



Nordic Council
of Ministers

Nordic Visions of Climate Neutrality



Contents

Nordic visions of a climate neutral society	3
Visions as a driver for change	7
Transition or transformation?	10
Characteristics of the climate neutral society	13
Everyday life in the climate neutral society	33
Recommendations for the Nordic Council of Ministers	45
Appendix 1: Interview guide	47
Appendix 2: List of interviewees	50
Sources and references	52
About this publication	54

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<https://pub.norden.org/nord2023-038>



1



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Nordic visions of a climate neutral society

Keeping global average temperatures to well below 2 °C and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C requires rapid transformation across all societies and all sectors^[1] and it is unlikely that technical solutions alone will be enough. Thus, the latest UN Gap Report (2022) called for *“wide-ranging, large-scale, rapid and systemic transformation”*^[2]. This will result in changes to our society and in the everyday lives of citizens. How we reach climate neutrality and what a climate neutral society looks like is a question of many types of choices – societal, political, and personal – however all too often we forget to think about what we gain from choosing one path over the other, while focusing on what we might lose, thus experiencing inability and unwillingness to act.

Sociological research has shown the need for visions in managing transformational shifts – describing how expectations of the future shape processes of social change in the present^[3]. For example, sociological research on consumption has shown that lifestyle changes are *“just as much about changes to meanings, norms and ideas about what ‘a good life’ is as they are about access to the necessary competences, infrastructures and sustainable alternatives”*^[4].

This report is meant as a starting point for further discussion about positive visions of climate neutrality in the Nordic countries – and globally. From citizens to politicians, we all need to start thinking about what “a good life” means in a climate neutral world.

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1. IPCC (2022). *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change. Contribution of Working Group III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [P.R. Shukla, J. Skea, R. Slade, A. Al Khourdajie, R. van Diemen, D. McCollum, M. Pathak, S. Some, P. Vyas, R. Fradera, M. Belkacemi, A. Hasija, G. Lisboa, S. Luz, J. Malley, (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA. Retrieved from: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-3/>
 2. United Nations Environment Programme (2022). *Emissions Gap Report 2022: The Closing Window - Climate Crisis Calls for Rapid Transformation of Societies*. Retrieved from: <https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2022>
 3. Jensen, C. L., Oldin, F. & Andersen, G. (2022). *Imagining and co-creating futures of sustainable consumption and society*. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1332/XQUM7064>
 4. Mandich, G. (2017). *Why sociology needs anticipation?* In: Poli, R. (eds) *Handbook of Anticipation*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31737-3_65-1

It is also an attempt to demystify the concept of climate neutrality. What kinds of positive changes could it imply for citizens? And why is it worth striving for? These are important questions that have not been fully answered yet. Partly because there is no single answer to any of them. And partly because the dominant climate neutrality narrative has focused on technical aspects of the green transition and the necessity of urgent action.

Based on interviews conducted across the Nordic countries, Nordic visions of the climate neutral society could be visions of a society in balance, environmentally and socially. It could be visions about a healthier society, with strong, local communities. It could be visions of a Nordic society with a global mindset and with more spare time. It could be visions of a new, climate friendly economy, a smarter society, and a society with inclusive democracy and long-term policies. These are the elements described in the report.

1.1. The context of this report

This report is one of two main deliverables of the project "Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to Climate Neutrality", conducted by the organizations CONCITO, CICERO, IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute, University of Iceland, Reykjavik University, and Tyrsky Consulting for the Nordic Council of Ministers. In other parts of this project, the consortium has taken stock of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the Nordic countries and described and assessed the national pathways towards climate neutrality in the Nordic region (covering Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden).

The project is part of the initiative "Climate transition in the Nordics" to support the Nordic Vision 2030. The overall aim of the Nordic Vision is to become the most sustainable and integrated region in the world by 2030. All co-operation in the Nordic Council of Ministers must serve this purpose. The objectives of the vision include to strengthen research and development and the promotion of solutions that support climate neutrality and climate adaptation. The work of the Nordic Council of Ministers should also contribute to the positive development of international co-operation on the environment and climate, such as by promoting Nordic green solutions in the rest of the world.

1.2. Methodology

The visions of a climate neutral Nordic society described in this paper have been derived from 23 interviews with experts and thought leaders across the Nordic countries. The names of interviewees are available in Appendix 2. In selecting the interviewees, we have tried to ensure representation in perspectives across the Nordic region with regards to different backgrounds, occupations, sectors, gender, and age. This report does not reflect all potential views and visions of a future climate neutral society and should thus be read as a starting point for discussion.

In the interviews, the interviewees have been asked to describe *their* vision of a climate neutral Nordic society and what characterizes this society^[5]. As such, the views of interviewees do not represent their organizations, workplaces, or any other affiliations they might have. It is also important to note that achieving climate neutrality has been a premise for the interviews and thus the resulting themes and visions.

