

## **Declaration of Russian environmental NGOs and indigenous people organizations**

*June 4, 2010*

The accident at the drilling platform DeepWater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico which resulted to oil blowing out, about 100 thousand tones already, is unequalled in terms of scale of ecological and social-economic consequences. Despite the all-nation campaign to liquidate the spill, enormous resources attracted and favorable hydrometeorological conditions, all attempts have been made so far to stop the oil spill from the killed well and effectively liquidate the oil pollution failed. The spilled oil has covered a significant part of water space of the gulf, polluted its coast and the deep-water zone.

The technological disaster in the Gulf of Mexico is another obvious proof that the mankind doesn't have safe technologies to extract shelf hydrocarbons. Each year several large accidents happen at wells of offshore fields, the last one happened in August 2009 near Australia. This is why it is important to introduce significant changes in the plans of offshore development. The development of new projects in the deep-water zone, arctic (freezing) seas, in other regions with complicated hydrometeorological environment shall be immediately stopped.

Russia shall immediately learn the lesson of this tragedy and provide for actual and all-round ecological safety of national oil projects at the offshore, including arctic seas, where the conditions to perform emergency works in case of an oil spill are incomparably more difficult than in the Gulf of Mexico.

The primary efforts shall be aimed at preventive measures, including:

- immediate revision and optimization of the existing normative-legal basis to prevent oil spills and reaction to them, its harmonization with the Recommendations of the Arctic Council on oil-and-gas offshore projects and, if necessary, develop a new one. In particular, to speed up development and acceptance of the Law on prevention of sea pollution by oil;
- allotment and creation of zones, completely closed for oil offshore projects (particularly valuable to protect biological diversity, rare species or development of industrial fishery), for example, in the Arctic Region, at Kamchatka shelf and in the Northern Caspian;
- development and ratification of the Protocol on reaction to oil spills and the Tegeran Convention, ratification of the International convention on control of marine ballast waters and residuals and their management, of 2004, the Annex VI to International convention in prevention of pollution from vessels, development of Convention on protection of marine environment in the Arctics.

Before these initiatives are realised it is necessary to announce a **moratorium** on

development of new off shore projects in oil extraction in the Arctic seas, Sea of Okhotsk, Bering, Kaspiy and other seas. Nevertheless, even the listed measures can't completely exclude the possibility of catastrophic accidents. Therefore until there are no safe technologies created and there is no equipment to exclude possibility of such accidents, oil extraction at offshore fields shall be performed only from land using the directional drilling method. All active shelf projects shall pass all-round and public audit to check their compliance with the best world practice in oil extraction and transporation.

Cease in development of new off shore projects won't endanger the power and economic safety of the country, if the priority in development is given to power industry based on safe and renewable power sources, which is necessary for innovative and stable development of the country in XXI century.

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