions as the most effective way to slow the trajectory of climate change. The U.S. and EU recently launched a Global Methane Pledge that calls on countries to slash methane emissions 30% by 2030.

Methane emissions cuts are one of the key topics at the UN's pivotal COP26 climate summit taking place this week in Glasgow. Although Russian President Vladimir Putin is not attending the summit in person, he recently called for global cuts to methane emissions.

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