

## World Heritage setback

---

By ROSEMARY BOLGER

May 21, 2013, 11:21 p.m.

The bid to extend Tasmania's World Heritage area has been dealt a blow by one of two advisory bodies to the World Heritage Committee.

The International Council on Monuments and Sites has recommended the federal government's nomination of 170,000 hectares in the South-West be sent back to allow further consultation with the Aboriginal community.

In its report to the World Heritage Committee, ICOMOS endorsed the area's natural values but criticised the federal government for failing to acknowledge that the nominated area covers significant Aboriginal sites, including caves and painted art.

"The current request does not provide evidence as to how cultural values might be protected and managed," the report stated.

The World Heritage nomination, submitted in February, was a key component of the Tasmanian Forests Agreement.

Former Liberal senator Guy Barnett yesterday called on the government to withdraw the nomination to save the embarrassment of having it rejected.

Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke said he would await the decision of the World Heritage Committee.

"The government had already initiated a process with traditional owner groups at identifying the cultural values referred to in the draft report and a letter had been sent to them before this report was released," Mr Burke said.

Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre spokesman Michael Mansell said there had been no consultation with Aboriginal groups up until yesterday.

"We were completely sidelined," Mr Mansell said.

Mr Mansell wants a commitment that Aboriginal people will be involved in the management of the land and will now meet Mr Burke at the end of the month.