

A Lifetime of Reflection

Professor, scientist, fisheries engineer, researcher and Brazil's representative in international negotiations on fisheries management, Fábio Hissa Vieira Hazin succumbed to COVID-19 on 8 June 2021, World Oceans Day

Fabio Hazin was stricken with COVID-19 a week before the opening of vaccination for university professors in Recife, his hometown in Brazil. His health deteriorated rapidly. He was hospitalized for 11 days, eight on a ventilator. In the end he died of intracranial bleeding.

A workaholic by nature, Fabio was invariably committed to several projects, supported by a wide range of students and professionals. The son of an important fishing entrepreneur,

a post-doctoral degree in Migratory Pelagic Fishery Resource Stock Assessment, at the Southeast Fisheries Science Center/NMFS/NOAA, in Miami, US, and in 2010 he specialized in International Law of the Sea at the Rhodes Academy Center for Oceans Law and Policy/University of Virginia School of Law.

His principal commitment was to the University, where he advised more than 90 students, published over 250 papers and reports and co-ordinated 27 research and extension projects in 29 years. A large part of his production was dedicated to the study of fisheries biology—focusing on elasmobranchs and large pelagic fish such as tuna and sailfish. His studies were used as the basis for decision making in national and international management.

His first big challenge at the University, in 1995, was Program REVIZEE (Assessment of the Sustainable Yield of the Living Resources in the Brazilian Exclusive Economic Zone), the largest marine science programme ever developed in the country, for which he assumed the co-ordination of the northeast region. The Program was co-ordinated by the Secretariat of the Interministerial Commission for Sea Resources (SECIRM), executed by the Ministry of the Environment (MMA), and had financial support from the Science and Technology Ministry throughout its 10 years of activities, putting Fabio directly in contact with national policymakers. Program REVIZEE has generated an immense volume of data and scientific information about the Brazilian sea, which resulted in the publication of hundreds of academic reports and the training of a large number of professionals in the field of marine science.

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he grew up amidst lobster boats and fishermen, which led him to earn a degree in fisheries engineering. After graduating and having experienced the profession as an entrepreneur, he decided to enter academia. He went to Japan on a Mombusho scholarship and did his Masters and PhD in Marine Science and Technology/Fisheries Oceanography at Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology. During his PhD, he was appointed as a professor at the Federal Rural University of Pernambuco in 1992.

At that time, his family company captured tuna and tuna-like species, which became the main theme of his research and work throughout his life. He continued to study and search for new knowledge as he became involved in broader issues such as international fisheries policy. In 2002 he completed

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Fabio Hazin at the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Fabio was an excellent communicator, perhaps because he had studied theater at the university and wrote plays and books

Fabio also assumed important international positions, such as the presidency of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) between 2007 and 2011, in which he also served as the Brazilian Scientific Representative between 1998 and 2015. He was always quick to defend Brazil's interests and fought for the country's quota increase in tuna and tuna-like fishing.

He was the Brazilian fisheries expert for the Food and Agriculture

Organization of the United Nations (FAO), becoming the chair of the FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) from 2014 to 2016. For artisanal fisheries, he was an important mediator as chair for the development process of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines), endorsed by COFI in 2014.

Fabio chaired technical consultations that led to the adoption of

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Fábio Hazin recently published *A arte de aprender a ser* (The Art of Learning to Be), a book on spirituality and freedom

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the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), the first binding international agreement designed to prevent and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. He chaired the Working Group on Marine Organisms Arising from International Waters (Introduction from the Sea), at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES) between 2010 and 2013. In 2015 he briefly assumed an important position in Brazil's Ministry of Fisheries.

In the late 1990s, he noticed an unusual increase in shark incidents in his hometown, Recife, transforming it into one of the cities with the most number of shark attacks in the world. (Brazil ranks fourth in the world ranking of shark attacks.) In the last 30 years, 61 incidents have been recorded. Fábio's research team emphasized the impacts of the construction of the biggest regional Port of Suape, and the environmental changes and degradation it caused. Other consequential causes were the intensification of maritime traffic and the existence of a deep channel parallel to the beach—which facilitates the approach of sharks, putting bathers and surfers in danger—associated with a marine current that predominantly moves from south to north.

As President of the Local Committee for monitoring the problem between 2004 and 2012, Fábio helped organize two important international seminars on the subject. Based on his group's research, surfing and bathing in the city's beaches was prohibited.

Fábio was an excellent communicator, perhaps because he had studied theater at the university and had written a play called *The Mangrove Battle*, which exposed the degradation of mangroves in the late 1990s. More recently, he turned spiritual and wrote a book titled *The Art of Learning to Be: The Story of A Spiritual Journey in Search of Freedom*, which was published in 2020. According to Graziela Castanhari, a colleague, "He always had a strong connection with spirituality. When he studied in Japan, he got to know some forms of Buddhism but realized that then was not the time to immerse himself in it.

He was busy pursuing his degrees at the time. After his divorce, he reconnected with spirituality, passing on knowledge to his students. He devised a special workshop—difficult to categorize since it dealt with various aspects of spirituality and their connection to science. In 2014, he organized such a workshop in Maragogi, a beach city in Pernambuco state, and called it 'Maragosangha'. 'Sangha' means 'community' in Sanskrit. Seven years and 30 workshops on, over 360 people have experienced Fábio's idea of liberation—reflection in order to free ourselves. He believed that through such liberation, we can see beyond our own ego and actually be happy. 3

For more

Tribute to Fábio Hazin

<https://www.fao.org/fishery/nems/41313/en>

Unusual Sense of Daring

<http://toobigtoignore.net/a-tribute-to-fabio-hazin/>

Making SSF Secure

https://www.icsf.net/images/samudra/pdf/english/issue_74/4220_art_4220_art_Sam74_e_Art13.pdf