

Media Release**Historic victory: judge forces Shell to drastically reduce CO2 emissions**

May 26, 2021 (Ottawa) For the first time in history, a judge has held a corporation liable for causing dangerous climate change. Today, as a result of legal action brought by Friends of the Earth Netherlands (Milieudefensie) together with 17,000 co-plaintiffs and six other organisations¹ the court in The Hague ruled that Shell must reduce its CO2 emissions by 45% within 10 years. This historic verdict has enormous consequences for Shell and other big polluters globally.

"This is a monumental victory for our planet, for our children and is a step towards a liveable future for everyone," says Donald Pols, director of Friends of the Earth Netherlands. "The judge has left no room for doubt: Shell is causing dangerous climate change and must stop its destructive behaviour now."

"This is a turning point in history. This case is unique because it is the first time a judge has ordered a large polluting company to comply with the Paris Climate Agreement. This ruling may also have major consequences for other big polluters," says Roger Cox, lawyer for Friends of the Earth Netherlands.

The verdict requires Royal Dutch Shell to reduce its emissions by 45% by the end of 2030. Shell is also responsible for emission from customers and suppliers. There is a threat of human rights violations to the "right to life" and "undisturbed family life". Shell must comply with the judgment immediately, because Shell's current climate policy is not concrete enough.

"This historic decision should resonate in board rooms around the globe. Investors in climate wrecking companies should pay heed," says Beatrice Olivastri, CEO, Friends of the Earth Canada.

"This historic victory sets a precedent that fossil fuel companies can be held liable for the harms caused by global climate change," says Professor Lynda Collins. "Given that these companies have benefited from both greenhouse gas emissions and climate change denial, this result is only logical. This forward-looking decision requires Shell to become part of the solution - a novel and ground-breaking legal remedy that could be followed by courts all around the world."

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¹ The co-plaintiffs are: Action Aid Netherlands, Both ENDS, Fossil Free Netherlands, Greenpeace Netherlands, Young Friends of The Earth Netherlands and the Wadden Sea Association (Waddenvereniging) and more than 17000 Dutch citizens.