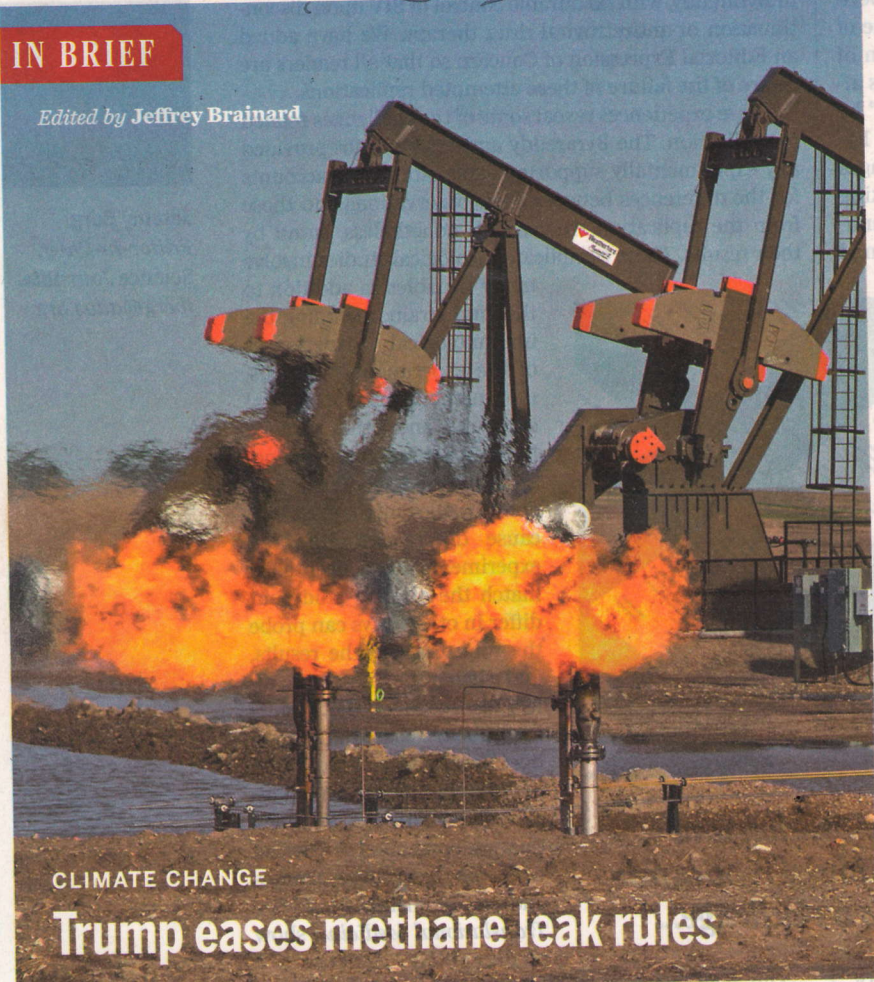


IN BRIEF

Edited by Jeffrey Brainard



CLIMATE CHANGE

Trump eases methane leak rules

Despite objections from some large oil companies, President Donald Trump's administration is moving ahead with plans to relax U.S. rules requiring oil and gas firms to reduce leaks of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, at land-based wells (like those in North Dakota, above) and pipelines. The move is designed to remove "unnecessary and duplicative" regulations imposed by former President Barack Obama's administration, said Andrew Wheeler, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, D.C., on 29 August. He also suggested companies will still voluntarily move to capture the gas because "methane is valuable." But energy firms including BP and Shell expressed opposition to the move, in part because they fear unregulated methane leaks will tarnish the image of natural gas (which consists of methane) as a more climate-friendly alternative to coal and oil. Still, many smaller energy firms had complained that complying with the leak rules would be too costly.