

Submission by Susanna Irene Scurry-4 April 2024

The application by the Infant Nutrition Council Limited to be allowed to continue to manage the Manufacturers and Importers Agreement (MAIF) and its associated guidelines in Australia is not in the public interest and should be denied. The Infant Nutrition Council is a misnomer. The Infant Nutrition Council represents the major manufacturers, marketers and ingredient suppliers of infant formula and toddler milk in Australia and New Zealand and are in direct competition with optimum infant nutrition and undermine breastfeeding women to increase sales and profit. Breastfeeding women contribute 3 billion annually to the Australian economy. As the gender specific work performed by women in producing breastmilk is not included in Gross Domestic Product, while commercial baby food is, manufacturers and producers of commercial baby milk have an unfair financial and competitive advantage over breastfeeding women to influence public policy. The gender discrimination of an outdated economic model fails to protect the food security of infants within an increasing environmental unfriendly and hostile environment and requires management by an impartial body to protect a valuable food source. Australia has a responsibility under Human and Child Rights obligations to implement the operational targets of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding and Sustainable Development Goal targets. The Innocenti Declaration recommend that the principles and aim of the International Code of Marketing of Breast- Milk Substitutes and subsequent relevant World Health Assembly resolutions be implemented in their entirety. The Knowles Report and Parliamentary Inquiry into breastfeeding recommend the WHO Code, not MAIF be implemented. In the last five years the management of the MAIF agreement by the Infant Nutrition Council has been ineffective and, in my experience as a health worker when submitting complaints of inappropriate advertising or breaches of the Code ineffective.