

Huan Resource Development Group
31 March 2014 - Hobart
Tasmanian Wilderness Inquiry

10/06/2013

The Chairperson, Rapporteur and Members of the 37th World Heritage Committee,
ICOMOS,
IUCN,
and others of whom it may concern, as addressed by email,

I wish to re-state my objection to the nomination to extend the **Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area** by the **State Party, Australia**, and to further distribute copies of the submission I addressed to the Director of the World Heritage Centre, Mr Kishore Rao, in February, 2013.

A copy of my submission is attached.

In addition to myself, submissions have been lodged with the World Heritage Centre in Paris by more than a dozen individuals and organizations from within the state of Tasmania in opposition to this controversial nomination to extend the TWWHA.

Since my submission in February, a number of disturbing developments have occurred, and a number of aspects of the nomination have come to light which cause me to amplify my call to reject the proposed extension and refer it back for full examination as if it were a new or separate nomination, and for the State Party to withdraw the nomination.

I am concerned there may have been examples of inappropriate behaviour and breaches of proper procedure in the manner in which enabling legislation on which the nomination depends was carried through the Parliament of the State of Tasmania in April, 2013, and this matter is being prepared for the attention of the Tasmanian Integrity Commission. Other legal challenges may follow.

I believe there were serious deficiencies in the manner in which the nomination was developed. Many were excluded from the process, and dissent was sidelined within the process. Since the announcement of the nomination, opportunities for interested parties and the community at large to have a say have been denied, and there was no mandate for the state of Tasmania to overturn existing agreements and legislation in order to make this massive extension.

I believe there are deficiencies in the current state of the proposed nomination, and breaches of procedure in the manner in which it was submitted, and these are sufficient to regard the nomination as one which should not go forward, certainly not as a 'Minor Boundary Adjustment'.

I believe the IUCN has been deficient in its assessment of the proposed extension, as aspects of the nominated area are poor, inappropriate, and inaccurately described, and will effectively 'devalue the currency' of other World Heritage Areas. Other State Parties should feel disturbed by what is being nominated here.

ICOMOS has identified deficiencies in the nomination, but there is a major deficiency they have overlooked. They have failed to recognise the cultural significance of an existing and on-going activity, which is the arts-based manufacturing industry focused on the use of relatively small quantities of the unique, endemic and slow-growing Special Timbers species in the state of Tasmania. They have failed to assess the impact the flawed nomination will have on the capacity to maintain this long standing activity, or to provide similar opportunities for future generations.

I expect UNESCO, the World Heritage Committee and the member State Parties would prefer to keep their integrity intact, and to not make a decision that could bring them into conflict and disrepute, and this would be served by referring this proposed nomination for full and proper evaluation.

I hope my objection is considered, and I would appreciate an acknowledgement of its receipt.

Yours sincerely,

George Harris