NORWAY TOWARDS SDG13 – CLIMATE ACTION

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SECTION 1. COUNTRY PROFILE

Norway stands out among nations as a symbol of progress towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. Ranked high on the worldwide index (Sachs, Lafortune, Fuller & Drumm, 2023), its strong score indicates a comprehensive approach to a sustainable future. In that regard, we explore the primary advantages of this topic and the drawbacks that remain to be overcome.

Norway's energy sector is highly admired. Almost 99% of their electricity is generated from clean hydropower and wind power, resulting in a minimal carbon footprint (Statista Research Department, 2023). This means setting ambitious goals for reducing emissions that go beyond the commitments made in the Paris Agreement. Norway excels in responsible resource management by prioritising sustainable forestry techniques and promoting ecologically friendly practices in shipping and oil & gas development. In addition, they constantly increase green spaces such as parks and forests (OECD, 2017) and support the advancement of green technologies and are recognised as a prominent global provider to climate funding, aiding developing countries in combating climate change.

Nevertheless, despite Norway's evident accomplishments, obstacles still exist. Although they produce clean energy, CO₂ emissions persist from fossil fuel burning and cement manufacture. The carbon footprint associated with imports and exports presents a complicated issue (Norway Sustainable Development, 2021). This emphasises the complex interconnections in our globalised society when acts in one location can have widespread consequences.

Although facing these challenges, Norway remains on the right track. Their Carbon Pricing Score (Sachs et al., 2023). is steadily improving, indicating a proactive approach towards incentivising emission reduction. They actively invest in research and development of clean technologies, exploring carbon capture and storage and hydrogen fuel cells, paving the way for a cleaner future. Furthermore,

Norway's non-ETS transport emissions, as reported by the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment in 2020, now stand at 22 million tonnes of CO2. The goal is to cut this amount by 50% by the year 2030.

Overall, Norway proves the potential for strong climate action, showing that substantial advancements can be achieved. Their journey is still ongoing. Norway can strengthen its position as a prominent leader in promoting a sustainable future by recognising and tackling the remaining obstacles, which can serve as an inspiration for others to do the same.

SECTION 2. SPECCTRE ANALYSIS

The SPECCTRe analysis focuses on different environments that will affect Norway's strategy of becoming the global leader in SDG 13: Climate Action. Various issues that come from different environments are listed in the table below. This report will only mention some key insights and impacts for the Norwegian government.

	Growing public concern about climate change
Social	Migration due to climate impacts in some regions
200142	The opinions from traditional Norwegian industries
	Lobbying against stricter climate policies from fossil fuel-related industries
Political	Strong commitment to Paris Agreement
	International pressure to achieve climate goals
	Complex political landscape with upcoming election or global conflict
	Norway and EU establish Green Alliance
	Kyoto Protocol
Economic	Dependence on oil and gas exports
	Potential economic benefits from green technologies and investments
	The growth of global economy
	High GDP and living standards in Norway
Competitors	Leadership from other developed countries
5	Other country's green technology companies
Customers	International investors (attracting investment for green technologies)
	Developing countries (offering expertise and technology transfer)
	Consumers interested in environmental protection
Technology	Advancements in renewable energy and energy efficiency
	Carbon capture and storage (CSS) technologies
1 centiology	Digitalisation technology
	Green technologies that adapt climate change impacts

Regulatory

Carbon tax legislation for citizen

EU regulations on the green freight transportation

In terms of the **social, economic, technological,** and **customer** environment, the key issues for the Norwegian government are fossil fuel-related industries. Norway is the 4th largest exporter of natural gas globally. The fossil fuel industry accounts for 24% of Norway's GDP (U.S ITA, 2024), which, apparently, also benefits Norway's sovereign wealth fund, reaching a record high profit of USD 213 billion (Markets Group, 2024). However, due to the Norwegian economy's high reliance on fossil fuels, it is the biggest obstacle to Norway being the leader in climate action. Also, when considering mitigating the investment in oil and gas to fulfil the climate action goals, not only will the negative opinions derive from the relevant industries (Science Norway, 2024), but it will also affect the sovereign wealth fund, which indirectly impacts Norway's economy and people's living standards. Thus, in this situation, a way to maintain mutual benefits is to concentrate on investing in technology, both in mitigating carbon emissions in the production of oil and gas and in green technology, which can be exported to developing countries to help decrease their demand for oil and gas.

