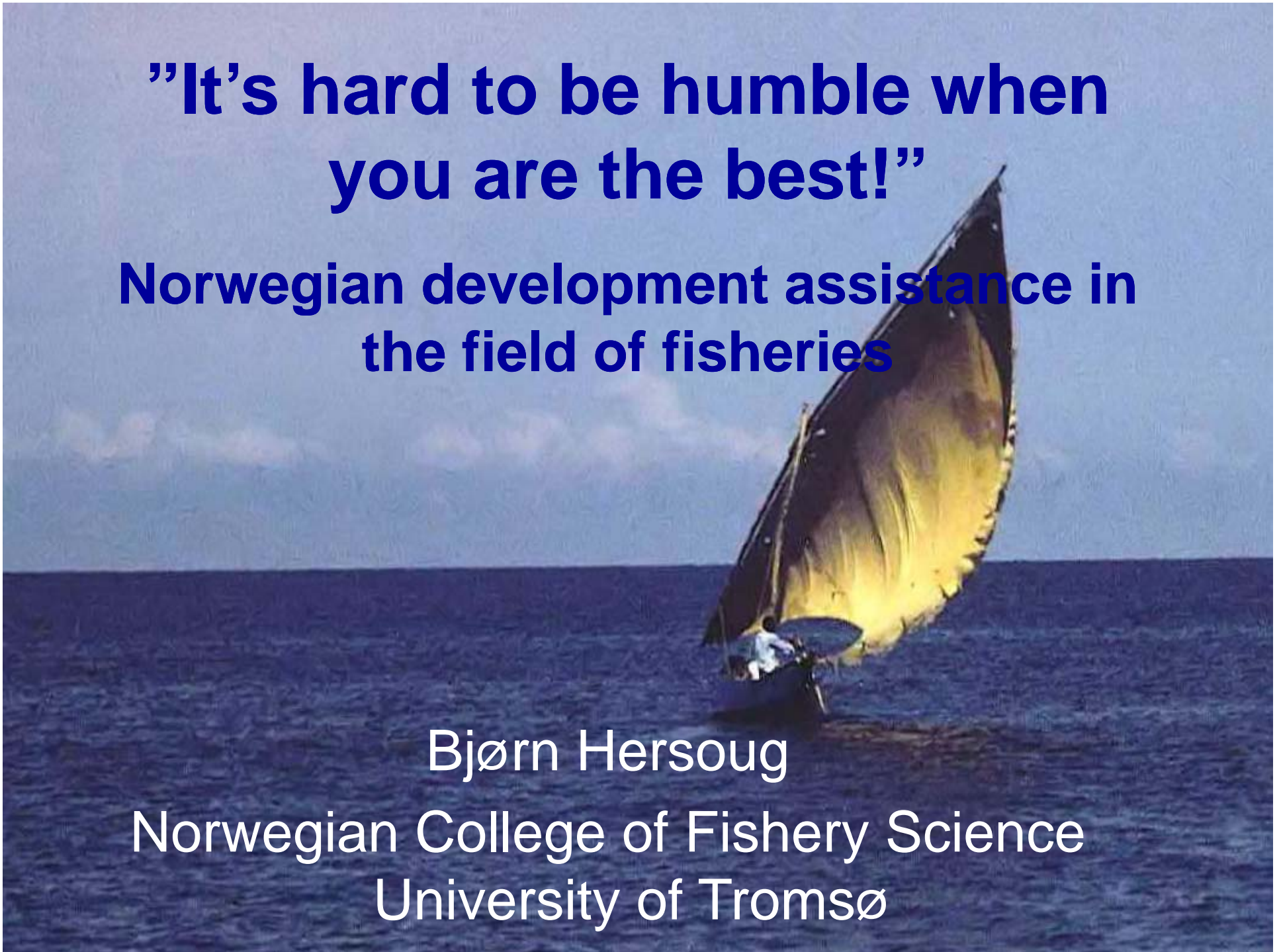


**”It’s hard to be humble when
you are the best!”**

**Norwegian development assistance in
the field of fisheries**

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Norad 2009

- For years Norway and Norad have struggled with simple perceptions of complicated fisheries projects
- Public perceptions have been dominated by three (in)famous projects:
 - Kerala (1952-72): creating shrimp millionaires
 - Lake Turkana (1971-86): the white elephant in the desert
 - Mbegani FDC (1972-92): "little Norway"
- Whatever the final evaluation: these projects were not *sustainable* in any sensible meaning of the word.

