

Vessel recovering oil from Solar I's two tanks

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Sonsub vessel *Allied Shield* has started recovering oil from the two tanks of sunken tanker MT *Solar I*. In a progress report obtained by [The News Today](#) *Allied Shield* is now transferring oil from port tanks number 3 and 5 to the shuttle. Last March 20 the vessel's remotely-operated vehicles (ROV) reached the sunken vessel's starboard tank no. 4 but it does not contain oil.

However, the volume of oil recovered is not yet determined.

Allied Shield arrived in Bacolod City last March 10 to perform oil recovery operations on MT *Solar 1* which sank 9 miles southwest of Guimaras Island last August 11, 2006. The tanker, which was carrying 2,000 tons of fuel oil, sunk to a depth of 640 meters.

Following clean-up operations on the affected shorelines, the Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Club, the insurer of *Solar 1*, contracted Sonsub, an Italian firm specializing in deepwater operations, to retrieve any remaining oil on the sunken vessel. This retrieval operation is the final phase of the clean-up to avert any potential threat of future oil leaks from *Solar 1*.



Allied Shield uses thrusters on its sides to keep it in place (dynamic positioning) directly above *Solar 1*. A global positioning satellite also continuously checks its position relative to the sunken vessel.

With the Philippine Coast Guard establishing a 1-kilometer exclusive zone around *Allied Shield*'s work area, contingency plans include oil spill response tugboats equipped with oil dispersants, oil skimmers for mechanical recovery of oil, and spill booms for containment. One aircraft, with airborne dispersant capability, is continuously monitoring the area.

Petron, the owner of oil carried by board *Solar 1*, has been actively involved in the cleanup and rehabilitation of affected areas in Guimaras. Employee volunteers teamed up with local residents to clean about 140-km of shoreline, and collected 6,000 metric tons of oily debris. The company also conducted numerous relief and medical missions in affected baranggays.

As part of its commitment to the recovery of Guimaras, Petron recently inaugurated a three-classroom Petron School at Bgy. Tando, Nueva Valencia, and a library hub in Jordan.

The company is likewise coordinating with Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) in order to establish a mari-culture livelihood model farm that will directly benefit fisherfolks.

The International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (IOPC) has cited the efforts of the company in its response to the clean-up and rehabilitation of Guimaras.

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