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## Preface

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**Biographical notes:** Shalu Darshan is involved in prion research activities as part of the Networks of Centres Excellence (NCE) funded project, PrioNet. Her academic background includes a PhD in Chemistry and interdisciplinary training in population health risk management. Her research interests include risk management and policy of prion diseases in Canada and internationally along with management strategies for developing countries to deal with the challenges posed by prion diseases.

Mark Raizenne is the Director General for the Centre for Food-borne, Environmental and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (CFEZID), a newly created centre in the Public Health Agency of Canada. He has more than 25 years of experience in the public service dealing with environmental and public health related issues. As the Director General of CFEZID, he is responsible for the strategic and operational activities within the centre. This includes ensuring that the centre is ready to respond to food-borne and zoonotic infectious disease outbreaks and strategic planning to address public health threats as well as environmental and public health issues.

Maura Ricketts has an MD, an MA in Health Sciences and FRCPC in Public Health. In 1995, she became the Medical Adviser at Health Canada's Blood-Borne Pathogens, and eventually, the Chief of Prion Diseases, where she developed the CJD surveillance system for Canada. In 1998, the WHO invited her to work as a Specialist for prion diseases. In 2001, with Professor Robert Will, she won a grant to conduct surveillance for human TSEs and risk assessments for animal TSEs in Central and Eastern Europe and China. She is a member of the Canadian Centers for Excellence PrioNet Research Management Committee.

The *International Journal of Risk Assessment and Management* special issue entitled 'Managing the risks of bovine spongiform encephalopathy: a Canadian perspective' includes 25 papers dealing with BSE as a zoonotic disease risk issue. This effort was completed as part of the risk management theme of PrioNet Canada, a network of Centres of Excellence established in Canada in 2005 to address prion disease risk issues of importance to Canada and internationally (Wong et al., 2009). Twenty of these articles were derived from case studies describing how BSE was handled in different countries around the world. Three additional papers discuss cross-cutting issues, specifically compensation programmes for farmers impacted by BSE in Canada, international trade policy, and policy lessons learned from the Canadian BSE experience. The penultimate paper provides an analysis of policy drivers for BSE risk management by correlating signal events such as the occurrence of domestic BSE with risk management interventions, such as banning the importation of meat and bone meal or live cattle from BSE-affected countries. Building on these and other analyses, the final paper presents a new integrated risk management framework for BSE, which has been the subject of discussion at international meetings organised by PrioNet Canada in Europe (Prion Risk 07 Workshop, Edinburgh, Scotland, September 25, 2007; Prion 2008 Satellite Event, Madrid, Spain, October 7, 2008; and Prion Risk 2009: Risk Assessment and Management Workshop, Thessaloniki, Greece, September 22, 2009), North America (BSE and vCJD Risks in Canada, Ottawa, Canada, June 25, 2008; and BSE and vCJD Risks in North America, Washington, DC, USA, July 10, 2008), and Asia (Prion China 2009, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China, November 7-8, 2009). Although motivated by the Canadian BSE experience, the articles in this special issue are expected to be of broad interest internationally to those responsible for managing BSE and other prion disease risks.

The special issue is presented in three parts. Part 1 (IJRAM 2010 Vol. 14 Nos. 1/2) includes ten case studies involving the following countries: the UK; Australia and New Zealand; North America: Canada and the USA; Latin America: Costa Rica; Russia; Central Europe: Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Poland; France; Germany; Portugal; and Spain. Part 2 (this issue) includes ten case studies involving the following countries: Belgium; The Netherlands; Israel; Switzerland; Japan; India; South America: Brazil and Argentina; Italy; Nordic Countries: Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and Norway; and China. Part 3 (IJRAM 2010 Vol. 14 No. 5) contains five articles documenting lessons learned from the international BSE crisis. The final paper consolidates the results from all three parts of the special issue into an integrated risk management framework for BSE.

## References

- Wong, M., Toth, J., Haney, S., Tyshenko, M.G., Darshan, S., Krewski, D., Leighton, F.A., Westaway, D., Moore, S.S., Ricketts, M. and Cashman, N. (2009) 'PrioNet Canada: a network of centres of excellence for research into prions and prion diseases', *J. Toxicol Environ Health A*, Vol. 72, No. 17, pp.1000–1007.