

Learning or lecturing?

Understanding participation in grid development projects in Norway and the UK

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The content of the presentation

- Research question
- Analytical framework
- Method
- Participation in grid development projects
 - Ørskog-Sogndal
 - SydVestlinken
- Preliminary findings from empirical data

Research Questions

- ***How do different types of participation work - top-down vs bottom-up?***
- ***How do these mechanisms contribute to community acceptance?***

Analytical framework

- Community acceptance (Wüstenhagen): addresses how the institutional framework governing the development of energy projects is perceived by the public
- Implementation theory – how is the political/regulatory framework working in practice?
 - Informative (top-down) versus learning-perspective (bottom-up)
 - Traditional expert-client relationships versus facilitating mutual learning
- Types of participation:
 - Procedures - mandatory/formal participation procedures
 - Guidelines – informal; best practice, recommendations companies/sector authorities
 - Ad-hoc measures – project specific, personell dependent

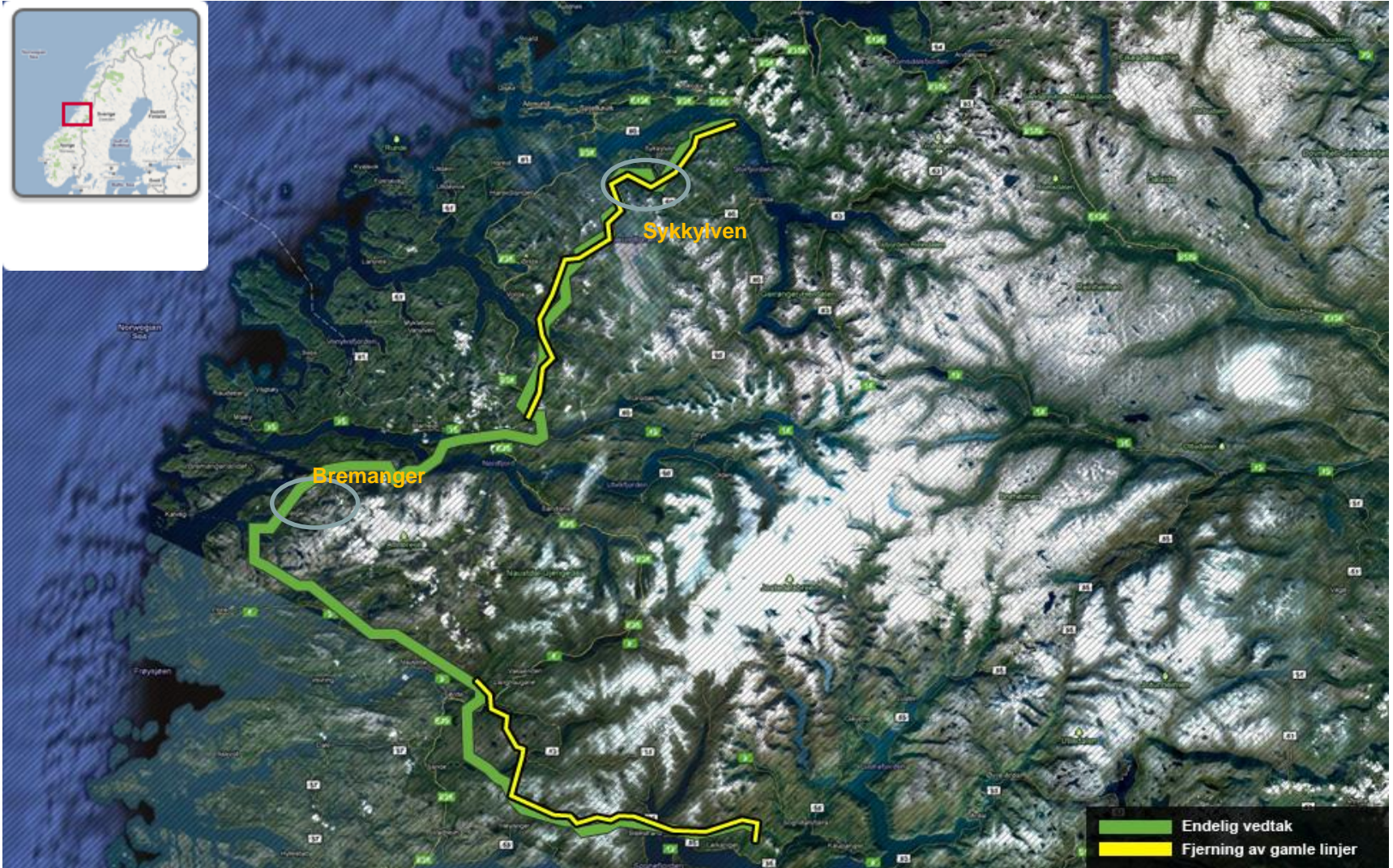
Methodology

- ***Comparative design: UK and Norway***
- **Case studies**
 - One project finalized and one in process – in each country, resp.
 - Different needs addressed
 - Different localisation – densely/sparsely populate
- **Document analysis**
- **Key informant interviews**
 - NGOs, authorities, decision-makers
- **Focus groups**
 - 2 localities in each grid development project

Starting point: Do different grid development regimes imply different types of participation?

