

Recreation and tourism - socio-cultural and socio-economic impacts on protected areas in Norway

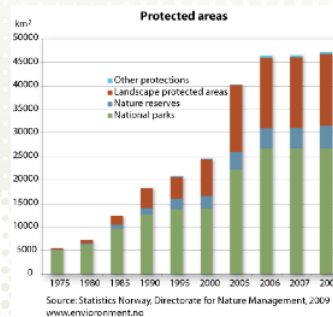
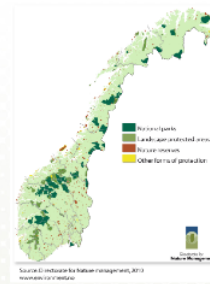
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Protected areas in Norway

- Protected areas cover almost 15 % of mainland Norway
- The first National park established in 1962 (Rondane)
- Common right of access and simple outdoor recreation activities important
- Many new protected areas the recent years
- Mainly mountains areas, but now more focus on forests and the coastal zone
- Now the key question is: How shall the areas be managed?



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Protection policy and management

- Traditional policy on protection through top-down regulation
- Less emphasis on active management
- Management by the Environmental Department at the County Governor (the Directorate of Nature Management and the Ministry of Environment)
- Consultative Supervisory Board with participation from municipalities, local organisations, etc.
- In spatial planning much power is delegated to the local municipalities according the Planning and Building Act



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Socio-cultural impacts

- Long traditions for huge conflicts
 - Between the state and the local remote communities
 - Between conservation and use/local development
- Socio-cultural impacts:
 - Protected areas have marginal influence on traditional agriculture, but on new businesses as tourism, etc.
 - Local feelings of distrust to the community`s ability of managing landscapes
- A movement towards more participation and dynamic management
 - More participation from stakeholders in conservation processes
 - Local management models for larger protected areas (co-management)
 - Management plans are now more normal
 - But still marginal resources for active management

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Socio-economic impacts

- National parks are still poorly developed as tourism attractions in Norway
 - they are more like ‘wilderness areas’ with scant facilitation and visitor services
- ‘Traditional, simple outdoor recreation activities’ are accepted
 - in accordance with the principles of common access (*allemannsretten*)
- Recent political initiatives underline NPs’ branding effect on international tourist markets and their significance as regional development tools
 - the ban on commercial activities inside NPs was lifted in 2003
- Still management agencies lack the professional competence to develop tourist provisions in NPs
 - managers probably also lack the will to include tourism visions and goals for the NPs
- The ‘static-preservation’ approach still seem to prevail over the ‘dynamic-innovation’ approach (cf. Mose 2007)
 - leading to serious concerns and frustrations among local tourism entrepreneurs (cf. Haukeland 2011)

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Socio-economic impacts, continued

- **National parks have a great appeal to foreign tourists in Norway:**
A survey among German, Danish and Dutch motor tourists in the summer 2008 demonstrated that
 - 50 % of the respondents maintained that the NPs have a ‘very great appeal’
 - 28 % said that the NPs had (to a larger or smaller degree) influenced their decision to visit the country
- **The economic impact is significant:**
A study in a national park area in Norway, i.e. the alpine region *Nord-Gudbrandsdalen* in Southern Norway, revealed that
 - 25 % of Norwegian tourists’ expenditures in the area could be directly attributed to the NP status of the local mountains
 - 40 % of foreign tourists’ expenditures are explained by the NP status
- **Local residents acknowledge the significance of NP tourism:**
It was showed in a recent survey in *Nord-Gudbrandsdalen* that
 - 90 per cent of the local people deemed the importance of NP tourism as ‘rather’ or ‘very high’ for income/ jobs in their local communities
 - 80 per cent saw the importance of NP tourism as ‘rather’ or ‘very high’ for the level of services/ infrastructure in their local communities

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Recreation and Tourism – protected areas in Norway

Regional parks – a new tool for dynamic management in Norway

- Kristian Bjørnstad

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Norway/Scandinavia:
3 established regional parks
8 established landscape parks
3 regional park projects

The map shows the outline of Norway with several locations marked by blue squares. Lines connect these squares to labels. On the west coast, labels include Næreyfjorden Verdensarvpark, Stalheim, Ulvik, Fyksesund, Sæbe, Herand, Vikabygd, Sveiu, and Ånarfjorden. In the south-west, a label for Hordaland Parks points to a cluster of squares. In the east, labels include Valdres natur- og kulturpark, Finnskogen, and Telemarkskanalen.

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Regional parks in Norway

- Projects grown locally/regionally throughout the 1990s. Secretariat supported by 3 ministries (Regional, Agriculture, Environment)
- New national program for parks from 2012 (approx 1.5 mill. Euro). Inspired by Swiss model of Parks (local support required/no area protection)
- Interest and activity increasing. Newly formed Norwegian Parks Association.
- New projects: Haldenkanalen, Finnskogen (NOR/SWE), Numedal, and on Iceland.



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Ongoing research projects and education at UMB

- Prospects of Managing Tourism Development in Protected Areas in a Period of Transition. Norwegian Research Council
- Ideals, models and practice in natural resource management – does local management matter? Is Regional Parks based on partnership models relevant for nature and landscape conservation? Norwegian Research Council
- Reindeer management and regional planning
- Masters Courses: Strategic landscape planning (20 ects), Nature based tourism (20 ects)
- Will establish a resource group with focus on dynamic landscape management based at UMB

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