

Global plea to protect Burrup art

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The World Archaeology Congress has demanded the State and Federal governments do more to protect WA's Burrup rock carvings from being damaged or destroyed by industrial development.

Members from the 74 countries that make up the congress passed a strongly worded resolution condemning the continuing destruction of the Burrup rock carvings, demanding Federal and State action to ensure no more rock art and standing stones were damaged, moved or destroyed as a result of industrial and other development within the Dampier Archipelago.

Australian heritage advocate group Friends of Australian Rock Art yesterday called on the State Government to halt development on the Burrup Peninsula, citing the congress resolution as proof of growing concern among the international community for Burrup rock art.

Former Greens MLC for the region and spokesperson for FARA Robin Chapple said despite the site being heritage listed in November 2007, half a dozen companies were developing or expanding industrial sites on the peninsula.

A spokesperson for Federal Envi-

ronment Minister Peter Garrett said the Federal Government would continue to work with the WA Government on "appropriate bilaterally agreed arrangements".

Mr Chapple said the proposed developments included the expansion of two quarries, the development of an explosives plant and the development of a methanol plant. "The State Government are acting like industrial dinosaurs," he said. "Already the World Monuments Fund and the National Trust of Australia have placed the Dampier Archipelago on their most endangered heritage lists."

Member for Cottesloe Colin Barnett said the Burrup rock art collection was the most significant heritage site in WA, and "ignorance is no longer an excuse" for its destruction through development.

Last year, Heritage Minister Michelle Roberts gave Woodside the green light to develop a second parcel of land on its \$10 billion Pluto gas project on the peninsula, arguing the dollar value of the controversial development was too great to ignore.

A Woodside spokesperson said yesterday only 5 per cent of rock art had been moved as a result of its Pluto gas project. He would not rule out the possibility the company would push to relocate more art in the future.