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PRESS RELEASE

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Leading ocean scientists issue consensus statement to end dispersant use in Gulf, call for independent research

July 22, 2010 - To break up crude oil unleashed by the Deepwater Horizon rig, BP has injected nearly two million gallons of Corexit chemical dispersants into the Gulf of Mexico. The massive volume of dispersants and the way they have been applied—both on the surface and 5,000 feet beneath it—is unprecedented. Once oil is dispersed in deep water, it cannot be recovered.

Although the gusher is currently capped, deep concern about negative impacts the dispersant/crude oil mix will have on both the marine ecosystem and human health has prompted leading ocean scientists to issue a consensus statement that urges a halt to any further dispersant use in the Gulf.

The statement, authored by Dr. Susan Shaw, Director of the Marine Environmental Research Institute, stands on a large body of research indicating that crude oil and dispersants are more toxic when they are combined than either oil or dispersants alone. The statement also calls for:

- Full public disclosure of all the chemical ingredients in the Corexit formulations and full toxicity data on these chemicals in combination with oil.
- Full public disclosure of information about adverse health effects and all monitoring and testing data collected by government agencies.
- Immediate funding for independent research to fully assess toxic impacts on the ecosystem and human health. **The scientists believe the worst impacts of the disaster are yet to come, and without deliberate, independent scientific tracking and assessment, they could remain hidden.**

Marine scientists and conservation organizations are invited to add their signatures to the document. It can be found on the website of the Marine Environmental Research Institute, www.meriresearch.org.

Initial signatories include:

- Sylvia A. Earle, PhD, Ocean Explorer-in-Residence, National Geographic Society; Advisory Council Chairman, Harte Research Institute
- Susan D. Shaw, DrPH, Marine Toxicologist, Director, Marine Environmental Research Institute
- Carl Safina, PhD, President, Blue Ocean Institute
- David Gallo, PhD, Oceanographer, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
- David Guggenheim, PhD, Marine Biologist/Conservationist, President, 1planet1ocean – a project of The Ocean Foundation
- Edith Widder, PhD, President and Senior Scientist, Ocean Research & Conservation Association
- Wallace J. Nichols, PhD, Research Associate, California Academy of Sciences

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