Norad 2009

- Yes, fisheries projects *are* complicated, due to the following factors:
 1. Conflicting goals (e.g. food versus export)
 2. Open access nature (the free-rider problem)
 3. Large fluctuations in resources and markets
 4. Inherently political nature of fisheries management (which implies allocation)
- BUT: No indication that fisheries projects have had a higher failure rate than other sectors within development assistance

A large number of projects since 1952:

- Phase 1: Production inputs: boats, gear, processing equipment, ice making machinery
- Phase 2: Technical training: technical experts, local training institutions, training abroad
- Phase 3: Framework and management: laws and regulations, management training, management experts
- Phase 4: Monitoring, control and surveillance: inspectors, boats, planes, software, training
- Phase 5: Institution building: setting up new management institutions, modifying old ones
- Phase 6: ? Rights based fisheries (ITQs, IFQs, IVQs, community quotas) as precondition for aid and loans

Norad 2009

- The present evaluation by MRAG a solid documentation of the *past*
- Norway's fisheries projects have performed reasonably well
- There are shortcomings (but they are familiar in the aid industry!)
- BUT, the evaluation has relatively little to say about poverty and future challenges
- Where do we go from here?

- “the goal of poverty reduction has not always been the key priority in establishing cooperation objectives”.
- Poverty reduction has been seen as an implicit goal of improved management or as a trickle down effect of private sector support
- If Norad should prioritise poverty oriented projects this would require another approach, different types of expertise, different evaluations
- Maybe we should make a distinction between poverty *reduction* and poverty *prevention*

