Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty (DCSD) - a short historical perspective

- 1992 – Establishment of the DCSD
- 1998 – Strengthening framework with executive order
- 2003 – DCSD part of the law
- THE LOMBORG CASE
- 1980's-90's – Int. cases on research misconduct
The Lomborg-Case

• ‘The Skeptical Environmentalist’ and Bjørn Lomborg’s participation in the climate debate in the late 90’ies led to a complaint to the DCSD. The Committees acquitted Lomborg but also stated that he had committed breaches of good scientific practice.
• Lomborg complained to the Ministry and since then the DCSD has solely dealt with actual research misconduct – Not good scientific practice.

A ‘vacuum’ in the Danish approach to Research Integrity?

Responsible Conduct of Research

| RCR | QRP | FFP |

Research Misconduct (DCSD)

Questionable Research Practice
The need for a Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

- Aiding researchers and institutions in Denmark
  - Practical tool for researchers in their everyday work
  - Cross-disciplinary standards for good practice
  - Common framework for the institutions to further develop

- Increasing international focus on integrity in funded research
  - Meeting demands from EU (Horizon2020) and other foreign funding agencies (fx National Science Foundation in USA)

- Cases in Denmark on research misconduct
  - Maintaining the high standards for research integrity held in DK in spite of prominent misconduct cases.
The code and the "one-pager"

Status and implementation of the code

- The code received widespread support in the research community
  - Positive feedback on inclusion of stakeholders in the process
  - The code’s built-in division of responsibilities between researchers and institutions has been positively highlighted (also by international experts on RI)

- 37 Research institutions have committed to the code
  - Universities, sector research institutions and technological institutes, research councils and several private funding agencies
  - Universities have or are in process of establishing mandatory RI teaching and training and advisory mechanisms ("named persons")
  - Many institutions are establishing system for handling breaches of RI
Two decisions by the DCSD are referred to the Danish Courts

• In both cases the courts disagreed with the assessments by the DCSD on whether or not the parties had committed research misconduct as defined in the law.

Review of the Danish misconduct system

• In 2015 an expert committee is tasked with conducting a review of the Danish research misconduct system.

• The central recommendations from the expert committee are:
  ◦ A clearer definition of research misconduct limited to Fabrication, Falsification and Plagiarism (FFP)
  ◦ A division of responsibilities where the central body handles research misconduct and the research institutions handle questionable research practice (obligation)

• A proposal for a new law based on the recommendations have been put before parliament in January 2017.
The Danish system in the future

Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (voluntary-based approach)

Central body handles all cases (DCSD)

Research institutions are obligated by law to handle cases (framework with room for different institutional systems)

Questions?