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For Environmental Justice

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**Historic victory: judge forces Shell to drastically reduce CO2 emissions**  
*Friends of the Earth wins climate case against Shell*

**The Hague, 26 May 2021** - 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 organisations<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

Roger Cox, lawyer for Friends of the Earth Netherlands, is also delighted: "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."

The ruling from the court in The Hague will have major ramifications internationally, Sara Shaw from Friends of the Earth International: "This is a landmark victory for climate justice. Our hope is that this verdict will trigger a wave of climate litigation against big polluters, to force them to stop extracting and burning fossil fuels. This result is a win for communities in the global South who face devastating climate impacts now."

**Main points from the verdict:**

- 1 Royal Dutch Shell must reduce its emissions by 45% net by the end of 2030.
- 2 Shell is also responsible for emissions from customers (scope 3) and suppliers.
- 3 There is a threat of human rights violations to the 'right to life' and 'undisturbed family life'.
- 4 Shell must comply with the judgment immediately, because Shell's current climate policy is not concrete enough.

**Donald Pols concludes:**

"This verdict is an enormous step forward for the international climate movement. One of the world's biggest polluters has finally been held responsible. I am filled with hope for the future, as we know that the climate crisis does not wait and does not stop at our borders. That is why it is so important the judge is now forcing Shell to take responsibility for its actions. This is also a clear signal to the other big polluters that they also have to act now ."

**Note to the editors:**

<sup>1</sup>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.

## **Livestream**

If the court in The Hague broadcasts a Livestream of the verdict, follow it via: <https://milieudedefensie.nl/livestream>

## **May 26th Press conference on location and via Zoom (estimated time 1745)**

Due to corona, it is important to register in advance for the press conference with the director of Milieudedefensie, Donald Pols and attorney Roger Cox.

Register to attend the press conference at the court here: [persvoorlichting@milieudedefensie.nl](mailto:persvoorlichting@milieudedefensie.nl)

Register to attend the press conference on Zoom here: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYtd-mqrDMrGdX-uGWax2m0veoJzhFXzkOSq>

After the press conference there will be (limited) time for individual discussions with the Milieudedefensie spokespersons as well as the chance to speak with the spokespersons of the co-claimant organisations.

## **Languages**

Part of the press conference will be in English and there will also be English and Spanish translation available.

French translation is available on request, please contact o [Alix.nieuwenhuis@milieudedefensie.nl](mailto:Alix.nieuwenhuis@milieudedefensie.nl) before 23 May

## **Location of the Press Conference**

The press conference will take place at the NH Hotel, Prinses Margrietplantsoen 100, 2595 BR, The Hague. During the press conference it is mandatory to wear a mouth mask when moving about and we ask you to stay in your seat as much as possible and to observe the 1.5f metre rule, for everyone's safety.

## **District Court of the Hague**

Information about the ruling can be obtained from the Press Office of the District Court in The Hague: Mr. Gijsbert Wassinkmaat, +31 (0)6 - 528 30 471  
E-mail: [voorlichting.rb.den.haag@rechtspraak.nl](mailto:voorlichting.rb.den.haag@rechtspraak.nl)

## **Other information:**

Photos, video material and interviews with director Donald Pols and lawyer Roger Cox will be available upon request via: [persvoorlichting@milieudedefensie.nl](mailto:persvoorlichting@milieudedefensie.nl) or +31 (0)20 5507 333 / (0)6-46851137

## **Online Press kit with updates:**

DUTCH: <https://milieudedefensie.nl/actueel/persmap-klimaatzaak-shell>

ENGLISH: <https://en.milieudedefensie.nl/news/press-kit-climate-case-against-shell>

## **Spokespersons**

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