WHEN FISHERY RHYMES WITH POVERTY

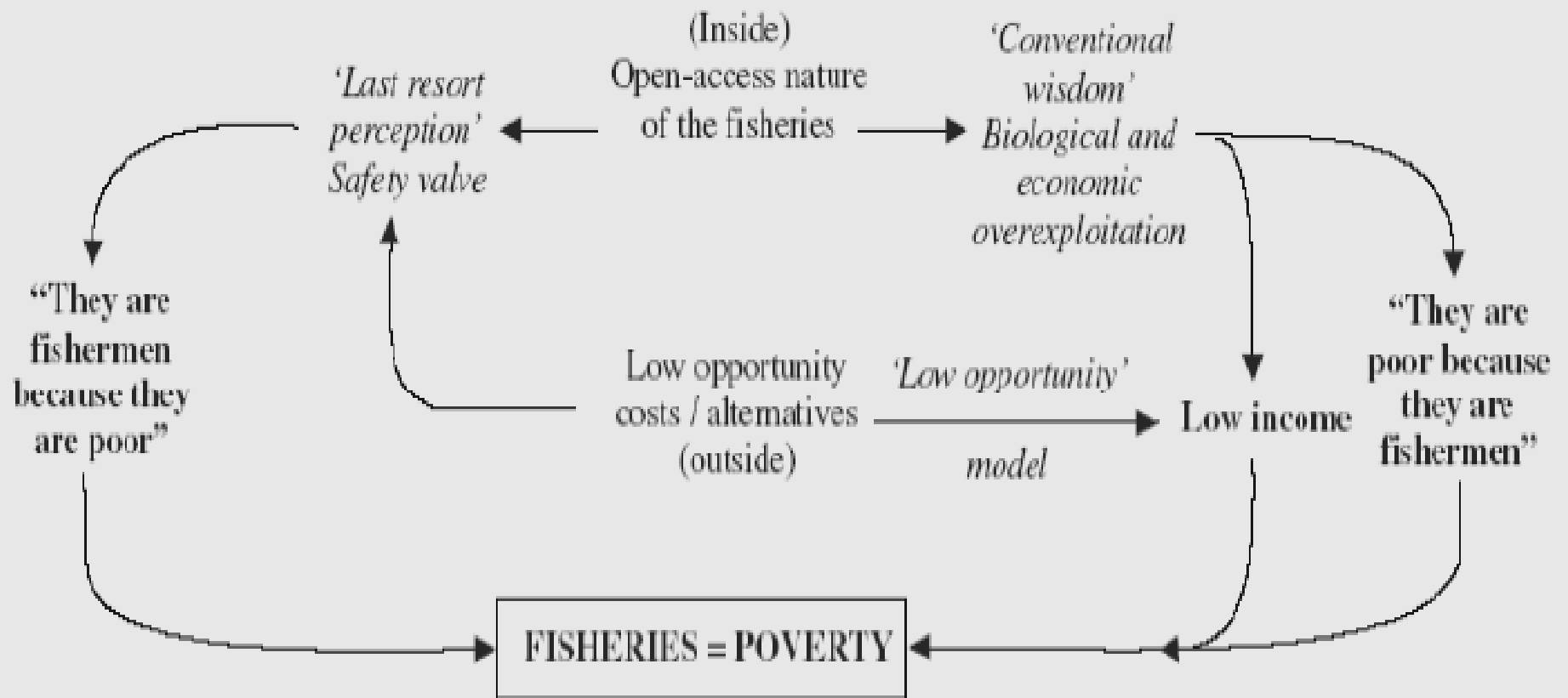
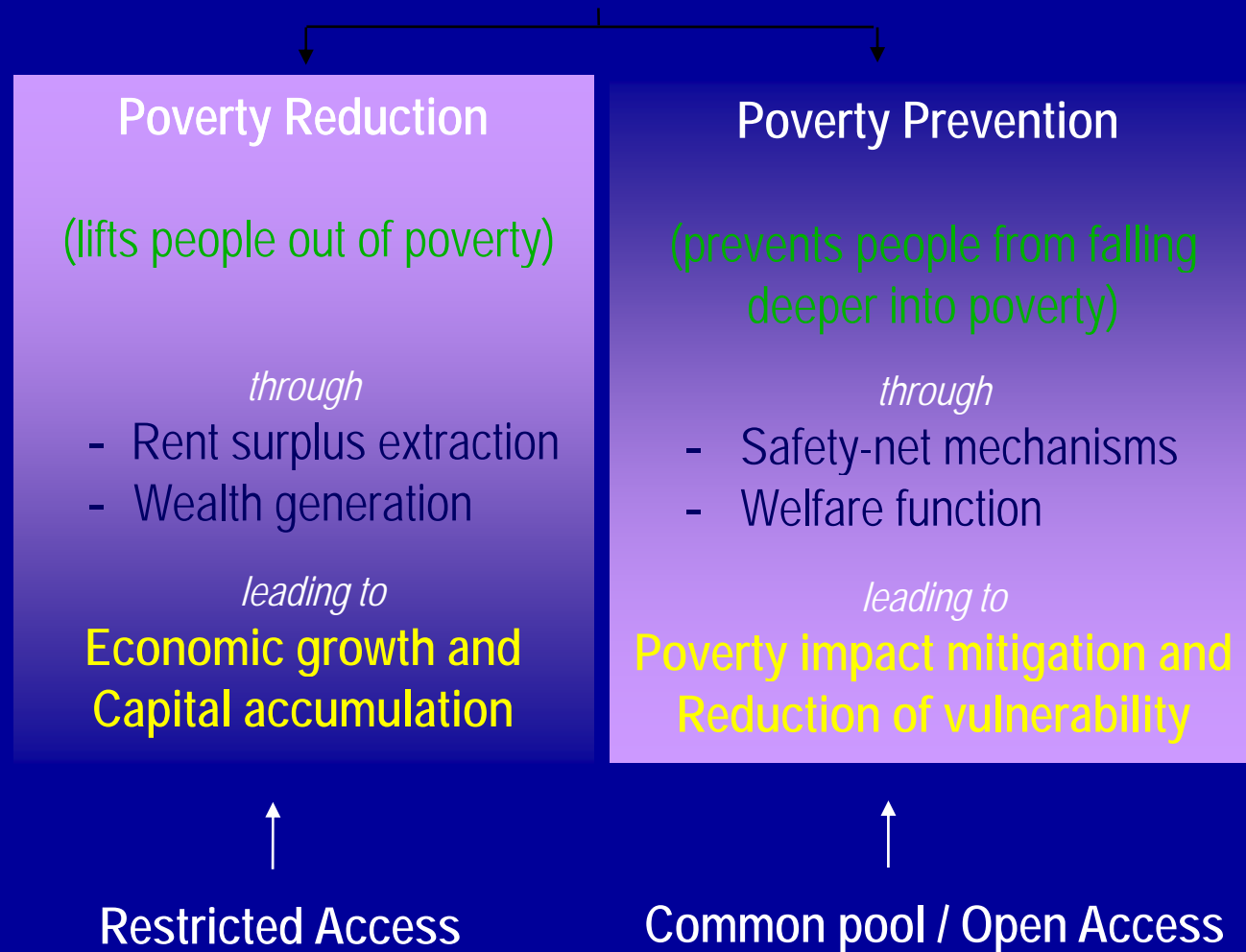


