

Shell urged to drop appeal over landmark climate ruling

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Shell said that while it planned to appeal the ruling, it would also accelerate its energy-transition strategy and deepen emissions cuts [File: Toby Melville/Reuters]

The Hague, June 25 (RHC)-- A Dutch activist group that won a legal battle against Royal Dutch Shell over its climate strategy has urged the company to ditch its appeal and hold joint talks on how to reduce its emissions, according to a letter seen by Reuters news agency.

A court in The Hague ordered Shell on May 26 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from burning oil and gas by 45 percent by the end of 2030, significantly faster than its current plans, in a landmark case filed

by seven groups including Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth Netherlands.

Shell CEO Ben van Beurden said the company planned to appeal the ruling but that the Anglo-Dutch company would also accelerate its energy-transition strategy and deepen emission cuts. The court ruling came amid mounting pressure from investors and activist groups on the world's top oil companies including ExxonMobil to tackle their emissions.

In the letter sent on Thursday, Friends of the Earth Netherlands called on Shell not to appeal against the ruling. "It is important to act swiftly and not to wait for legal proceedings to finish. We have very little time left to turn the tide," the group said in the letter addressed to van Beurden. "We are convinced that it is in everyone's interest – especially that of the climate – to avoid an appeal."

Friends of the Earth Netherlands said it would be "constructive" for both sides to "discuss the new reality in light of the verdict, its implementation, and our shared interest in preventing dangerous climate change." Shell said in response that it still expected to appeal the ruling.

"We agree that urgent action is needed on climate change and, while we expect to appeal the ruling, we want to rise to the challenge and accelerate our existing strategy," it added. "We have previously offered to engage with Milieudefensie [Friends of the Earth] and will of course consider their proposal."

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