


# THE METHANE NUMBER

$$\text{Me} = \frac{\text{annual mass of anthropogenic CH}_4}{\text{annual mass of natural CH}_4} \approx \frac{\text{oil pumpjack} + \text{cow}}{\text{wetland}} \approx \frac{3.5 \times 10^{12} \text{ kg/yr}}{3.6 \times 10^{12} \text{ kg/yr}} \approx 1$$
The diagram illustrates the components of the methane number calculation. The numerator represents anthropogenic methane sources, shown as an oil pumpjack (with blue smoke) and a cow (with a green cloud of methane). The denominator represents natural methane sources, shown as a wetland area with green grass and blue water.