Figure 2.5: The two pillars of poverty in fisheries (Béné 2003:957).

Norad 2009

- The dominant position: they are poor because they are fishers!
- Solution: limit access, increase the income of the prioritized bona fide fishers, sector-oriented
- Alternative position: they are fishers because they are poor! (fishing as an employer of last resort)
- Solution: alternative employment, multi-sectoral approach, keep the common pool resources open!

Contribution of SSF to rural development



- Hard to disagree on the recommendation that projects should be better documented according to a more rigorous methodology
- But, Norad's projects are within the fields of management, science, education, institution building, etc.
- Normally small projects with scattered impacts, often with effects after many years and at different places
- Cause and effects will still be hard to find!

Human resources:

- Yes, need for more capacity in Norad!
- But the real problem is much more complicated:
- In which areas should we participate?
- Norwegian or foreign expertise?
- Consultancy firms, public authorities (twinning) or research /university institutions?
- Who should be responsible for capacity development?
- If more poverty oriented fisheries projects, who is responsible for developing capacity?

Private sector support:

- Originally a good idea, turning attention away from state run fishing industries
- Based on the "trickle down" effect
- But lack of investment (especially in the fleet) hardly the main problem today
- If new products and new markets; Yes
- If old products and old markets; No
- Aquaculture in Africa a main bottleneck, but few private investors interested (low value species)
- Research and consultancy exchange a better option?
- (see Norwegian companies in Chile)

Norad 2009

- Recipient responsibility: yes but who are the recipients?
- Different views on what is beneficial!
- Small-scale versus large scale?
- Aquaculture versus traditional fisheries?
- Industrial processing versus traditional?
- The fisheries agreements demonstrate the differences and the dilemmas
- NGOs can be used when state intervention is difficult, but there are limits to bilateral interventions
- Norway withdrew from Tanzania (MFDC) in 1992
- A need for exit strategies! (as in Mozambique)

Norad 2009

- The early lessons of fishery projects were :
 1. Too little information on resources
 2. Too much "little Norway"
 3. Too advanced technology
- Three types of learning:
 1. Not repeating former mistakes (single circuit learning)
 2. Gradual change of project profile (double circuit learning, reconsidering the goals)
 3. Trying to build a learning organisation (meta-learning)
- Still limits to aid: Norway and MFA/Norad has to work through official channels, with heavy emphasis on planning and control + large turnover of key personnel. Most cooperating countries are NOT major fisheries countries!

