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**Letter to President Obama asking for permanent protection for the Eastern Planning Area in the Gulf of Mexico**

FLORIDA - On Tuesday, December 20th President Barrack Obama announced the banning of offshore shore oil and gas drilling across million acres of the Arctic and nearly 4 million acres in the Atlantic along the Eastern Seaboard. These areas are not only banned from the hazards of oil and gas drilling, but they will be placed in permanent protection.

The communities of the Gulf Coast States are requesting that the Eastern Planning Area of the Gulf of Mexico, which is currently protected by a moratorium until 2022, also be placed in permanent protection from offshore oil and gas exploration and drilling.

A collective group of individuals, businesses, and organizations, known as Another Gulf is Possible (AGIP) has been working tirelessly to ensure the protection of the Gulf of Mexico and her coastal communities. We have drafted a letter to be sent to President Obama on Thursday, January 5th asking for the permanent protection of the Eastern Planning Area.

“We have a vision.” says Mary Gutierrez, Executive Director of Earth Action and part of

the AGIP collaborative, “ We want to be the part of the United States that creates the

largest renewable energy market and use that has ever been seen. We want complete

dependence from fossil fuels while developing a competitive and lasting job market for

those transitioning from the fossil fuel industry. This isn’t just about protecting the

environment, it’s about public health and moving our country towards sustainable, clean

energy sources.”

For those of us who live, work, and play along the Gulf of Mexico, we know her charm and beauty and how she provides us with what we need to live the beach life. The Gulf provides us with so many things, but here are just a few: jobs, a substantial recreational and commercial seafood market, and a hugely successful ecotourism industry. Yet the Gulf needs our help. Its death by a thousand paper cuts or rather it’s death by a thousand oil spills and leaks.

"Our public waters and the communities that depend on them need permanent protection from Trump's dirty energy agenda. The Gulf Coast is on the front lines of fossil fuel exploitation and climate disruption, and should no longer be treated as an energy sacrifice zone. President Obama should extend his order to withdraw offshore areas from future oil and gas leasing to the Eastern Planning Area of the Gulf of Mexico. The vibrant and unique Gulf ecosystem and the communities that call it home need a just transition to a clean energy economy, not Big Oil's bottom line." -- Marissa Knodel, Climate Campaigner, Friends of the Earth

"We stand in deep solidarity with our fellow water protectors banded together from the Arctic to the Atlantic, from the Pacific to the Gulf as we co-create a better future for our people and our planet. Our fights are quite literally one. The Gulf South is on the frontline of climate change, where natural disasters have become a tragic way of life. We are already on the frontline of environmental disasters, like the BP oil catastrophe which we are still recovering from. It is time to put an end to extractive energy production, and the exploitation of our land and labor that comes along with that. We do not want to see anyone suffer from these horrors any longer." – Jayeesha Dutta, Radical Arts and Healing Collective, New Orleans, LA

Although Gulf Coast residents and numerous national organizations have been extremely vocal in our desire to end new offshore drilling. the Gulf of Mexico remains in BOEM’s five-year plan. Support our efforts in asking President Obama to place the Eastern Planning Area of the Gulf of Mexico into permanent protection from offshore oil and gas exploration and drilling.

Please find the online letter to Obama here:

https://anothergulf.com/2017/01/03/dear-president-obama-love-the-gulf-again/