

BAN Press release: Exxon Mobil Creates Green U.S. Jobs

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Seattle, Washington. November 8, 2011. -- Instead of sending their defunct tanker to

the infamous ship-scraping beaches of South Asia, Exxon Mobil and wholly owned subsidiary SeaRiver Maritime, recently completed the sale of the S/R Wilmington, a 1984 built tanker, to a U.S. ship recycling facility, where it will be dismantled by a skilled workforce, using advanced technologies to manage the vessel's hazardous waste stream. Exxon's move to recycle the Wilmington in the U.S. is seen by the toxic trade watchdog organization, Basel Action Network (BAN), as a move to lead by example, opting for the safe and environmentally preferable ship recycling methods of U.S. ship recyclers, while creating green U.S. jobs in a tough economy. *"We applaud this decision and hope this is a harbinger of many more such corporate choices – to internalize costs and not use the global commons or developing countries as convenient dumping grounds for pollution and harmful activities,"* said Mr. Colby Self, Green Ship Recycling Campaign Director for BAN. This move is in stark contrast to some of Exxon's competitors including BP, who often send their retired fleets to the shipbreaking beaches of South Asia, where nearly a quarter of the exploited workforce at these yards are child laborers making less than USD\$1 per day, and where little is done to protect their health and safety or that of the environmentally sensitive tidal flats where these vessels are scrapped. Because of its age, the Wilmington is suspected of containing a host of hazardous wastes within its construction. These wastes cannot be managed in an environmentally sound manner on the shipbreaking beaches of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, where approximately 90% of the obsolete global shipping fleet is dismantled. Using advanced technologies at U.S. ship recycling facilities, these wastes, including PCBs, asbestos, lead, and mercury are contained and managed with proper care, while approximately 91% of the vessel, including critical metal resources such as steel, aluminum, and copper, are fully recycled and recirculated into the marketplace, thereby reducing demand for environmentally destructive primary metal mining and related carbon emissions. *"BAN is pleased with this outcome after having been in close contact with Exxon/SeaRiver for months,"* said Self. *"Building on this positive result, we now call on Exxon to further lead by example to make a corporate commitment to Off the Beach environmentally sound management of all end-of-life vessels owned, operated or leased on behalf of Exxon/SeaRiver."* The NGO Platform, of which BAN is a part, is seeking an *"Off the Beach Commitment"* from all enterprises utilizing shipping. This Commitment entails agreeing to ensure that the ships used by a company directly or under contract, do not find their way to the beaches of South Asia at end-of-life.