



10 project examples from Interreg Sweden-Norway in the sustainable development field

[Interreg turns 30 years during 2020](#). As a part of a series to celebrate 30 years of successful cooperation across borders, the European Commission have published some project examples within the sustainable development field.

Interreg Sweden-Norway contributed to the series with some examples from our programme, which are described in this document. Even more projects working can be found in [our database](#) (in Swedish).

Interreg is the EU's flagship scheme for cooperation across borders at regional and national level, to the benefit of all EU citizens. Launched in 1990, it has proven that borders are not barriers and has brought Europeans closer together by helping to tackle common challenges and creating new opportunities for cooperation across borders.

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ecoINSIDE 2

ecoINSIDE stands for eco INner Scandinavia Innovation & Development and is a project about innovation and sustainable growth in Inner Scandinavia. The project wants to support and strengthen SMEs so they can take part of the market possibilities that comes with the green shift in Inner Scandinavia, nationally and international. This includes extensive collaboration on innovation and environmentally driven business development, skills development and the use of Living Labs for testing and demonstration.

The three focus areas of the project are:

- Circular Economy in Inner Scandinavia
- Scandinavian Center for Solar Energy & Energy Systems
- ZEIS (Zero Emission Inner Scandinavia)

These will utilize the opportunities that circular economics and digitalization entail and help to increase green growth in Inner Scandinavia, bring forth more innovations and knowledge transfer and exchange of ideas between strong research environments, investors and other companies.

ecoINSIDE2 is a cooperation between Viken and Innlandet in Norway and Dalarna and Värmland in Sweden. The project owners are Arvika kommun and Kunnskapsbyen Lillestrøm.

<http://ecoinside.nu/>



The Bioeconomy Region

The Bioeconomy Region project has among other things worked to speed up the transition to fossil-free products in the packaging industry. Fossil plastic used as packaging today contributes to large greenhouse gas emissions both when it is manufactured and when it is incinerated. It is a challenge and important for the climate to find alternative sustainable solutions for the plastic packaging, while it also is an opportunity for companies to further develop their products and supply new alternatives to the fossil plastic.

The Bioeconomy Region covers the geographical area of Värmland, Dalarna, Akershus, Østfold, Hedmark and Oppland. The forest is a great natural resource and the area is a prominent region in forest-based bioeconomy where world-leading industries as well as new innovative companies conduct their business. But for both climate and business, the bioeconomy needs to grow. Therefore,

the project The Bioeconomy Region was created with more than 40 partners in business and academia who actively want to support the sustainable development of the region.

The fossil-free bag

The project's efforts have, for example, resulted in a successful collaboration where a group of actors tested different coating materials on different types of paper in the Säffle based company UMV's test lab. The goal has been to try to produce a brand-new fossil-free packaging that resists air, fat and moisture. The result has become a packaging bag that a Norwegian food company now wants to use for their products. Further testing is required, but the fossil-free bag will hopefully soon be ready to be launched in stores.

In order to stimulate new green innovations and help entrepreneurs to get their business running, The Bioeconomy Region has also offered various programs of support. The support has ranged from finding funding for forest-based innovation to helping with business development and contact with existing actors and potential customers on the market.

Recycled cross-glued wood

Thanks to the project, the company Biosorbe has been able to take the step from lab to pilot production with its innovation which is an absorbent of forest raw material that can make oil remediation more efficient and environmentally friendly. Another example is the startup company Woup, whose business concept is to take advantage of residues from the production of cross-glued wood to house parts. From the material they create furniture for, for example, waiting areas and parks. Through the project, they have gained contacts with the industry and access to materials, innovation support and coaching, and have had the opportunity to present their business at several conferences and trade fairs to get in touch with suppliers and customers.

The project owners are Region Värmland and Viken county municipality.

<https://bioeconomyregion.com/>



Swedish and Norwegian actors have cooperated to develop a new fossil-free packaging that is good for both people and the environment. The fossil-free packaging, which can be recycled as paper, will hopefully soon be out in stores.



The project's efforts have resulted in increased political interest where wood construction has come up on the agenda in several municipalities.

Two countries - one river

The project is about a river, Klarälven-Trysilelva-Femundselva, which flows through Sweden and Norway. All measures within the project will contribute to preserve and reconstruct the wild salmon and trout populations plus otherwise threatened species and habitat types in the river.

Since the river and its biodiversity do not know the national border, there is a clear need to use a cross-border perspective when creating the conditions for a long-term reconstruction of the wild and long-migrating salmon population.

