



Nowhere in New Zealand do podocarps grow in the same gigantic proportions as they do in Whirinaki Forest, just south of Rotorua. This kahikatea, near the Whirinaki River canyon, is one of a number of massive trees that pierce the forest canopy here, climbing skywards to 65 metres and outwards by up to three metres.

The fate of Whirinaki — under threat from salvage logging recently — could well be decided by the time you read this, thanks to the Labour Government's commitment to preserve this "dinosaur forest." Furthermore, this move will have been made without placing any of the jobs at Minginui at risk. In fact, the tourism opportunities now opened up could well offer jobs outside the timber industry.

Photo: Greig Royle

The endangered kokako (inset) is just one of the species which finds refuge in Whirinaki.

Photo: Hugh Best

