

ENVIRONMENT VS. SHELL

THE ACCUSED: Royal Dutch Shell

THE CRIME: Continuing to colonize the world through ecocide

ACCOMPLICES: The Dutch government & Dutch people in allowing this.

DEPOSITION - 88347

THE DUTCH CULTURE SECTOR

My name is [REDACTED]. I was born on the [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] the Netherlands. I am the director of the [REDACTED] museum.

You ask about my involvement with Royal Dutch Shell? Well, we owe them, Gasunie and Gasterra as part of Royal Dutch Shell, a great deal of gratitude. If it wasn't for them we would never have existed.

25 years ago when they started drilling for gas, they sponsored the building of the museum as a way of investing in the community around it. And still, every year we receive an amount from them that gets placed in a fund in order to once every two or three years organize one of the larger exhibitions with. This type of unrestricted income is pure gold for the culture sector!

Of course I've heard of this fancy new term of 'artwashing.' But that has never been an issue for us. We've been supported by Shell for so long, long before terms like artwashing existed or even were a thing, so that is pertinently not the case. And let me ask you this: what if you turned it around? You understand that it would be pretty bad if your brand image did not get any better from sponsoring an art museum, would it?

Say the fossil industry started sponsoring the fight against polio disease, what about that? Would Fossil Free Culture allow that? What if Shell was to start helping African children? It just seems too easy to attack museums who are just small, weak players in the business of money - and completely dependent on sponsoring.

We have a social and cultural mission that they, amongst others, make possible. Through which people who would otherwise not get the chance to come into contact with art, finally can have that experience. I'm still not convinced that that's not OK.

Of course within the museum there are mixed feelings. Everyone watches the news and it's not like we don't know what's going on. Besides this, of course there's a lot of antagonism in the region. Not just because of the earthquakes... There is definitely a feeling going round that the local people are not reaping the benefits, but are definitely having to deal with the shit that is left behind.

My personal opinion is that it would be pretty hypocritical for me to stop accepting funding from Shell and the rest of the fossil industry, while we are fine with putting gas in our cars. I mean where's the limit? Obviously the weapon trade or cigarettes are a big no-no, but if Heineken were to offer us money, am I allowed to accept that? Where draw the line if Shell is off limits?

END DEPOSITION