

# Trucking, the Port Expansion, the Dug-out Port, Back of Port plan, and Link Road: How will these developments impact on communities, the environment, and contribute to climate change?

## ACT NOW TO SAVE DURBAN BAY

Transnet have plans to widen and deepen berths in the Durban Harbour to accommodate massive container ships bringing imported goods into South Africa. This will eat into the last remaining sandbanks – crucial for fish nurseries, endangered birds and the health of the bay.

The natural environment of the Durban Bay provides a unique shelter for fish and birds on the South African coast. The Bay also shelters the city centre by mitigating flooding. Before development, this swampy area was filled with mangrove forests with thousands of flamingo and migrating birds. However, the ever expanding port and related business has drastically altered the bay. All that is left of the 200 ha. of mangroves forests once growing in the Bay, are the 20 ha. conserved in the Bayhead Natural Heritage Site.

A mere 14% of the tidal flats remain, yet the sandbanks within the Bay still provide the only sheltered, marine dominated, permanent tidal sandbank habitat in KZN. Thirty species of fish and sand prawns are found here and 132 species of birds frequent the area. Despite the marine traffic, the central sandbank and mangroves remain an important nursery area for young fish. Sixty-two species of endangered, migratory (in particular waders) rest and feed here. Under the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, to which South Africa is a signatory, South Africa is bound to protect these birds and thus the habitat on which they rely. Durban Bay is one of few such habitats on the sub tropical east coast of Africa. Nine species of birds that were once common in the Bay in the 1960s are now extinct.



Articles - click on links:  
[‘Concern over port expansion plans’](#)  
*Tony Carnie, March 2012*  
[‘Durban Bay on the Brink’](#)  
*Tony Carnie, June 2011*

*“After nearly 200 years of sustained human assault, Durban Bay is dying. Scientists say the bay - still considered one of the most important fish-breeding nurseries in the country - has reached a critical ‘tipping point’ where its ecological health balances at the edge of a downward spiral.”*

From: ‘Durban Bay on the Brink’ by Tony Carnie - The Mercury, 9 June 2011

## THE DUG-OUT PORT, LINK ROAD AND BACK-OF-PORT DEVELOPMENT WILL DESTROY SOUTH DURBAN COMMUNITIES

### BACKGROUND TO THE ISSUES

Transnet has agreed to a R1.8bn deal to buy the old Durban International Airport area, and at the end of June, eThekweni Municipality released draft proposals to develop the back of the port in a 60-day public consultation process. The **Back of Port Interface Local Area Plan** is part of a strategy to create a superport of international stature, and is linked to Transnet’s plans to invest R100bn in the new **Dug-out Port** at the site of the old airport. At the same time, the 91-year-old Clairwood Racecourse is being sold by Gold Circle for R430m to Capital Property Fund with the aim of developing a **Warehouse & Logistics Park** to service the port. Finally, there are plans to build a **Link Road** from the Bluff through Clairwood, Austerville and Merebank to connect with the national roads network.

The South Durban area will be greatly affected by these proposed developments. While some maintain that they will help boost the economy, it is debatable whether these claims are true. What is abundantly clear however, is that these developments will force immense relocations of homes and businesses in the area, and that those who will be the most affected by the removals will be the same communities that have already been marginalized and damaged by the operations of local industry. Although there is talk of authorities engaging with all affected areas, this should have been done much earlier on in the process. The community’s voice should not only be heard in reaction to the plans, it should have been there to formulate the plan from the start.

## IMPACTS ON COMMUNITIES

There can be no doubt that these spatial developments will individually create problems for the community. Combined, they will compound the already massive, negative impact industry has on the South Durban area. Government should also not be spending money on activities that will further intensify climate change issues and result in infrastructure lock-in that supports the use of non-renewable energy resources. These developments will not only have negative social and economic impacts, but will detrimentally affect the environment around the mouth of the Isipingo River, contribute to further climate change, loss of natural resources, and the extinction of species, with the airport site thought to have one of the highest mother populations of Black-headed Dwarf chameleons so far discovered.

**FARMERS:** Airport Farmers, who have been on the land for twenty years will be removed. Presently, their livelihoods are being destroyed, without any communication. Throughout the process, they have heard nothing from the current land owners (ACSA), nor from the probable future landowners (Transnet). The farmers are unsure on how to invest in the land because they do not know how much longer they will be allowed to work there.

**TRUCKING:** The building of the link road will further complicate issues with trucking. There are already too many accidents and deaths from trucking, and it is negligent for the government to encourage even more trucks in the area. Studies have shown that freight on rail would produce 70% less carbon dioxide emissions than the equivalent trip in trucks, and is also more efficient in its use of diesel fuel. Not only is it safer to use rail, but also more economically efficient. In fact, economic forecasts project rail growth to continue; the South African government should be trying to engage in rail, rather than holding on to a dying form of transportation.

**HOUSING:** There are claims made by Government that there is no land or finance for housing. The land is right here - what isn't here is the government's responsibility to take care of its citizens. The Clairwood residential area will be rezoned for logistics, which will drive citizens out. There will be 'significant social disruption' in the Clairwood area, and the additional potential loss of historical and cultural assets in the area. Officials admit that helping those dislocated will be a challenging issue. If their historical record is any indicator, government's ability to handle such a 'challenging' issue is completely unconvincing. Other affected areas from these spatial developments include Mobeni, Merebank, Bluff, Wentworth, and parts of Isipingo. Community members from all these communities need to stand together as one and fight for their rights.