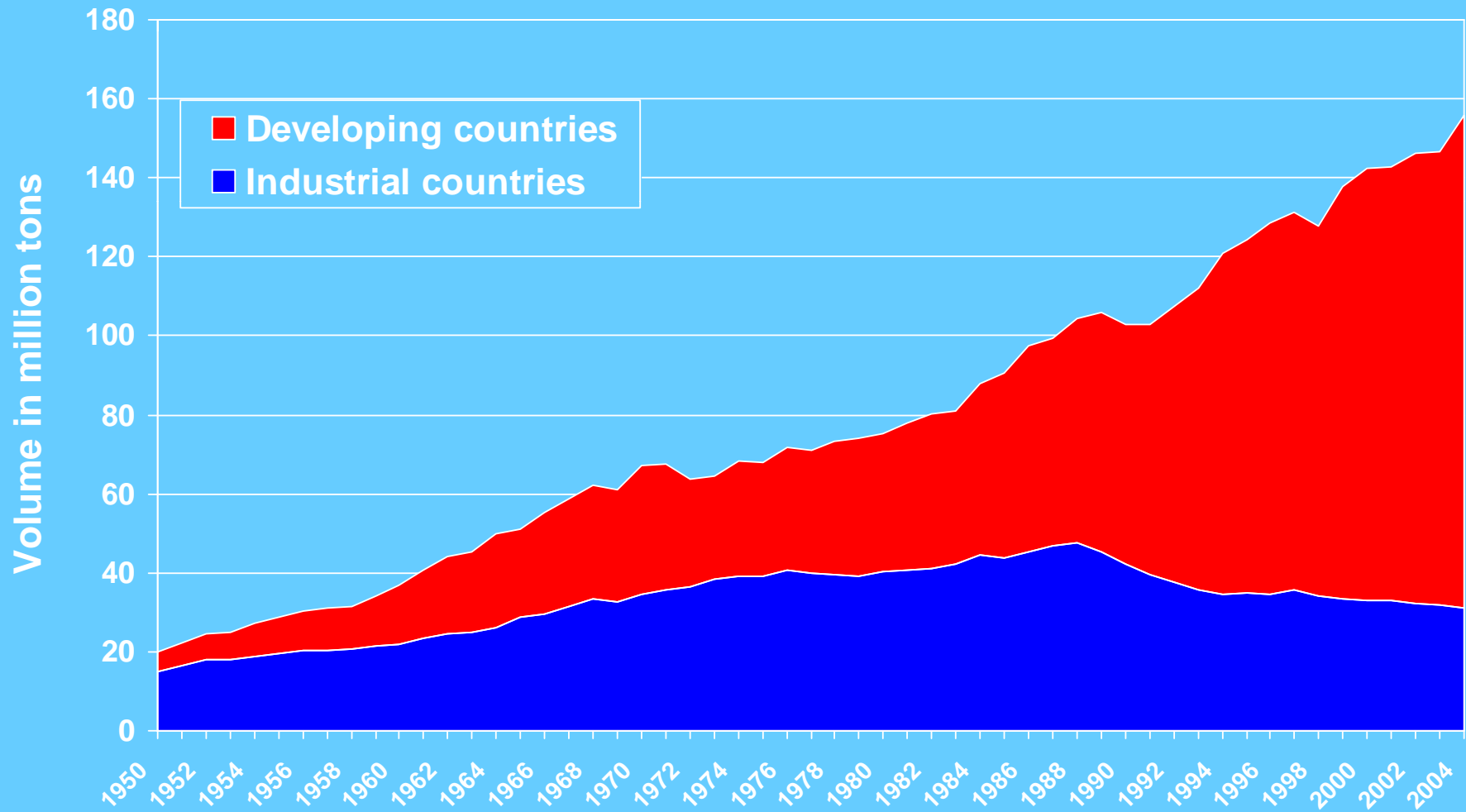
Should Norway concentrate on:

- The poorest nations (which by chance are not fisheries nations, with some exceptions)
- Fishing nations?
- Nations with the largest resource potential?
- Nations with the largest potential for fisheries management improvement?
- Nations most in need of the expertise we have?
- NB! Namibia was the lucky exception, but results cannot be generalized!

- The old saying in Kerala:
- "To be a Norwegian you have to be an expert!"
- Maybe time for some modesty abroad?
- Norway has certain key competencies that could be applied usefully in a number of fisheries in developing countries, but the magnitude of the problems and the size of the expert group, indicate that we can only be "a bubble in the stream"
- Often the real benefits of development cooperation are primarily on the Norwegian side (as in China)
- Maybe time for larger ambitions at home?
- Fisheries and aquaculture development projects only responsible for less than 1% of bilateral assistance

Where are the challenges?

Global production of aquatic organisms



Source: Hempel 2006