

Devpolicy News: Aid and animal abuse | Growth in the Pacific | Abbott in PNG

Author : Development Policy Centre

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Aid and animal abuse

ANU graduate student, Paul Wyrwoll, [contributed](#) a superb piece of aid reporting with his expose of the shocking conditions in which animals are being held in an aid-funded national park in Vietnam. Aid funds didn't actually pay for the U Minh Thuong zoo's cages, but both Australia and German aid paid for the zoo's canteen, and both donors are also in much larger partnership with the park. The donors' branding sits just a few meters from the concrete and iron cages within which a number of endangered and clearly distressed animals live. As Paul writes, "It is difficult to see how GIZ and DFAT can fund the structure where tourists are eating their lunch, but have no responsibility for the caged animals they are looking at whilst eating it."

Among the more worrying features of Paul's tale are that GIZ and DFAT were both unaware of this until he brought it to their attention (whatever happened to site visits?), and didn't show much sign of alarm even after he did. GIZ's response (at the bottom of Paul's post) at least admitted that the situation was unsatisfactory. DFAT's response didn't even concede that. Fixing up the zoo might not be easy, but this is a problem which is not going to go away, and which neither donor can or should disown.

Growth in the Pacific: Friday April 4 @ ANU

Our seminar on Friday will hear ADB economists Emma Veve and Christopher Edmonds discussing Pacific island growth trends and prospects. 2.30pm in the Crawford Building Seminar Room 9. Register [here](#). You can also go at 12.30 to the Weston Theatre for a presentation from the ADB on their 2014 Asian Development Outlook: register [here](#).

Debating PNG and asylum-seekers

In the context of Tony Abbott's visit to PNG, Stephen Howes wrote [this piece](#) for *The Australian* complaining

that “the Manus agreement ... has taken away all Australian leverage in the relationship.” Karl Claxton, from ASPI, [disagrees](#), arguing in his blog post and subsequent comments that the asylum-seeker deal “affords extra motivation to avoid damaging rows” and has “done the relationship as much good as harm so far.”

There’s no bigger issue facing PNG at the moment than the PNG Government’s decision to borrow K3 billion to purchase a 10% stake in Oil Search. PNG’s Treasurer has been sacked over this, and the Ombudsman has launched an investigation. Charles Yala, Osborne Sanida and Andrew Anton Mako, all from PNG’s National Research Institute, [explain](#) why they think the loan is not a good idea for the country. Paul Barker, from PNG’s Institute of National Affairs, [opposes](#) the Oil Search loan because it will sink the country’s Sovereign Wealth Fund.

Finally, because PNG has made clear its reluctance to resettle a lot of refugees from Manus, Abbott announced while in the country that Australia is looking to other Pacific countries to help. Despite the inducement of extra aid, Robin Davies [doesn’t see](#) much willingness in the Pacific to take up Australia’s offer, and “trade off relatively minor profits against loss of sovereignty and social cohesion.”

Australian aid stories

We are still looking for your ripping aid yarns as part of our [Australian Aid Stories](#) project. What has and hasn’t worked in Australian aid should influence thinking about what should be done now and in the future, but too often the innovations and achievements of Australian aid, as well as the failures, vanish without a trace. This is our attempt to collect those stories.

If you have a story to share, either leave a comment on the blog or send us an email at devpolicy@anu.edu.au.

Parliamentary inquiries

Aid and development scrutiny by the Australian Parliament has turned up a notch in 2014, with the recent announcement of two new Parliamentary inquiries, one on the role of the [private sector in development](#), and another on the rights of women and [girls in the Indo-Pacific](#). The Senate also last week [released](#) their report on the Australian aid program. See our initial comments [here](#).

Catch up on our podcasts

If you missed the fascinating discussion at our Forum on recent Office of Development Effectiveness evaluations, you can now download the whole discussion as an audio podcast (Part 1 on volunteers is [here](#), and Part 2 on aid quality [here](#)). You can also subscribe to our podcasts via [Feedburner](#) or [iTunes](#). We’ve also got plenty of other new podcasts including updates from our Pacific Conversations series and our recent events on the infrastructure reform and risk and hardship in the Pacific.

We walked in her shoes

We pounded the pavement last month participating in CARE Australia’s Walk in Her Shoes challenge to support women and girls living in poverty, [raising](#) over \$3,500. Thanks to everyone who supported us.

Upcoming events

[Growth prospects in the Pacific: four challenges driving longer-term prospects](#)

2.30-3.30pm

4 April 2014

2014 PNG Budget Forum

The next [PNG Budget Forum](#) will be on Thursday April 10th at the National Research Institute in Port

Moresby. The Forum will analyse the 2014 budget, and also release the next round of analysis from the PEPE survey.

2014 Aid Budget Forum

The Federal Budget will be handed down on May 13, and we will once again be holding an event the very next morning to break down what it means for aid. [Register here](#).

2014 PNG and Pacific Update

The PNG Update will be at the University of PNG in Port Moresby June 12-13 and the Pacific Update will here at the ANU on June 16-17. More details on both [here](#).

Blog highlights

[Debating](#) KFCP

Robin Davies on [G20 and food security](#)

Why are Latin American countries [becoming donors](#)?

[Two blogs](#) find problems with two recent ODE evaluations

Blog summary

You can find a list of all posts since our last newsletter on 17 March in the list below.

Australian aid

[How reliant are Australian development NGOs on government funding?](#) By Michael Wulfsohn and Stephen Howes.

[AusAID HIV Education and Prevention in Papua New Guinea: A Case of Too Much Pessimism?](#) By Cheryl Che, Ruth Tay and Stephen Howes.

[ODE on whole of government approaches to law and justice: where's the evidence?](#) By Tracey Blunck.

Pacific & PNG

[Oil Search loan deal will affect Papua New Guinea's Sovereign Wealth Fund](#) by Paul Barker.

[Regional resettlement: may we charge this to your aid program?](#) By Robin Davies.

[Of Manus and megaphones \(or how I learned to stop worrying and love a bit of M.A.D.\)](#) by Karl Claxton.

[The Oil Search loan: implications for PNG](#) by Charles Yala, Osborne Sanida and Andrew Anton Mako.

[What does the future hold for SPC? An interview with Colin Tukuitonga](#) by Tess Newton Cain and Colin Tukuitonga.

Global development policy

[Why do Latin American countries offer development assistance?](#) By Carmen Robledo.

[Not such a bad project after all? A new report on KFCP](#) by Erik Olbrei and Stephen Howes.

[Wildlife held in unsafe captivity at a Vietnamese national park supported by the Australian aid program](#) by Paul Wyrwoll.

[Food security and the G20's development agenda: stop or go?](#) By Robin Davies.

In brief

[Finding common ground: the Senate inquiry on Australian aid](#)

[Hardship in the Pacific](#)

[ADB looking for researchers on Pacific economic linkages](#)

[Cooling the hype on cash transfers](#)

[Parliamentary inquiry announced on role of private sector in development](#)

[Parliamentary inquiry to look at rights of women and girls in Indo-Pacific](#)

[The old Australia-UK aid partnership is new again](#)

[The rapid UK Haiyan review: could Australia do the same?](#)

[Who should get aid, now and in 2030?](#)