

PROTEST NEXT THURSDAY

NGOs oppose harbour

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Climate change NGOs country-wide, including Earthlife and GroundWork, have forged an alliance to oppose Transnet's plans to construct a multi-billion rand port in Durban.

"In response to this and the broad-scale pollution across the country, community groups from pollution hotspots in KwaZulu-Natal, the Vaal Triangle and the Highveld are holding a People's Climate Camp on the Bluff, south Durban," the NGOs said.

Transnet is planning to build a dug-out port estimated to cost between R75 and R100 billion on a site encompassing the old Durban airport near Isipingo and surrounding farms owned by the parastatal, but leased to farmer tenants.

"As an expression of our solidarity with the farmers who, together with the actual land, will be removed if the proposed dug-out port project goes ahead, we will be holding a march and an informal press conference at the farmers' land," the alliance said.

The protest will take place on Thursday next week.

According to Transnet's planning documents, the proposed port will be the largest in the southern hemisphere, with a capacity three times that of the existing Durban port.

Given the extensive nature of the project, the parastatal had indicated that it would bring in private investors to help finance the mega project.

The NGOs said they are concerned about the impact the extensive work will have on the environment, as well as communities living in the surrounding areas.

"We will showcase our visions for another world, for energy sovereignty and for sustainable living and settlement," the NGOs said.