The project aims to improve the river's ecological status, among other things through environmental adaptation of hydropower, so that today's low natural reproduction of salmon and trout in the watercourse can increase. Another measure is to restore salmon to their home areas on the Norwegian side.

If the project succeeds in creating the conditions for a long-term reconstruction of the wild and long-migrating salmon population, many other species and values will also benefit of it.

The project owners are the County Administrative Board of Värmland and the County Governor of Innlandet.

<https://tvalanderenelv.eu/>



Foto: Alexandra Hellström

Strängforsen in Northern Värmland. Biotope restoration and other measures around hydropower plants increase the survival of migratory fish in the Swedish-Norwegian river.

Cross-border management for the Fulufjället National Parks

Fulufjället's two national parks are an increasingly popular visitor attraction. In the summer of 2017, 15 years after the formation, a new visitor record was struck at Naturum Fulufjället (the visitor and information center on the Swedish side) with just over 30 000 visitors. To be able to welcome even more visitors, develop the businesses in northern Dalarna and eastern Hedmark and give visitors a world-class nature experience without compromising the unique nature of the park the project has developed a joint visitor strategy for the the Fulufjället National Parks on the Swedish and Norwegian side.

Some areas of the park have been adapted for visitors with information boards, while other parts of the parks can remain untouched. Naturum Fulufjället has become the entire park's visitor center, which now organizes joint cross-border events, provides information on the park on both sides of the border and manages common border regional Facebook and Instagram accounts. A major effort has been made at the entrance in Njupeskar with development of new sights, new nature trails, new signposting, handicap adaptation of paths and new maps - all to be able to accommodate more visitors and provide a high-quality wilderness experience in controlled forms.

To develop the businesses in and around the park border regional cooperation platforms, joint annual conferences and certification of national park partners have been established. A communication strategy with a common message that describes what image you want to convey when communicating and marketing the Fulufjället National Parks has been developed and has become an important document for everyone who works with and in the parks.

The project has also carried out an inventory of cultural heritage, which resulted in 200 new archaeological finds, ranging from stone-age finds to traces from mountain farms, and produced and digitized stories, pictures and films about life in Fulufjället. Together, they create a basis for establishing new sights in the park and attracting new visitor groups.

Project owners were the County Administrative Board of Dalarna County and the County Governor of Hedmark.

<https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/dalarna/natur-och-landsbygd/regional-samverkan-for-naturvard.html>



Around Fulufjället you experience wilderness in two national parks, just a few hours from everyday life. Watch the movie about both the national parks at www.fulufjallet.se

Green Drive Region

Green Drive Region has, among other things, worked strategically with municipalities to phase out fossil fuels. A successful example of this is the municipality of Skedsmo, which the project supported to develop a strategy for the municipality to run fossil-free in 2020. The strategy has been spread as a good example on both sides of the Swedish-Norwegian border so other municipalities can get inspiration and hands-on advice.

During the project, a relay was also carried out across the border region. The relay aimed at involving, informing and engaging stakeholders within the municipalities to convert to fossil-free vehicles as well as at informing the public and offering test drives of various environmentally friendly cars. During the relay a total number of 24 Swedish and Norwegian municipalities signed an agreement to cooperate about achieving the national goal of a fossil-free vehicle fleet in 2030.

Another good result from the project is that the number of charging stations in the region increased by 116.5 percent from 2015-2018!

In 2015-2018 the project Green Drive Region worked to reduce emissions from the transport sector with a focus on private cars. The project's website (www.greendriversregion.com) which still is up and running even after the project is finished, contains easily accessible statistics, reports and information on various fossil-free fuels, a map of filling and charging stations in Sweden and Norway and much more.

The project owners were Region Värmland and Kunnskapsbyen Lillestrøm.



A screenshot from one of the project's films with the message "Take care of the world and the future - change fuel!" Films within the project have been produced with equality and gender equality in mind – the characters are animated without stereotypical perceptions of gender roles and with different looks and different skin colors.

Smart Green Region Mid-Scandinavia

The project has three focus areas:

- Green Highway which is about companies that will develop the fossil fuel-free transport corridor between the two countries.
- St Olavs trail an ancient pilgrimage route that now will be developed as a tourist destination from coast to coast.
- Ski Region Mid Scandinavia which will develop companies and organizations to make winter sports and events into important growth engines in the area.