- *Based on findings from Brekke and Sataøen (2012):*
- **Norway (assumed implication):**
 - Given the prevalence of formal procedures, we expect participation to have a top-down character and being mainly 'informed' by the expert-based documentation.
- **UK (assumed implication):**
 - **Assumed implication:** Given the prevalence of formal procedures based on political processes, we expect participation to have a top-down character, but with bottom-up aspects related to political discussions in the early project phase.
- **Empirical data from actual participation in grid development projects:**
 - **UK cases (Hinckley Point C and MidWales)**
 - **Norwegian cases (Ørskog-Sogndal and SydVestlinken)**

Ørskog-Sogndal



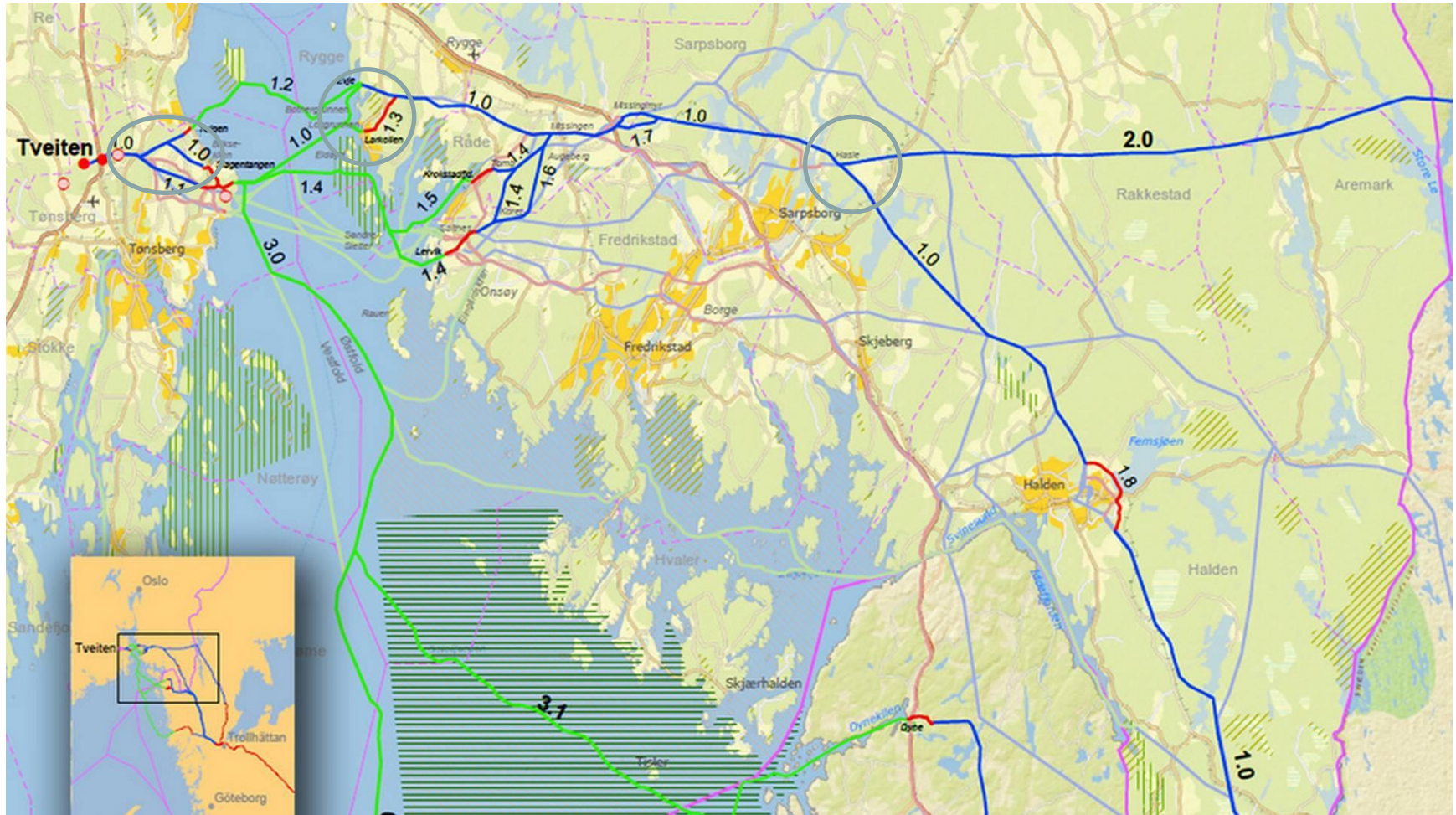
Ørskog-Sogndal

- Located in the fjord district of Norway, covering a long stretch of nearly 300 km. Will run through 15 municipalities and two counties (Møre and Romsdal, Sogn and Fjordane)
- New transformer stations will be constructed in five localities
- Around 110 kilometers of existing 132 kV lines is to be refurbished (compensation measure)
- Planning started in 2005, and the line got a final concession in 2011.
- The routing through a natural reserve in Myklebustdalen was appealed by the County Governor. The Ministry of Environment decided to approve the routing.

SydVestlinken



SydVestlinken



SydVestlinken

- Located eastern part of Norway in densely populated areas (compared to other parts of the country) covering a long stretch of nearly 400 km from Tveiten in Norway to Barkeryd in Sweden. Routing in Norway: 60-110 km (depending of the alternatives chosen)
 - Two counties (Vestfold and Østfold) and 13 municipalities are affected
 - New transformer station will replace existing transformer station at Tveiten (Tønsberg). Land fall points needed on the western part of the Oslo fjord.
 - Notification sent in 2009 and the EIA determined in 2012
- ***Project abandoned in April 2013 due to lack of "socio-economic benefits"***

Participation in Ørskog-Sogndal and SydVest-linken

- Formal procedures
 - Meeting with local and regional authorities and NVE where the TSO presents the project
 - Consultations with affected stakeholders required in the notification phase (comments on the EIA program), application, additional applications and final assessment.
 - Public hearing meetings at all stages from notification to assessment
 - Possibilities to appeal to the MoPE after NVE's assessment
- Institutionalized guidelines
 - On-site inspections: Conducted early in the process by Statnett in both cases. NVE performed several on-site inspections in relations to the application, municipal meetings and with Statnett in Ørskog-Sogndal.
 - "Open office days" - an offer available for residents living close to the grids, property owners and other stakeholders who wish to get more information and who wants to influence on the routing solutions.
 - Information brochures to affected households.
 - Several informal meetings held by Statnett during both of the processes; municipals and landowners.

Perception of participation in the Norwegian grid development projects: Preliminary findings (1/2)

