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# Preface

This book is the synthesis report of my senior doctoral thesis and represents the culmination of 15 years of my research. It draws on material generated through participation in nine large research projects, a number of advisory assignments and supervision of five PhD students. The senior doctoral thesis was submitted to Aalborg University in August 2008 for assessment for the Doctor of Science degree. The assessment committee was composed of Professor Per Christensen, Aalborg University, Denmark (chairman), Professor Susan Hanna, Oregon State University, USA and Professor Bjørn Hersoug, University of Tromsø, Norway. The thesis was successfully defended on 12 May 2009 in the North Sea Science Park in Hirtshals.

The book provides an analysis of the problems that the EU and the Danish fisheries management systems are facing. In order to provide some contrast to the EU situation experience from fisheries management systems in Southern African countries and Vietnam is included. By pointing to important explanatory factors for the failure of the Common Fisheries Policy, I hope that the book will be useful to those involved in fisheries management in the EU, Denmark, and other countries as well. I have to emphasise that the material presented in the book relates to the period before July 2008, and therefore the book does not directly address the issues raised in the *Green Paper - Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy* presented by the Commission in April 2009. Nevertheless, it is my hope that the book will make a valuable contribution in the process of reforming the Common Fisheries Policy as it uses four different perspectives: political, ideational, institutional/organisational and socio-economic to explain the failures of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Over the years I have been in contact with a large number of people in the fisheries sector and fishing communities in Denmark, Europe, southern Africa and Vietnam, as well as politicians and officials in fisheries administrations in the same countries. Without their willingness to discuss, and at times argue with me, it would have been impossible to conduct the research that has enabled me to write this book. I express my sincere

gratitude to all of you for taking the time to share your knowledge with me and inspire my research.

I would also like to express my thanks to all the research collaborators from the various research projects in which I have participated, and in particular to those with whom I have co-authored the publications on which this book is based. Our discussions have been extremely rewarding, and I have learnt a lot from you. It is always risky to mention some and not others, but Tomas Vedsmand, Mafaniso Hara and Troels Jacob Hegland, with whom I have co-authored more than half of the 20 publications, deserve to be mentioned by name. Mafa, you also deserve warm thanks not only from me, but also from my family for your kind assistance during our stay in Cape Town in 2004-2005, making it a very memorable experience.

Without support from my employers it would have been impossible to write this book. In this respect it was fortunate that IFM decided to set-up a sabbatical research arrangement, otherwise I would not have had the courage to embark on this project. Therefore, big thanks are due to Sten Sverdrup-Jensen, as well as the IFM Board of Trustees for making this decision. Poul Degnbol has been very supportive and an intellectual stimulation when I began implementing my sabbatical, and Eskild Holm Nielsen “protected” me during the period when I was completing the book. Thanks for your support, encouragement and commitment. The North Sea Centre has been very supportive to IFM and to me over the years, and I particularly express my gratitude to its former director, Poul Pedersen.

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This book has benefited from the contributions of a number of people, and I will in particular mention Hilary Palevsky, Troels Jacob Hegland, Mafaniso Hara and Sten Sverdrup-Jensen to whom I am thankful for providing comments on chapters 3, 4, 5 and 7, respectively. Sincere thanks also to Mette Bertelsen for assisting me in compiling the biological data used in section 3.1. Kirsten Klitkou has been an invaluable support. She has been

involved in all aspects of the editing process, as well as the proofreading. Kirsten deserves all the credit for turning my text files into a professional manuscript. I am deeply grateful to her for all the effort she has invested in putting this book together. I have been very fortunate that Edward Lahiff accepted my request to undertake the English language editing. I am very grateful to him for turning my “Danglish” into fluent and easily readable English, but he has done more than that – he has pointed to weaknesses in my arguments and my sympathetic treatment of fisheries and fisheries management in EU and Denmark, which required further explanation to be understandable to an outsider.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Jørn Munk Nielsen for his support over the years and in particular his assistance in providing generous financial support through the “Initiative Foundation” for the municipality of Hirtshals, which enabled me to engage an academic coach during the process of writing this book. My former PhD supervisor Staffan Zetterholm, who had recently retired, agreed to take on the role of coach, and it has been a big privilege for me to re-establish collaboration with him. The collaboration has been a wonderful experience, and I am extremely grateful to him for all his support and thoughtful suggestions for improving the structure of the book and the logic of the arguments. Like Edward, Staffan, being a non-fish person, has asked for explanation and clarification of issues which I considered basic knowledge, making me realise that the fisheries management universe is complex and complicated and requires a thorough introduction to the problems and arguments presented in this book.

Looking back, it has been a privilege to undertake research on a fascinating subject which also happens to be my hobby. It has provided me with the opportunity to travel around the world and visit many interesting places, be exposed to other cultures and meet many inspirational people. Now, however, I believe my time is up on this project. My children have often asked me: “Dad, when will you be done with your book?” followed by the remark “You are always working in your office, we want to do things together like other families.” I know I have been “absent”, and plans with friends and in particular my family have been postponed or adjusted according to my research schedule (even summer holidays have been in fishing areas, enabling me to collect data). Thank you Simon, Sarah and Nancy for your patience and understanding – and to Nancy, thank you for

your consistent support during all the years. Without your support I would never have been able to complete this book project. Also thanks to the rest of the family and my closest friends for being understanding and flexible when making arrangements with us.

Just to clarify, I am not planning to retire yet and I have many exciting academic and professional challenges ahead of me, which I look forward to with great pleasure. However, for many years now I have been generating a large social deficit, and the balance between work and my social life will change in the future.

Jesper Raakjær  
Hirtshals, October 2009