Although Norway is already the top 10 world leaders in climate action goals in 2023 (CCPI, 2024), to maintain its reputation, there will be pressure from **political**, **regulatory**, and **competitors** environments. These factors will largely impact the Norwegian government's future strategy planning. As exemplified by the strong commitment in the Paris Agreement, all member countries are required to make pledges of action every five years to lower their greenhouse gas emissions (MIT Climate Portal, 2021). Moreover, the pressure could come from different global green organisations or alliances, such as the Green Alliance established by Norway and the EU to strengthen their joint climate action, environmental protection efforts, and cooperation on the clean energy and industrial transition (Office of the Prime Minister, 2023). Additionally, some environmental regulations released by the EU, like green freight transportation (European Commission, 2023), could impact Norway's policies. On the other hand, the competitive relationship with other countries might lead to competition for resources such as cutting-edge technology in the green domain, which might cause conflicts globally. Under these external pressures, the key strategy is to find and adapt practical and useful solutions for climate change rather than idle theorising in numerous global agreements or entangling in unnecessary political issues without any actual actions.

In the **social** environment, the growing public concern about climate change is related to the **technology** and **regulatory** environment. When climate change becomes a general public awareness, the Norwegian government will be forced to speed up the digitalisation of infrastructure and enact relevant legislations, such as implementing carbon taxes or improving waste management. Moreover, the impacts of climate change on the Arctic Circle have influenced migration of Sami people in Norway (Brookings, 2024), consequently affecting some traditional Norwegian industries such as reindeer farming. However, investment in renewable energy also contributes to the impact on these traditional

industries, as noted by BNN Breaking (2024). Therefore, it is vital that Norwegian government adopt a comprehensive and thorough approach in decision-making to fulfil the climate goals. Failure to do so may lead to adverse effects.

SECTION 3. SWOT ANALYSIS

Norway's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are indicated in the table below.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strong financial resources and sovereign	Dependence on fossil fuels such as oil and
wealth fund	gas export
Advanced technological expertise and	Potential social and economic costs of
research capabilities in climate action	transitioning to a green economy
Existing renewable energy infrastructure and	Geographic/ cultural challenges for some
potential for further development	renewable energy sources (e.g., wind power)
Strong public support for climate action and	Regional disparities in climate change
high level of green awareness	impacts and hydro energy distribution
Opportunities	Threats
Exporting renewable energy expertise	Geopolitical instability and potential
following the increased global demand for	disruptions to energy markets
green technologies and solutions	Arctic ice melting may lead to rising sea
Joining international agreements can attract	levels and more frequent natural disasters.
investments, partnerships for innovation.	Unpredictable shifts in weather patterns and
Diversifying the economy and creating new	climate change, disrupting power supply.
jobs in the green sector	Negative impact of climate change policies
	on national economies

To identify areas for improvement or actions to formulate robust strategies, we utilise TWOS framework by considering four pairs S-O, S-T, W-O, W-T.

Norway can leverage their strengths to capitalise on external opportunities (S-O). Specifically, the country's sovereign wealth fund could be used to invest in renewable projects around the world and promote expertise to cultivate partnership. For instance, Norway government and the European Union established Green Alliance in 2022 to focus on climate change adoption and green transition (Minister, 2023). In addition, since Norway has experience with renewable energy infrastructure, Norway could share the knowledge with developing countries, offering consultancy and technology transfer, contributing to Target 13.3 (Build knowledge and capacity to meet climate change). This could also help attract talents and foster green technology innovation. Moreover, Norway's leadership in

international climate agreements and its citizens' high level of environmental awareness might attract foreign investment and facilitate diversification in green jobs.

Furthermore, Norway could develop strategies that leverage strengths to mitigate threats (S-T). Their strong financial resources and sovereign wealth fund can be used to invest in green energy projects and infrastructure upgrades. For example, Norway could allocate money from this fund to support the construction of new wind farms or solar installations. Investments in climate-resilient infrastructure, such as seawalls or flood defenses, could mitigate the potential impacts of rising sea levels and extreme weather events on coastal communities, aligning with Target 13.1. Furthermore, Norway's advanced technological expertise can be utilised by enforcing the collaboration between Norwegian researchers and engineers and local communities to design and implement smart grid systems that improve the efficiency and reliability of energy distribution. Additionally, investments in climate monitoring technologies, such as satellite-based sensors or weather forecasting models, can enhance early warning systems for extreme weather events, reducing the risk of disruptions to renewable energy operations.

