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Surfrider Foundation Europe and 21 partner NGOs from all over Europe are calling for a ban on offshore drilling

On the 20th of April 2010, the explosion of Deepwater Horizon, the deepest offshore oil platform, led to the biggest oil spill in human history.

On the 10th anniversary of this catastrophe, Surfrider Foundation Europe, the European NGO devoted to protecting the Ocean, launches its campaign #DrillingIsKilling and calls for a ban on offshore oil and gas exploitation and exploration in Europe by 2035.

Offshore drilling is a disaster for the environment and the economy

All stages of offshore drilling – exploration, exploitation, maintenance and dismantling – have a dramatic and irreversible impact on ocean biodiversity, putting human lives and marine species in grave danger.

Some of the environmental risks are:

- Oil spills: Deepwater Horizon accident is not unique. For the past 30 years, humanity has faced more than 10 major offshore accidents, half of which led to oil spills.
- Offshore exploitation inevitably leads to hydrocarbon releases and water pollution drilling muds containing benzene, zinc, arsenic, radioactive materials, and other contaminants with irreversible consequences.

- Seismic testing that precedes exploitation has a huge impact on marine life, resulting in hearing loss, reduced catch rates of 40-80%, and beach strandings for a number of species.

Offshore drilling also threatens the lives and livelihoods of coastal communities. European tourism and fishing industries employ 40 times more people than offshore oil and gas activities (2 570 000 vs 63 000 people in 2017) and generate 5 times more added value (85 vs 17 billion euro in 2017).

The offshore drilling industry's economic contribution is minute compared to the value added by the sectors which it threatens the most.

Given the current oil crisis which made oil prices reach their historic minimum, abandoning such a costly and dangerous activity seems an absolute necessity.

Year 2020: a unique chance to ban offshore drilling in European waters

Surfrider is fighting for a society that would preserve the marine habitats and environment.

Given the upcoming revision of the Offshore Safety Directive 2013/30/EU planned for 2020, Surfrider Foundation Europe is mobilizing, together with 21 other European NGOs, to call for an EU-wide offshore drilling ban by 2035.

"2020 offers us a unique chance to shape the future of our continent's energy policy. If Europe wants to fulfill its Paris Agreement commitments to keep the rise of temperatures under 1,5C, as well as its ambition to become climate neutral by 2050, it should put an end to offshore oil and gas drilling" - Antidia Citores, Surfrider's spokesperson and Head of Lobby.

Banning offshore drilling is the first step in overcoming our addiction to fossil energy.

Surfrider Foundation Europe and all the signatories of the Manifesto "Toward an EU offshore drilling ban", are calling on the European Union and its Member States to adopt a hardline stance against offshore drilling:

- **By stopping approving new drilling permits** both for exploration and exploitation by 2023,
- By committing to refuse renewals on issued authorizations after their expiration date in order to reach a complete phase-out by 2035,
- **By putting a stop to exploitation and exploration activities in and around Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** in order to protect these ecosystems, crucial for ocean resilience.
- **By prohibiting drilling in the EU and the EEA icy Arctic waters.** The Arctic is an example of an area where the probability of an incident occurring is higher and the potential damage is worse due to its vulnerable ecosystem with keystone species.

#DrillingIsKilling campaign: inform, mobilize and influence

Surfrider's #DrillingIsKilling campaign is aimed at helping all the stakeholders to develop an understanding regarding offshore drilling consequences, especially for ocean conservation.

After launching the campaign on the 20th of April, Surfrider Foundation Europe will continue its campaign on the legislative level by pushing for an ambitious revision of the Offshore Safety Directive.

Later in 2020, we will pursue our mobilization efforts by encouraging citizens to raise this problem to their Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) via a specially designed platform.

Our ocean and our coasts represent an ecologic, economic and recreational treasure which is threatened by offshore drilling. Thanks to its campaign #DrillingIsKilling Surfrider Foundation Europe is calling for an EU-wide mobilization to put an end to this harmful practice by 2035.

Signatories of the Manifesto "Toward an EU offshore drilling ban"

Almargem, Centro De Intervenção Para O Desenvolvimento Amílcar Cabral (CIDAC), Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), Climate Action Network Europe (CAN Europe), Coalition Clean Baltic, Coral Guardian, Fractracker Alliance, Friends of the Black Sea, Glocal Faro, Grupo de Estudos de Ordenamento do Território e Ambiente (GEOTA), Leave it in the ground (LINGO), Liga para a Protecção da Natureza (LPN), Mediterranean Information Office for the Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO ECSDE), Plastic Soup Foundation, Plataforma Algarve Livre de Petróleo (PALP), Ocean sounds, Oceana, Our Fish, Save Greek Seas, SCIAENA, Sociedade portuguesa para o estudo das aves (SPEA)

Discover the manifesto "Toward an EU offshore drilling ban" - UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL THE 20TH OF APRIL

For more information about Surfrider Europe : www.surfrider.eu

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