Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the European Commission, DG Research, for their financial support for this book and the research project on which the book is based. The project ‘Rhetoric and Realities: Analysing Corporate Social Responsibility in Europe’ (RARE) was funded from 2004 to 2007 within the EU’s Sixth Framework Programme (contract number No. CIT2-CT-2004-506 043). Our special thanks go to Dominik Sobczak for administering the project so smoothly. Dominique Bé, Robert Strauss and Geneviève Besse from the Commission’s DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, as well as José Jorge Diaz Del Castillo from DG Environment also supported us at various points during the project.

Sincere thanks are also given to all members of the RARE project team. Apart from the authors of this book, this includes a number of other researchers from the seven involved organisations – the Öko-Institut (Germany) as project coordinator, the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (Hungary), Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei (Italy), Fridtjof Nansen Institute (Norway), the Institute for Social-Ecological Research (Germany), Peter Wilkinson Associates (United Kingdom) and the Stockholm Environment Institute (Sweden). They all contributed to our discussions, to individual project deliverables and to the development of our common understanding of this research endeavour: Bettina Brohmann, Jordi Cadilla, Vanessa Cook, Michael Chi Chen, Miriam Dross, Ludovico Ferraguto, Carolin Günsche, Lars H. Gulbrandsen, Rike Krämer, Tanja Kreetz, Arild Moe, Ria Müller, Sabina Nicoletta, Linn Persson and Olivia Voils. The book authors, of course, merit our special thanks for their contributions; they all did tremendous work and had to endure many tiresome requests from our side.

We highly appreciate that 49 companies participated in our CSR surveys and case studies, thus enabling us to gain empirical data for our research. Especially, we would like to thank those company representatives who kindly agreed to be personally interviewed and who provided valuable and sometimes critical company information. This includes chief executives, purchasing managers, marketing and quality assurance staff, risk managers, human relations managers, advisors and many more informants from Caja Madrid, Dexia Group, Gottfried Friedrichs KG, Hydro, MOL Plc, Monte dei Paschi di Siena, Shell Plc, Shell Hungary, Unilever and Young’s
Bluecrest. We would of course like to extend our thanks to the interviewees from civil society organisations such as Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Transparency International and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature; from private sector associations such as Confederación Española de Cajas de Ahorros, Associazione Bancaria Italiana and the European Savings Banks Group; as well as from public institutions including Instituto de la Mujer and Instituto Universitario de Investigación José Ortega y Gasset.

In the context of an expert workshop, a number of CSR researchers and practitioners gave us very fruitful feedback on our conceptual building blocks and thus helped us in shaping our research approach. Apart from the above mentioned EU Commission officials, they include Davide Dal Maso, Stanislas Dupré, Kate Grosser, Stephen Hine, Jonas Moberg, Jeremy Moon, Antonio Rueda, Paul Scott, Bernd Siebenhüner, Jette Steen Knudsen and Roberto Zangrandi. We would also like to thank those that contributed as speakers, discussants or moderators to the RARE project’s final conference: Bernhard Bauske, Geneviève Besse, Giorgio Capurri, Tony Clark, Paul de Clerck, Elizabeth Guttenstein, Richard Howitt, Jane Leavens, Mike Mitchell, Arild Moe, Jan Noterdaeme, Guido Palazzo, Orsolya Pallaghy, Jette Steen Knudsen, Marion Swoboda, Ralph Thurm and David Vogel.

Finally, it remains to thank most warmly those that not only secured the organisational success of the conference but also did a great job in editing this book and preparing its print: Nathalie Hahn and Heike Unruh from the Öko-Institut. Without them, this publication would not have been possible. Likewise, we are highly indebted to Ben Booth from Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd for his trust in the manuscript and his patience with us.

Regine Barth and Franziska Wolff
Darmstadt / Berlin, April 2008