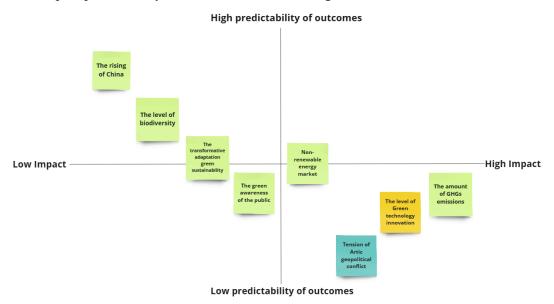
In terms of Weaknesses and Opportunities (W-O), although Norway is a major oil and gas producer and a net energy exporter (IEA, 2022), the country can leverage fossil fuel revenue by strategically allocating a portion of these funds for renewable energy projects. Also, Norway can take advantage of their expertise in green energy by exporting knowledge, technologies, and services to international markets to generate funds for renewable energy investment. This can help reduce reliance on fossil fuels over time while mitigating its economic impacts towards 2040. Moreover, Norway can address cultural challenges by engaging and collaborating with communities, involving them in the planning and decision-making processes for renewable energy projects. For example, the Fosen Vind wind farm in central Norway, part of Europe's largest onshore wind development, has affected the traditional pastures crucial for Sami people reindeer herding, threatening their culture and livelihood (Bloomberg, 2022; IWGIA, 2022). This demands Norwegian government to consider actions such as provide alternative lands to Sami people or dismantling the wind turbines. The development of renewable initiatives should not come under "green colonialism" or at the cost of local communities' rights and heritage.

Last but not least, it is imperative to develop strategies that minimise weaknesses to avoid potential threats. Norway could mitigate regional disparities through infrastructure investment and grid optimisation and develop alternatives such as solar power in those regions. Particularly, there is a lack of transmission capacity generated from hydropower from north to south, which results in large electricity price differences (IEA, 2022). By addressing this issue, Norway can enhance the efficiency and reliability of energy distribution, thereby averting potential disruptions to their energy market due to geopolitical events such as Russian – Ukraine war. Additionally, the government should actively promote and encourage local enterprises to undergo green transformation, raising national awareness of the green economy. It is crucial to ensure ample capital and support for the successful implementation

of green economic transformations and to mitigate negative effects when implementing climate change policies on national economies, especially for companies in the fossil fuel industry.

SECTION 4. SCENARIO ANALYSIS

The impact/predictability matrix is indicated in the figure below.



Based on the matrix, two clusters that have high impact and low predictability of their outcomes are 'Tension of Arctic geopolitical conflicts' and 'The level of green technology innovation'.

Scenario 1: High Geopolitical Conflicts – High Technology

Escalating tensions surrounding the strategically important Svalbard archipelago in the Arctic severely hindered Norway's climate change efforts. Russia, already voicing grievances against Norway's stricter environmental regulations on the archipelago and its refusal to acknowledge Norwegian jurisdiction in the fisheries protection zone (CsaP, 2023) years ago, exploited these vulnerabilities to undermine Norwegian sovereignty. This, in turn, accelerated the melting of Arctic ice, further opening up the region for resource extraction and raising the stakes in an already tense geopolitical environment. Despite innovations in high-tech renewable energy, such as offshore wind, geothermal, tidal energy technologies, and carbon capture and storage (CCS), which have helped alleviate the environmental impact of Arctic resource extraction, their militarisation in a high-conflict scenario has affected the fragile Arctic ecosystem. Despite Norway's advancements in green technology, its failure to effectively address the challenges posed by the high-conflict scenario by 2040 has led to its downgrading among top countries and the inability to become the leader in SDG13.

Scenario 2: High Geopolitical Conflicts - Low Technology

By 2040, the Arctic region finds itself embroiled in heightened geopolitical tensions with Svalbard, the strategically located archipelago under Norwegian jurisdiction, has been undermined by Russia due to Norway's implementation of stringent environmental regulations and Russia's refusal to acknowledge Norwegian jurisdiction of fisheries protection zone (CsaP, 2023) years ago. Consequently, this accelerated the melting of Arctic ice, opening up the region for resource extraction from others while exacerbating global warming. Research and development in green technologies, along with funding for climate action initiatives, were diverted towards military applications. The lack of significant innovation in green technology has hindered Norway's efforts to mitigate environmental degradation and transition towards sustainable practices. The combined effects of geopolitical instability and lagging tech innovation have pushed Norway further from its ambitious climate goals to lead in SDG13 during those years. International cooperation on climate action has also suffered due to heightened tensions, making it harder to address global challenges collectively.

