

# Application News

Gas Chromatograph GC-2030

**NARO** way | DEVELOPED WITH NARO

## Greenhouse Gas Analyzer

Shinji Uchiyama,<sup>1</sup> Hiroyuki Aikawa,<sup>1</sup> and Shigeto Sudo<sup>2</sup>  
1 Shimadzu Corporation, 2 National Agriculture and Food Research Organization

### User Benefits

- ◆ Simultaneously measures the 3 main greenhouse gases: CH<sub>4</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O.
- ◆ Offers short analysis cycle times and is equipped with an AOC-6000 Plus syringe injection system to analyze large numbers of samples.
- ◆ Uses nitrogen as a carrier gas for lower running costs.

### Introduction

Greenhouse gases are a major cause of climate change, and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) are considered the 3 primary greenhouse gases. Although CO<sub>2</sub> accounts for the majority of greenhouse gas emissions followed by CH<sub>4</sub>, reducing CH<sub>4</sub> emissions is considered important because CH<sub>4</sub> has a warming effect that is more than twenty times greater than CO<sub>2</sub>. At the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November 2021, over 100 countries joined the Global Methane Pledge, which pledges by 2030 to reduce global CH<sub>4</sub> emissions by 30 % compared to 2020 levels.

The Greenhouse Gas Analyzer is a gas chromatography system that has been developed by Shimadzu in collaboration with the National Agriculture and Food Research Organization (NARO) (Fig. 1). Measuring levels of CH<sub>4</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O simultaneously in a single sample is difficult, but the Greenhouse Gas Analyzer has been designed to do this simultaneously, which reduces analytical errors and improves the sampling speed, giving researchers a valuable tool in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

This Application News describes using the Greenhouse Gas Analyzer to simultaneously measure CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O levels.



Fig. 1 Greenhouse Gas Analyzer

### System Configuration

The Greenhouse Gas Analyzer measures gases using a valve system that is combined with 3 detectors. Different detectors are used for specific analytes. CH<sub>4</sub> is measured using a flame ionization detector (FID). CO<sub>2</sub> is measured using a thermal conductivity detector (TCD), and N<sub>2</sub>O is measured using an electron capture detector (ECD). A schematic flow diagram of the system is shown in Fig. 2, and the conditions used in the analysis are shown in Table 1. Although helium is a popular choice as a carrier gas, recent supply chain disruptions have led to helium shortages. Nitrogen is easier to procure and can be used as a carrier gas by the Greenhouse Gas Analyzer. The Greenhouse Gas Analyzer is also compatible with gas bags and glass vial sampling containers. Investigating changes over time in large areas, such as fields, requires large numbers of samples. In these situations, glass vials can offer shorter sample collection times and easier transportation because they are smaller than gas bags (Fig. 3). The AOC-6000 Plus syringe injection system used by the Greenhouse Gas Analyzer can hold up to 108 glass vial samples for high-throughput analysis.

### Analysis Flow

The AOC-6000 Plus syringe injection system uses a syringe to inject samples from the vials, which are arranged in trays, into a packed column injection port (Fig. 2). When performing manual analysis of a sample in a gas bag, the gas bag is connected to the system, and the sample is passed from the bag through the sample loop and into the gas chromatograph. The accumulation of sample gas moisture in one part of an analysis column can cause issues in the chromatogram. However, the Greenhouse Gas Analyzer uses a precolumn to separate moisture and other unwanted impurities from the sample and vent them from the system (the pre-cut). After the pre-cut, each target gas (CH<sub>4</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O) is isolated by a different column, and CH<sub>4</sub> is measured by an FID, CO<sub>2</sub> by a TCD, and N<sub>2</sub>O by an ECD.



Fig. 3 Comparison of a Gas Bag and a Glass Vial

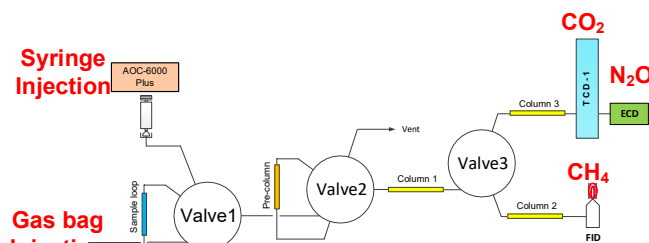


Fig. 2 Schematic Flow Diagram of CH<sub>4</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O Greenhouse Gas Analyzer

Table 1 Analytical Conditions

Model:	GC-2030 FID + TCD + ECD + Valve option box
Auto Sampler:	AOC-6000 Plus
Injection Volume:	1 mL
Valve Temp.:	110 °C
Inj. Temp.:	110 °C
Carrier Gas:	N <sub>2</sub>
Column Temp.:	110 °C
FID Temp.:	250 °C
FID Gas:	Air, H <sub>2</sub> , N <sub>2</sub>
TCD Temp.:	120 °C
TCD Current:	70 mA
TCD Gas:	N <sub>2</sub>
ECD Temp.:	340 °C
ECD Current:	2 nA
ECD Gas:	CH <sub>4</sub> 5 %/Ar

### ■ Analysis of Standard Samples

Fig. 4 shows the chromatograms obtained from standard samples.

