

Black Planet for BP - ethecon Foundation to bestow censure award

Date: 04-12-2011 07:57 AM CET

Category: [Politics, Law & Society](#)

Press release from: [ethecon - Foundation Ethics & Economics](#)



Stiftung Ethik & Ökonomie
Foundation Ethics & Economics
Fundación Ética & Economía

On Thursday, April 14, representatives of the ethecon - Foundation Ethics & Economics will present the International ethecon Black Planet Award 2010 to the BP company. The bestowal will occur in London during the first BP shareholders meeting since the oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. With the bestowal of its censure prize shortly before the first anniversary of the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig, ethecon aims to focus attention on BP's responsibility for this catastrophe.

On the initiative of ethecon and in cooperation with the Gulf Coast Fund, several affected fishermen from the Gulf region will also take part in the shareholders meeting and appear at an information session on the evening of April 12. Also present will be the American environmental activist and ethecon Blue Planet Award winner Diane Wilson, who on the grounds of her protests against BP and the oil spill, received a suspended prison sentence of two and a half years last August.

Diane Wilson is enraged over the bonuses which several companies paid the very same executives who were responsible for the oil disaster, among them two BP managers. "BP cut corners on safety in order to make more profit. Instead of being thrown out of the Gulf region, they were granted new drilling permits." She demands that a warning example be set with BP.

"With the Black Planet Award, Foundation ethecon calls by name the people at BP personally responsible for the crimes to man and the environment," explains ethecon board member Axel Köhler-Schnura. "I'm talking about former CEO Tony Hayward, current CEO Bob Dudley, board chairman Carl-Henric Svanberg, other executives as well as the major shareholders of the company." In an extensive dossier ethecon shows that the above named are responsible for policies of BP which place profit above employee safety, the health of local residents and environmental protection. Through these policies BP contributes to the downfall of the earth as a Black Planet. At the BP shareholders meeting, Köhler-Schnura will read an open

letter justifying the censure of BP inherent in the bestowal of the International ethecon Black Planet Award 2010.

The high profile event before the shareholders meeting will be jointly hosted by ethecon, the UK Tar Sands Network, Greenpeace and other British and Canadian environmental organizations. These groups are trying to stop BP's plans to extract oil from tar sands in Canada.

Since 2006 "ethecon - Foundation Ethics & Economics" confers two international awards annually. A positive prize, the "Blue Planet Award", honors outstanding efforts to maintain and save the "Blue Planet". Its negative counterpart, the "Black Planet Award", exposes and condemns actions responsible for the ruin and destruction of the "Blue Planet". With its positive prize ethecon honored in past years Diane Wilson/USA (2006), Vandana Shiva/India(2007), José Abreu und Hugo Chávez/Venezuela (2008), Uri Avnery/Israel (2009) as well as Elias Bierdel/Austria (2010). The censure award went to the owners, shareholders and executive management of the following companies: Monsanto/USA (2006), Nestlé/Switzerland(2007), Blackwater (Xe)/USA (2008), Formosa Plastics Group/Taiwan (2009) and BP/Great Britain (2010).

In contrast to many corporate, family, church, political and state foundations, ethecon is one of the few foundations empowered by ordinary citizens. There are currently 19 endowment contributors. Following the credo "for a world without exploitation and oppression", it sees its mission in its responsibility toward coming generations. The young foundation is financed through endowment contributions, donations and sustaining memberships.

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