Scenario 3: Low Geopolitical Conflicts – High Technology

A decrease in tension of Arctic geopolitical conflict would foster the harmony between Norway and its neighbouring countries. Indeed, the Norwegian government has accelerated the development of green technology, which diversified the economy and reduced reliance on fossil fuels. Moreover, the development of carbon capture and storage has reduced carbon emissions significantly, thereby enabling the country to meet its ambitious climate targets sooner, by 2050, according to the The Climate Change Act (Klimautvalget 2050, 2021). In addition, Norway became the chair of Arctic Council in 2023 and participated in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) in 2019, which facilitated joint research. Meanwhile, the cooperation attracted more investment and supported developing countries in infrastructure development and green transitioning in line with the Paris Agreement, thereby reducing carbon footprints by innovating renewable energy technology worldwide. Furthermore, Norway has helped developing countries build knowledge and capacity to meet climate change with their expertise and high technology innovation, fostering their leadership in SDG13 by 2040.

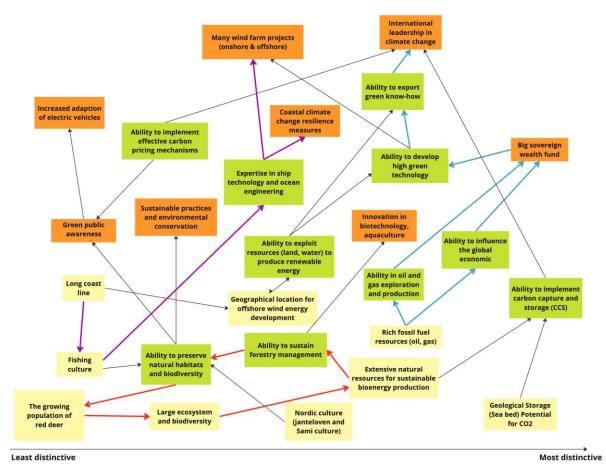
Scenario 4: Low Geopolitical Conflicts – Low Technology

With low tension in Arctic geopolitical conflicts, there was less pressure on Norway's offshore oil and gas exploration and production activities, which was beneficial to Norway's export-oriented economy. However, as the world has moved towards a low-carbon society due to climate change, Norway's oil and gas revenue has suffered, affecting the country's sovereign wealth fund and future investment prospects. Conversely, reducing military spending for Artic conflict freed up resources for green initiatives and international cooperation on climate change, aligning with Norway's green goals. This has led to increased cooperation with other Arctic nations, such as Denmark and Finland, in resource exploration and environmental protection efforts. However, without significant green technology innovation, the transition away from fossil fuels was slower, impacting the environment negatively and postponing climate targets. Furthermore, Norway has missed opportunities associated

with developing and exporting green technologies, diminishing its influence in global sustainable development initiatives and leadership in green technology by 2040.

SECTION 5. DISTINCTIVE COMPETENCE

Norway's assets, competences and competence outcomes are presented in the figure below.



The key links discussed in this report are highlighted in red, blue, and purple colours in the figure.

Regarding the relationship highlighted in red, one of Norway's most important distinctive aspects is its tremendous green resources for the generation of sustainable green energy, which are backed up by the country's excellent ecology and biodiversity. For example, Norway, in terms of wind energy, aims to have 30 GW of offshore wind capacity, putting it at the forefront of the world's renewable energy generation per capita by 2040 (International Trade Administration, 2022). As a result, Norway has the ability to provide support to their forestry organisation while simultaneously monitoring the maintenance of trees and natural resources which globally benefit in terms of climate change. Furthermore, this competence supports the ability to conserves habitat and the environment in order to produce enormous diversity in their country. For example, they can achieve this by expanding the population of red deer, which are part of enormous ecosystems and biodiversity as well.

