

High Court decision won't diminish strong case to save Denniston says Forest & Bird

Title

Forest & Bird (BirdLife in New Zealand) is disappointed with the High Court's decision today related to an Australian mining company's plan to mine the Denniston Plateau. The High Court today said it has declined to consider the effects of the proposed Sullivan Mine site from being considered in the Environment Court hearing about Bathurst Resources' proposed adjacent open-cast coal mine on the Denniston Plateau. This is the first of the High Court appeal decisions, which form part of Forest & Bird's Environment Court appeal to stop the Australian company developing a 106ha open-cast mine on the ecologically unique Denniston Plateau.

Forest & Bird Top of the South Field Officer Debs Martin says: "No one's denying that mining Denniston will cause irreversible damage to the plateau's unique landscapes and vital habitats. And the judge said in his decision we had put forward a 'very powerful proposition ... that if cumulative effects are not considered now, they never will be'. "So while we may have lost on this one point, we still have a very strong case in the Environment Court to save the plateau." The judge is expected to announce a decision on further points appealed in the High Court tomorrow, and a further hearing of the Environment Court appeal is scheduled for June 12.