

Response from Shell regarding the Accufacts assessment of the 2008 Bodo oil spill

20 April 2012

Amnesty International shared Accufacts assessment of the 2008 Bodo oil spill with Shell. The company sent the following statement on 19 April 2012 to Amnesty International which they requested was published in full:

As you are aware this spill is currently the subject of litigation and the volume and extent of the spill will be the subject of independent expert testimony in the litigation. You will understand, therefore, why it is not appropriate for us to comment on this estimate at this time. Having heard the independent expert testimony the court will decide what the volume of the spill was. We suggest you might be better to wait for the authoritative view on the volume of the spill and publish at that stage rather than risk misleading the public with Accufacts estimate.

We trust that, in the interests of transparency, that if you do decide to publish Accufacts estimate you will also publish this response in full.

Representative of Shell, 19 April 2012.

In response to this statement Audrey Gaughran, Director of Global Issues, Amnesty International commented:

Publishing the Accufacts assessment is not misleading the public.

The Accufacts data is an expert assessment of the oil release rate, based on video of the spill. As such it is authoritative. Far from being misleading the Accufacts assessment provides a clear explanation of the basis for the figures given.

On the other hand, Shell's figure of 1,640 barrels of oil spilt in total at Bodo has been given to the public, and the people of Bodo, with absolutely no evidence to support it or information to explain how the calculation was made.

The Accufacts assessment – based on a video of the spill – shows that even at the lowest possible estimate there was nearly as much oil flowing in one day (1,440 based on the lowest end of Accufacts' assessment) as Shell claims flowed over a period of several weeks. At the higher end of the Accufacts assessment more than twice as much oil was flowing per day as Shell claims flowed in weeks. No matter which way Shell looks at this their figure is wrong.

For further information please contact Tom Mackey, Amnesty International, +44 207 413 5566

-ENDS-