In terms of the mapping with blue arrows, as a country with a rich resource of fossil fuels, particularly oil and gas, Norway was the world's 5th largest oil (European Parliament, 2023) and 8th largest natural gas exporter (U.S. ITA, 2024) in 2023. This experience also shows that Norway has excellent capabilities in oil and gas exploration and production. Thus, this unique asset gives Norway the ability to indirectly influence the global economy by utilising the revenue from it and also helps them establish the sovereign wealth fund. Based on this financial strength, Norway has the capability to develop advanced green technology and further aligns to foster sustainable practices. In 2022, Norway's climate finance budget is raised to about \$1.4 billion (Bloomberg, 2023), giving them great potential to develop technology related to climate action. As the country with the most renewable energy sources in the world, it achieves a very high position in that category (CCPI, 2024). Thus, based on the above-mentioned competences, these provide opportunities for Norway to export its green know-how to other countries, contributing to the global effort to mitigate climate impacts and becoming the international leader in climate change actions.

Finally, the purple arrows illustrate about how Norway expertise in offshore and marine innovations. Firstly, Norway's exceptionally long coastline, exceeding 83,000 kilometres when factoring in fjords and islands, intricately shapes its fishing culture. This vast and diverse marine environment provides abundant fishing grounds, fostering traditional fishing practices and shaping a deep connection between Norwegians and the sea. From cod fishing in the north to salmon fishing in the south, the long coastline has not only sustained Norwegians for centuries, but also played a crucial role in their cultural identity and economic development. According to this, Norway is well-known for its expertise in naval architecture, ocean and marine engineering and the Norwegians' involvement with the marine ecosystem has led to the gradual the development of extensive knowledge and advanced technical proficiency in the development and operation of marine equipment, as well as the managerial skills required to run their ocean industries. According to this, their innovation and technologies are able to prepare and protect coastal communities and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change, particularly rising sea levels, stronger storms, and erosion which Norway constantly increases funding of marine protected areas (Affairs, 2023). Moreover, this increasing both on-shore and off-shore wind energy projects. This ambitious target is backed by concrete steps, including designated areas for largescale projects and the world's biggest floating wind farm, Hywind Tampen, already operational (www.equinor.com, 2023).

SECTION 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our analysis of Norway's efforts towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 13: Climate Action reveals both commendable achievements and persistent challenges, alongside potential threats or impacts from external environments and uncertain events that could happen in the future. Norway stands as a pillar of progress in sustainable development with many strengths, such as their strong

finance, advanced expertise and infrastructure in renewable technologies, boasting a highly acclaimed energy sector predominantly powered by clean hydropower. Also, their commitment to responsible resource management, coupled with investments in green technologies and strong public support and awareness, underscores their dedication to mitigating climate change.

However, despite these accomplishments, Norway has certain weakness and faces multifaceted challenges, notably stemming from its reliance on fossil fuel industries. The complexity of transitioning away from these industries while maintaining economic stability poses a significant obstacle. Moreover, external pressures, such as geopolitical tensions in the Arctic and the global competitiveness in green technology innovation, add layers of uncertainty to Norway's path towards climate leadership.

It is realised that it is more comprehensive to utilise different approaches, including SPECCTRe, SWOT, scenario analysis and competence mapping during the planning process to formulate robust strategies. Strengths could be leveraged to overcome weaknesses or mitigate threats, along with considering different environments such as social, political or technology. Moreover, certain scenarios could be mitigated by distinctive competences, for example, their ability in high green technology could guarantee a high level of green technology innovation towards 2040. However, some assets or competences, such as a long coastline and expertise in ocean engineer, could relate to conflicts around the geopolitically strategic Svalbard in the Arctic.

Based on the findings, some recommendations for Norway to further accelerate and enhance its leadership in climate change action are given. First, the country could invest more in advanced green technology and energy by allocating resources towards research and development in these areas to enhance resilience against geopolitical conflicts, natural disasters, or disruptions caused by extreme weather events and accelerate the transition towards sustainable practices faster. Moreover, Norway can continue to foster partnerships with other nations and international organisations to leverage expertise and resources in addressing global climate challenges. Engaging in diplomatic efforts to mitigate geopolitical tensions in the Arctic region and promote cooperation on climate action initiatives.

In essence, it is imperative for Norway to continue its proactive approach towards climate action, addressing the remaining obstacles while capitalising on its strengths. Embracing international collaboration, fostering innovation, and prioritising sustainable practices will be crucial in solidifying Norway's position as a leader in climate change mitigation towards SDG13 through 2040.

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