- Consultation/IA-process
 - Many are questioning the relation between expert studies in the EIA and the final political assessment
 - «.. It was a clear and good process (..) related to scientific knowledge.. Disciplines and impact assessments – those that have knowledge of this. But what is really provocative, is that in a way it is not worth anything. Why do you need it when the politicians know best anyway..»
 - Some of the stakeholders found that their local knowledge had not been included in the EIA or in the assessment process
- Public hearing meetings
 - One-way information: not a focus on dialogue and lack of transparency on health issues
 - “... No matter what was said (..) at the meetings we were not heard. We were not. That is, they came and invited us to participate at the meetings and we responded. Then they came with new things, and what we had indicated was nowhere to be found..”
 - Organized badly: not in all local newspapers, small advertisements, information too late (sometimes the same day).
- Onsite-inspections generally perceived as a good way to influence. The grid company also see this as a way of learning/understanding routing arguments from stakeholders
 - About the dialogue with Statnett at the onsite-inspections: "I think it was OK.. (..) And I don't think it uncomfortable in any way. No problem with that. I felt that .. very...that I was taken seriously"
 - But some inspections planned poorly (authorities)

Perception of participation in the Norwegian grid development projects: Preliminary findings (2/2)

- Few possibilities for influencing/participating in the early stages in the project. Problematic because:
 - Many stakeholders feel that the decisions have been made from the start and that there are limited possibilities of influencing on the project

“First of all, they had been thinking about this (project) long before they made it public. That is, and draw a line on the map: “We want this transmission line no matter what”. And then they make some alternatives for us to think that we have alternatives, in a way..”
 - Most stakeholders find that it is important to be able to communicate their concerns at an early stage in order to be able to affect the project (routing etc.)
- The municipality often involved early in the process, but the role of the municipality is not always perceived as taking the interest of people living in the municipality

If the municipality had taken a hold on things in the beginning of the process, and been.. summoned, yes, not only the landowner, but the whole – because it is relevant for the whole village, it is not only affecting the landowners – and could agreed upon things.. the maybe we would have been stronger, and I think the conflict had become different..”

Learning or lecturing in Norway?

- Grid development: a technical and expertise-driven domain
- Impact versus involvement
 - Several opportunities to get involved, but the degree of influence and mutual learning can be questioned
- Early involvement seen as important to influence
 - Only municipalities that are given the opportunity.



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