<http://www.greenhighway.nu/>



The project Smart Green Region Mid-Scandinavia focus on the coast to coast area in central Sweden and Norway.

The future is blue

The border region between Østfold and Västra Götaland is an exciting marine-growth zone. The project Future is Blue work to enhance the conditions for marine industries. Particularly development areas are oysters, seaweed, sea bass and mussels. That's where the region sees the greatest the development potential and the project hope to contribute to more jobs without sacrifice of the environment. The project also maps differences and similarities in legislation in Norway and Sweden.

<https://svinesundskommitten.com/blatillvaxt/marint-gransforum/>



Marine foods, such as mussels, can be more profitable.

Fossil free border region 2030

Fossil-free border region 2030 continues the good work of the in the previous project The Whole Green Road, where 40 municipalities in the border region undertook the responsibility to be fossil free by 2030. That project led to the establishment of over 1000 new charging points, five biogas filling stations and enabling over 1000 public enterprises, companies and residents to test fossil-free transport means.

I project Fossil-free border region 2030, the parties go further by taking the concrete steps needed to achieve fossil-free freedom. Municipalities in the border region are continuously switching to fossil-free vehicles, the number of charging stations is increasing successfully and there are concrete plans for further expansion for biogas. Another objective is to increase the number of fossil free work machines and electrical bicycles.

<https://www.fossilfri2030.se/>



A happy bunch who, through the project's lending center, replaced the diesel truck with an electric-powered light truck. When the loan period was over, they did not want to leave it. The power of the example is great. Trying yourself is greater. Photo: Martin Norderhaug.

Bioraff- More from wood

In the field of innovative environments, "Bioraff - More of wood" will contribute to creating sustainable growth in the area and the main goal is to establish new collaborative configurations of value chains in the forest-based industry. The sub-projects focus on the further development of protein production from forest industrial residual streams for fish feed, the value chain for fish feed, green chemicals from pyrolysis oil and the development of black pellets from sawmill residues.



Yvonne Söderström, project manager for "Bioraff - More of wood" took a nice summer picture in the forest on the protein from forest raw material, which is the ingredient in fish feed, one of the activities in the project.

To strengthen the Arctic Fox population

The project "Felles Fjellrev II" (~Common Arctic Fox) has achieved the single most important goal: to strengthen the Arctic Fox in the project area through direct support measures. The project has thus contributed to the overall and long-term goal: to strengthen the Arctic Fox population so that the fox in the future can live on with only limited support measures, or better yet: completely without human assistance. The work to save the Arctic Foxes has been carried out in three focus areas.

Specific support measures

Support feeding at the dens are valuable for the Arctic foxes especially during years with few lemmings, so the foxes can stay by their dens on the mountain. Then they can quickly respond to the next good year with lemmings and breed new puppies. The support feeding contributes to better survival for both adult animals and puppies. Competitive red foxes have been hunted and diminished close to Arctic Fox dens and in valuable areas for the Arctic Fox.

Research and inventory

Research have been carried out for the benefit of future management of our Arctic Foxes. Through several research projects in collaboration between researchers in Norway and Sweden, the knowledge about the Arctic Fox and its life has increased significantly.

The project has also carried out annual monitoring and inventory of Arctic Fox to clarify the number of puppies born. In conjunction with these works, many tissue samples have been taken and pooled for DNA analysis. The results of the analysis have been used to study kinship, migration, age structures and other things that provide valuable knowledge for future management of Arctic Foxes.

Communication and information

The project's work to develop new information products has been extensive. The project has produced; a new revised information brochure; a new short film "Storm & Tinde II"; yet another children's book "Lemmings - the beating hearts of the mountains" and an updated version of the info kiosk that was developed in a previous project.

The project has also produced a network-based educational package for schools in Sweden and Norway, "The Artic fox in a backpack" that is available on the project's website.

During "Felles Fjellrev II", the project has also focused on communicating with the public. The website has been updated and supplemented with interactive material for children and it is now a working information site.

The project has been very active in communicating via social media - Instagram and Facebook. In addition, four week-long information tours have been conducted for schools and the general public in municipalities within the project area.

The project owners were The Norwegian Environment Agency and the County Administrative Board of Jämtland in Sweden. Partner: Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, County Administrative Board of Västerbotten, Stockholm University, WWF Sweden.

<http://www.fellesfjellrev.se/>

<https://www.facebook.com/fellesfjellrev/>

<https://www.instagram.com/fellesfjellrev/>



Photo: Lars Liljemark, County Administrative Board of Jämtland County