**JOB:** The promise that the development will create many thousands of jobs, particularly during construction is the main justification for the port project. This is founded on the notion that ever-increasing economic growth creates more jobs, and for economic growth to take place we need a bigger port. Economic growth as the solution to unemployment has proven time and again to be illusory. Unemployment remains high, both in the South Durban area and South Africa as a whole, despite huge expansion of petrochemical and other industries since 1994. Jobs that are created are often temporary or of a poor quality, with no security, skills training or other benefits that could make a long term difference to the economic and social problems people are struggling with. In addition, much of the economic wealth leaves the region (and South Africa) through the dividends and profits of foreign-owned companies. Meanwhile, many thousands of jobs have been destroyed due to cheap imports, and the lack of protection afforded to local industries.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:** The proposed development and increased industrialisation will remove the only "green lung" in the area - the Clairwood Race Course, leading to more environmental health problems associated with high levels of air pollution. This will be on top of the already high rates of asthma, leukemia, and other cancers and illnesses that are suffered by the communities of South Durban.

### **How are Trucking, the Port Expansion, the Dug-out Port & Back of Port development, and the Link Road connected to climate change and other community issues?**

**CONNECT THE DOTS!** An export/import-led growth economy dependent on ever-increasing and unnecessary consumption = more imports = larger container ships = bigger port = more trucks on the road to transport the goods and the need for more roads. Combined, this leads to: the loss of vital habitat that provides valuable ecosystem services such as fish nurseries and mitigation against climate change; more pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; health problems and accidents; loss of jobs due to cheap imports undermining the local economy; more noise and congestion; more extraction and use of finite resources; more pollution of air, water, soil; more use of water and energy in the manufacture and transportation of goods; more waste in landfills emitting greenhouse gases; the removal and disruption of communities. The increase in GHG emissions from shipping, resource extraction, manufacture, transportation and waste = MORE global warming, climate change and extreme weather events. Those who are most impacted by extreme weather are automatically the most marginalised communities.

#### **Sources and further information: Click on links**

South Durban Community Environmental Alliance <http://www.sdcea.co.za/>

'Port project must leave Durban the better for it' *Edward West, Business Day, July 2012*

'Concern over port expansion plans' *Tony Carnie, March 2012*

'Durban Bay on the Brink' *Tony Carnie, June 2011*

'7 000 truck crashes in one year' *Bronwyn Fourie, July 2012*



## THE DUG-OUT PORT, LINK ROAD AND BACK-OF-PORT WILL DESTROY OUR COMMUNITIES

Plans are not completely finalized and therefore the community must fight the process. Authorities blatantly did not include the community earlier on in the planning phase, but have now provided a number of avenues for the people's voice to be heard. SDCEA will be hosting a series of community meetings in Austerville, Merebank, Clairwood, Bluff and Isipingo during the course of July and August. Please attend and have your voice heard on these important developments. Everyone must be united in action to ensure that these plans do not follow through in such a community-destroying manner. **PEOPLE BEFORE PROFITS!**

For more information contact: South Durban Community Environmental Alliance 031 461 1991

- South Durban Community Environmental Alliance
- Clairwood Rate Payers Association
- Merebank Community
- Wentworth Development forum
- Bluff Rate Payers Associations
- Bluff community safety organisation
- Isipingo Ratepayers Association
- Airport Farmers Association
- Clairwood Tent town
- Abahlalibasemjondolo Poor Peoples movement
- Umlazi Shacks

## TRUCK OFF CAMPAIGN

- An end to carnage on our roads
- No trucks are to enter residential areas
- The police must crack down on trucks
- Containers must be transported by rail not road
- Trucks must be contained to one lane on main roads during peak traffic

Article – click on this link:  
**'7 000 truck crashes in one year'**  
*Bronwyn Fourie, July 2012*



### RECORD OF DEATHS AND INJURIES DUE TO ACCIDENTS INVOLVING TRUCKS IN KZN:

2006:	893 deaths and 2482 injuries
2007:	1120 deaths and 1031 injuries
2008:	987 deaths and 1372 injuries
2009:	787 deaths and 1101 injuries
2010:	587 deaths and 748 injuries
2011:	483 deaths and 1524 injuries (part year)



For more information contact: South Durban Community Environmental Alliance 031 461 1991

## THE RIGHT2KNOW CAMPAIGN SUPPORT THE RIGHT2KNOW CAMPAIGN

The Secrecy Bill in South Africa is an example of moves world-wide to crackdown on whistleblowers and activists who expose the truth and challenge power. There is also a concerted effort to hide the truth in other ways, and to this end there are numerous strategies – whether in the refusal to label GMOs in food, the charging of animal rights activists as terrorists for exposing the realities of factory farming, or using industry-funded academics and analysts to produce conflicting reports about the dangers of climate change, GMOs, pesticides, fracking ... the list goes on!

There's also the lack of transparency around so-called public processes due to rushed public consultation, dense, inaccessible reports, and the favouring of elite groups by ensuring that advisory committees are dominated by powerful vested interests. At the same time the corporate-owned media - funded by corporate advertising - creates an illusion of press freedom and balanced reporting while limiting the terms of references, giving minimal coverage to alternative ideas, and using subtly biased language.

Is it any wonder therefore, that many of us don't know the truth about Climate Change, nor are we aware of the numerous practical, relatively simple solutions that could be implemented with immediate effect while providing many other benefits – primarily by a re-ordering of priorities in favour of the ninety-nine percent instead of the one percent!

ENQUIRIES: Sbu Zikonde 083 547 0474 / Desmond D'Sa 083 982 6939 / Roy Chetty 082 334 8461 / South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA) 031 564 4342