



## Assessing the success of environmental policy integration in Norway

### What is the issue?

Both in a national and global context, it is challenging to identify key conditions for the integration of sustainable tourism as well as evidence of integration in public policy. Literature on sustainable tourism could gain new insights if it applied a more systematic analytical approach to understanding how and why certain policies come to dominate over others. This approach is called Environmental Policy Integration (EPI).

This article analyses a number of planning processes dealing with tourism development (mostly) taking place in Sogn og Fjordane County, located in the fjord region of Western Norway; an area described by several commentators as particularly 'sustainable'.

### What did the researcher do?

Through case analysis, the concept of Environmental Policy Integration (EPI) was applied. The researchers studied a number of recent and on-going planning processes pertaining to tourism development in Norway and how sustainability may or may not be integrated into tourism planning. Four cases were examined including: an international cruise port, second homes, a national park and a destination promoting sustainable tourism. This research addresses two research questions

- (1) To what extent, and in what ways, is EPI present in current tourism development processes?
- (2) What conditions may hinder, as well as stimulate, EPI integration in tourism development processes?

### Why is this research useful?

Public participation has changed the outcome of planning processes by strengthening the voice of the public in planning processes studied. This analysis of these case studies how environmental policy integration could be used to achieve more sustainable tourism. The case studies also assist in policy learning and change at all three levels of government.

### What were the outcomes?

Integration has taken place, to some extent, in all the cases studied in Norway. First, the definition of sustainable tourism in Norway is conflicting in its approach. Second, there is a weak structure for evaluating overall tourism policy integration. Third, the local integration process has created a situation in which economic concerns tend to trump social and environmental concerns. Fourth, there is a weak structure for tourism policy making. This study could not find any evidence for the announced shift from a sector approach to an integrated approach to sustainable tourism.

### About the Researcher

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### Keywords

Environmental Policy Integration, Sustainable tourism, Tourism infrastructure planning, Norway.

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