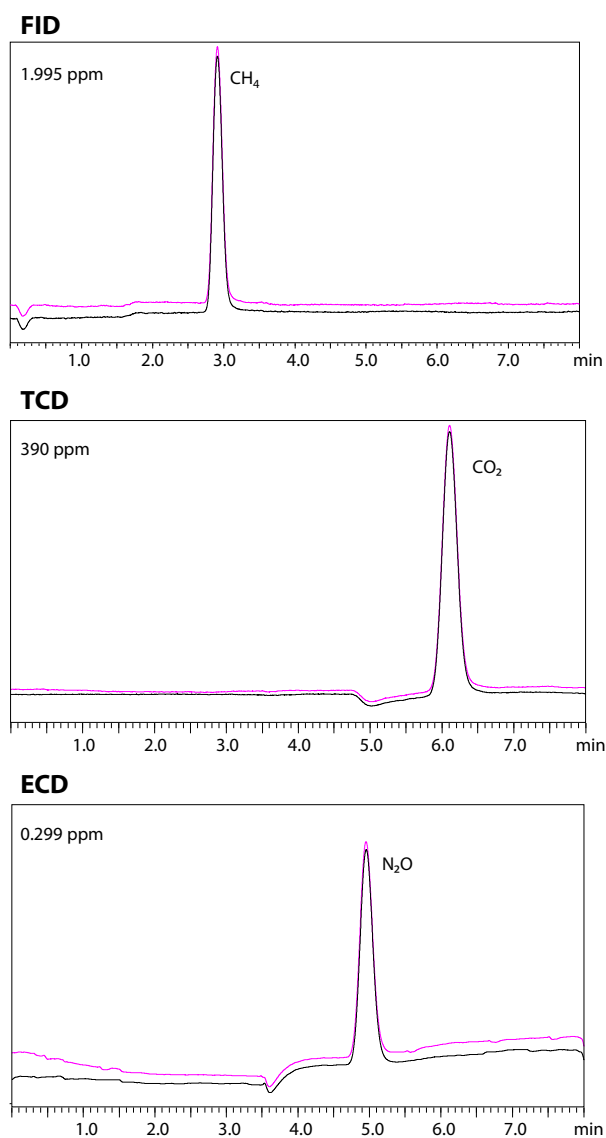


Fig. 4 Chromatograms of Standard Samples

### ■ Analysis of Real-World Samples

Fig. 5 shows the chromatograms obtained from atmospheric air analyzed 6 times in succession. Table 2 shows the analyte levels from standard samples and the repeatability of the results.

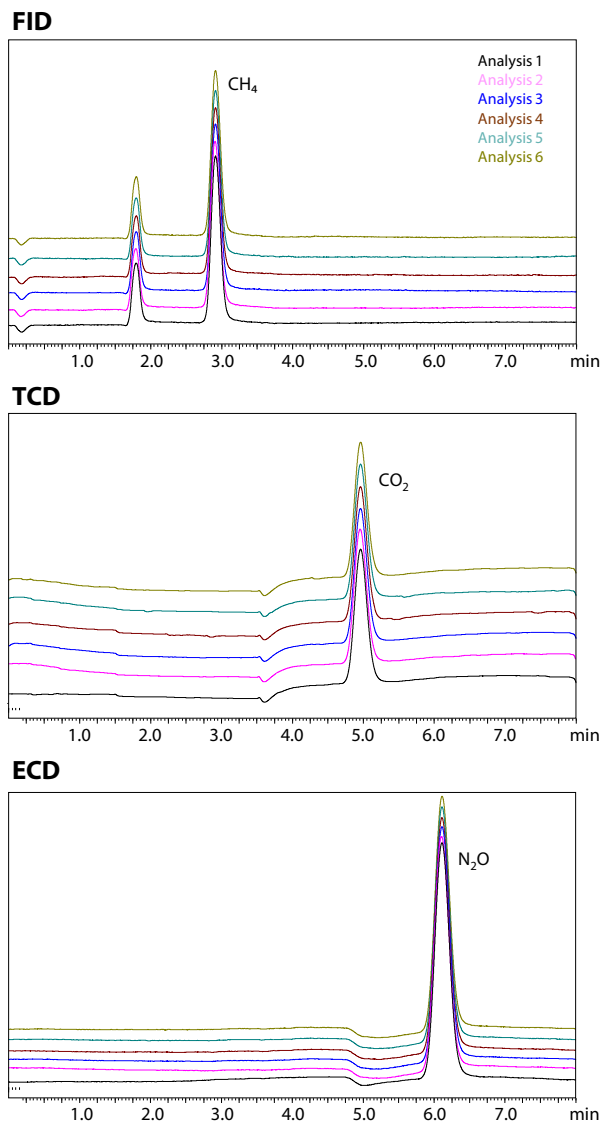


Fig. 5 Chromatograms for Atmospheric Air (Successive Analysis)

Table 2 Peak Area Repeatability and Gas Levels in Atmospheric Air (n = 6)

	CH <sub>4</sub>	CO <sub>2</sub>	N <sub>2</sub> O
Peak Area Repeatability (% RSD)	0.53	0.49	0.41
Measured Level (ppm)	2.02	434	0.332

### ■ Conclusion

The Greenhouse Gas Analyzer can simultaneously measure 3 greenhouse gases in atmospheric air in a single analysis. Each analysis by the Greenhouse Gas Analyzer is performed in 8 minutes with an analysis cycle time of 10 minutes.