

Submission No 9

IFAD TT March 04
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The Chairman

Mr Andrew Southcott MP

Joint Standing Committee for Treaties

Dear Mr Southcott

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BY:

IFAD Agreement with Australia

I was greatly concerned to learn recently of the possibility that Australia could withdraw from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). This organisation is, and has been, the only multinational agency specifically charged with the alleviation of poverty amongst the rural poor. IFAD has for many years carried a significant reflection of Australia as a caring generous nation.

IFAD projects have in many cases helped to sharpen the focus of often larger infrastructure or similar projects sponsored by other agencies, some examples are provided as a footnote.

Having worked in over 35 developing countries in the past 27 years for more than 11 national and multinational agencies I truly believe that it would be a backward step for Australia to withdraw from IFAD and that the "savings" would be much less than the "losses". In addition to the need for Australia to remain an active member of the international/universal aid effort for humanitarian and civic responsibility reasons there are direct and indirect economic benefits. Personally I have earned (and paid Australia tax) on more than US\$ 500,00 from IFAD and Australian team members with me would have earned at least a similar figure. In addition I have facilitated the supply of goods and service, training, equipment and agricultural supplies to IFAD projects from Australia.

As a fully retired consultant I would observe that I have no present or possible future financial interest in the outcome of your deliberations.

IFAD projects have also provided an intangible benefit to Australia from the adaptability and work attitude of the many Australians I have had working with me on IFAD and other teams. Government Ministers have on a number of occasions expressed their gratitude for the way in which Australians will "go the extra mile".

Hoping you can see the benefits of continuing the agreement with IFAD and that your committee chooses for Australia to stay an active partner in international development

Sincerely

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- Three examples of IFAD-interagency cooperation for more effective focussing
- i) People's Republic of China a series of credit projects without which WFP food would not have been effective in large scale land rehabilitation, terracing and irrigation improvement
 - ii) Republic of Indonesia the development of P4K a UNDP initiative for Marginal and Landless farmers was greatly and successfully expanded by a joint approach with IFAD.
 - iii) Cooperation between IFAD and the Islamic Development Bank focussed the Badia Rangelands Development Project on poor rangeland users.

There are other examples which could be provided if you would like them