

Swiss firm touts oil-absorbing fabric for US oil spill

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Contractors work to clean oil from a strip of beach in Grand Isle, Louisiana. A Swiss company which produces an oil absorbing fabric said Tuesday that it had received a visit from US officials, as it claimed that it could help tackle the Gulf of Mexico oil slick.

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Carlo Centonze, chief executive of HeiQ Materials, said US army and consular officials came to visit last Thursday to evaluate the fabric to protect the US coastline.

"Our product is being presented today (Tuesday) in Washington and we are waiting for the green light from authorities to deploy our material on

the beaches," he told AFP.

Centoze said he was ready to produce five to 15 kilometres a day of the fabric, which was developed with German firm TWE, with more output possible from five other production plants.

The mats are claimed to both absorb oil and repel water allowing them to be used as a protective barrier on the coastline.

"The [oil](#) does not spread in the sand but is absorbed by the [fabric](#). It can then be carried away and incinerated in a cement factory or a power plant," said Centoze.

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