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Public participation in a regional plan for wind energy - Norway

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Outline of the presentation

1. The Norwegian planning system
2. National and regional context for wind energy planning
3. Main procedural steps of the plan
4. Public participation
5. Lessons learnt





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1. The Norwegian Planning System

Planning and Building Act - main principles:

- Democratic and decentralised
- Open process:
 - Authorities concerned and relevant interest organisations shall be given the possibility to participate actively
 - The public in general shall be given information about the planning process and the possibility to give comments
- EIA/SEA:
 - EU Directives and Espoo Convention/ protocol implemented in the act and a regulation
 - EIA/SEA integrated part of planning process



1. The planning system cont.

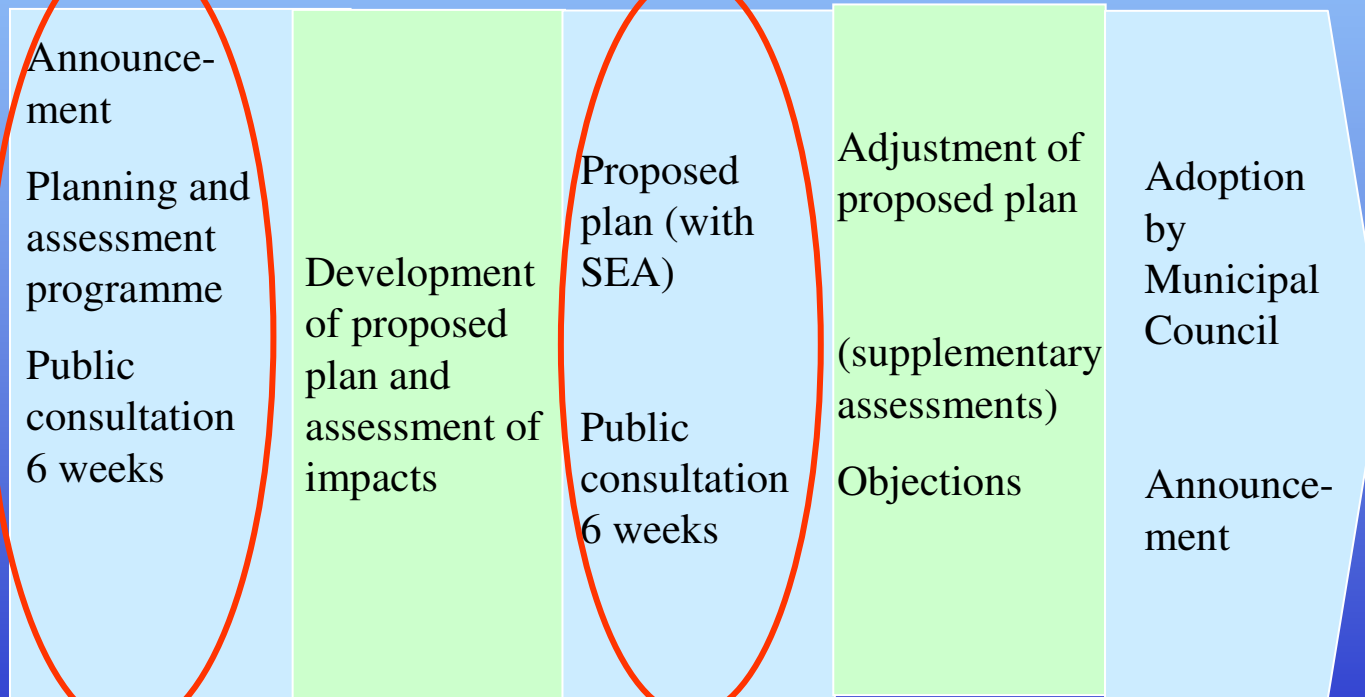
Division of planning tasks:

- **National**
Planning authority: Ministry of Environment
 - Provide law and guidelines for planning at regional and local level
 - White Papers
 - Resolving conflicts
- **Regional (19)**
Planning authority: County Council
 - Prepare county plans for the development of the county. Guidelines for the planning in the municipalities and sector planning
- **Local (431)**
Planning authority: Municipality Council
 - Prepare municipality plans and legally binding local plans





1. The Planning system cont.





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1. The Planning system cont.

Planning and assessment programme:

- First formalized step/document in the planning process
- Define conditions and clarify purpose of the planning task
- Describe arrangements for information and participation (early pp)
- Describe alternatives to be included in the planning- and assessment process
- Clarify the need for and describe assessments to be conducted



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2. National and regional context for wind energy planning

National goals:

- 30 TWh renewable energy within 2016 - partly by wind energy
- Regional plans shall clarify "yes/no/maybe" areas for wind energy

Rogaland County:

- Population: 405 000
- Area: 9 325 km²
- Good wind conditions - many wind energy projects:
 - 3 in operation
 - 2 more licences
 - 25 possible projects





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3. Main procedural steps of the plan

- Start January 2006
- Public hearings for 8 weeks in 2006 and in 2007
- Adopted by the County council October 2007
- National approval by the government in prospect 2008

- SEA integrated part of the plan - conflict assessment of relevant topics as basis for final plan



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4. PP - Identification of the public

- **Authorities concerned:** environmental authorities, municipalities concerned, regional and national energy authorities, state road authorities, National aviation authorities, The Norwegian Defence
- **Interest organisations:** six developers, three local energy companies, two tourist organisations, two environmental NGOs, farmers association, hunting and fishing organisation, cultural heritage organisation



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4. PP - tools used for public involvement

- **Two public hearings:**
 - **by letter** to authorities concerned and relevant interest organisations
 - announced in two local **newspapers** and at the internet
- Two **hearing seminars** open to all
- Two meetings with a **reference group** (authorities concerned and relevant interest organisations)
- **Internet** - Information of the planning process and studies undertaken
- **Ad hoc consultation meetings on request** through out the planning process up to final decision (administrative and political)



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4. PP - interest shown and influence on decision

- Development of the planning and assessment program (low)
 - Development of the planning proposal (moderate)
 - Hearing of the planning and assessment program (25 written comments)
 - Hearing of the planning proposal (66 written comments)
 - Two hearing seminars (ca 150 participants)
 - Hits on the internet (ca 2400 in the planning period)
 - Ad hoc consultation meetings (high)
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- The designated "yes/no/maybe" zones for localisation of wind farms were considerably adjusted due to the public involvement



5. Lessons learnt

- **Benefits - open seminars:** gave a broad discussion with a lot of pros and cons regarding wind energy and localisation. Many participants (ca 150)
- **Benefits - Internet:** An efficient way of keeping the public continually updated of the development in the planning process and of new studies available.
- **Problems - reference group:** the group was too large to allow for in depth discussions on specific topics and interests. Two meetings was judged not enough. Available resources did not allow for more meetings with subgroups.
- **Problems – planning and assessment program:** being a new procedural step in Norway, participation at this early stage could have been encouraged more to clarify especially developers and energy companies attitudes towards proposed “no-zones”. Instead late ad hoc meetings were organised.



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Thank you !

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