Forest & Bird disappointed at climate change ruling

Title

Forest & Bird (BirdLife in New Zealand) is dismayed at the High Court decision that says the effects on climate change cannot be considered under the Resource Management Act (RMA). Top of the South Field Officer Debs Martin says the RMA should take into account the tremendous threat to nature from climate change. "Forest & Bird would like to see the RMA consider all issues for our environment from new developments, including mining. Climate change will have the greatest impact on the world's plants, animals and people, and it's hard to see why the RMA should ignore this." Forest & Bird appealed the decision in a bid to save the public conservation land on the West Coast's Denniston Plateau from being destroyed by open-cast coal mining. Australian-owned mining company Bathurst Resources (also known as Buller Coal) plans to build a 200-hectare open-cast coal mine on the plateau and mine 80 million tonnes of coal that, when burnt, will release about 200 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Although the effects of the mine on climate change may not be considered, Forest & Bird will nevertheless be opposing the resource consent application for the mine at the Environment Court hearing set down for late October. Forest & Bird will continue working to protect the Denniston Plateau from the mine, and seeks a 5900-hectare reserve on the plateau to preserve its rare and endangered native plants and animals. They include great spotted kiwi, West Coast green geckos, a unique species of giant land snail and miniature southern rata.