

IFAD

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Submission No: 20

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From: John Bingle [jbingle@bigpond.com]
Sent: Tuesday, 6 April 2004 5:48 PM
To: Gould, Gillian (REPS)
Cc: Committee, Treaties (REPS); Darcy Gibbs
Subject: Joint Standing Committee on Treaties - IFAD

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6 APR 2004

BY:.....

Dear Ms Gould,

International Fund for Agricultural Development

Please find attached a Submission for inclusion to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties for IFAD.

Yours faithfully,
John Bingle
General Manager, Africa
Centre for Mined Land Rehabilitation
University of Queensland

6 April 2004

Ms Gillian Gould,
Secretary,
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA. ACT 2600

Dear Ms Gould,

Re: Submission to Joint Standing Committee on Treaties

I was concerned to hear through the consulting industry that the Government is considering withdrawing its support for IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development).

I would have thought with the current difficulties in the world relating to terrorist activities that Australia should be seen with the best possible focus on assisting the under-developed and the marginally isolated, which would fall into the IFAD lending criteria. It is possibly more important to support IFAD in this current period than it has been in the past.

To this avail I would like to present some background information which may help to support a debate for the continuation of our involvement with IFAD.

I have been associated with the consulting industry especially in agricultural consulting for the majority of my adult working life, having spent 6 years in Papua New Guinea and a further 23 years in many African countries. During this period I was founder and principal of John Bingle Pty. Limited - my own agricultural consulting company specialising in all forms of agricultural development in various parts of the developing world. We had offices in Sydney, Mogadishu, Somalia and Gaborone, Botswana. I was also President of the Australian African Business Council.

The company employed sixteen permanent staff members in North-east Africa in long term contractual obligations with various Governments, and was supported by a continuing stream of short term specialist consultants. These varied in numbers from six or eight up to approximately twenty. Countries in which the company had project involvement included - Tunisia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Mali, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Burma, the Maldives and Papua New Guinea. All project activities were funded through the major donors - ie World Bank, IFAD, UNDP and KFW of Germany.

IFAD especially has a unique role in supporting the "poorest of the poor" projects, which quite often are overlooked and are not of interest to the larger donors. Australia, by being active within IFAD gives us the opportunity to pass on our technical skills and demonstrate our generous nature in all aspects of project development. We are able to "onsell" our manufacturing base and training capabilities through our institutions, and in the process assist those on the poverty line in poorer countries.

In my view, this "bridge of assistance" will become more important as the world has become polarised between the rich and the poor. It would be short-sighted to make a decision to withdraw our support from IFAD in the current world climate.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BINGLE
General Manager, Africa
Centre for Mined Land Rehabilitation
University of Queensland,
ST. LUCIA. QLD. 4072