The interviews have been supplemented by material from talks and discussions at the Nordic Pavilion during COP27^[6]. However, most of the analysis have been conducted on the interview data collected in this project.

When doing the analysis, the interview data was translated to English and anonymized. Quotes from the interviews carried out in this project are thus also anonymized. This was done in order to the interviewees to be able to fully express their opinions.

The insights from the interviews were discussed at a virtual workshop with participation from the project team and many of the interviewees. The recommendations outlined in the last chapter in this report were the primary outcomes of the workshop.

The project team would like to thank the experts and thought leaders who chose to participate in the project and share their visions of a climate neutral Nordic society. Special thanks go to those experts and thought leaders who also found the time to participate in the virtual workshop and the discussions on realizing the potential co-benefits of a climate neutral Nordic society.

5. The interview guide can be found in Appendix 1.

6. YouTube: 10 highlights from the Nordic Pavilion at COP27 (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRzSENBt6RqIHU5K1Y551JhoWGyebhKmg>)

1.3. Reader's guide

Based on the qualitative data from the interviews, a range of topics/themes have been identified. The report is structured around these topics.

After two introductory chapters about the role of visions and the degree of change, respectively, the first part of the report covers a set of potential, broad characteristics of the climate neutral society:

Characteristics of the climate neutral society

- A society in social and environmental balance
- A healthier society
- A society with more spare time
- A society with strong, local communities
- A society with a global mindset
- A smarter society
- An inclusive democracy with long-term policies
- A new just and climate-friendly economy

The second part of the report focuses on the potential changes in the everyday life of Nordic citizens:

Everyday life in the climate neutral society

- Housing
- Food
- Transportation
- Consumption



Photos: iStock and Jens Dresling, Ritzau Scanpix

Visions as a driver for change

There is no single solution or single vision.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

Just as there are multiple pathways towards climate neutrality, there are a multitude of different visions of what the climate neutral society could and/or should look like. As will be evident throughout this report, some visions depict a society that closely resembles the one we know today – just greener and smarter. Other visions describe societies radically different from current ones. All these different visions are valid and the variation between them constitutes a good starting point for a societal dialogue on how we would like a climate neutral society to look.

What does a good life look like for a regular middle-class person in 25 years? When it comes to questions like that it is difficult to not get bogged down by fear of what such a life could look like. But I think that's really what we need ... to have something to strive towards, and also something to be excited about, the opportunities that these transitions can give to our lives.

Emma Holten, discussions at COP27 in the Nordic Pavilion

In the green transition, countries that have the tools, know-how and institutional and financial capacity must step up and lead by example. The Nordic countries fulfill these criteria. But leading by example is not just about providing feasible pathways towards climate neutrality. It is also about contributing to a positive, global narrative about climate neutrality and the opportunities for achieving increased human well-being in the process.

We are way too afraid of talking about goals – about how we would like things to be.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

Visions and goals can help us maintain hope for a better future – despite the multiple crises we are currently facing. Positive visions can create buy-in from citizens and decision-makers and can highlight the elements of change that we need to start addressing now to achieve the vision.

The process of "visioning" also helps building future resilience in a society. Future resilience is the "capacity to live and develop with change and uncertainty (...)^[7]" and we need it to navigate the many pathways to climate neutrality and their uncertainties.

Getting the narrative right is the biggest challenge.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

7. Rockström, J., Norström, A.V., Matthews, N. et al. (2023). *Shaping a resilient future in response to COVID-19*. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-023-01105-9>

Humans tend to prefer the status quo and are inherently skeptical towards change^[8]. This is why positive narratives of the necessary changes are key. A positive narrative can act as an enabler for climate change action while the lack of narrative – or even worse, a negative narrative – makes people disconnect and avoid the issue rather than act on it^[9]. Research shows that catastrophic scenarios of climate change can overwhelm people, prompting apathy or depression^[10].

Another aspect to consider is the need to envision a future that encompasses other regions as well. In the Nordic region, we have a strong Nordic identity and a lot of things in common, but we live in an interconnected world, and our actions in the Nordic region have impacts on people around the world. In the Nordic region, we have the capacity to begin a dialogue on positive narratives on what it means to live in a climate neutral future, but those narratives also need to be appealing to other regions and other parts of the world.

We will all appreciate it once we're there. We just are not all ready to take those steps, you know, and why are we not ready? Because we're not presented with a vision and a plan. If you don't see the end goal, why would you start running?

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

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8. Lang, C. et al (2021). *Status quo bias and public policy: evidence in the context of carbon mitigation*. Retrieved from: <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abeeb0/meta>
 9. Suttie, J. (2018). *How to overcome "Apocalypse Fatigue" around climate change*. In: The Greater Good Magazine, University of California, Berkeley. Retrieved from: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_overcome_apocalypse_fatigue_around_climate_change
 10. Moser, S. C. & Dilling, L. (2007). *Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change*. Cambridge University Press, USA.



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Photos: Niclas Jessen and Line Ørnes Søndergaard, Ritzau Scanpix

Transition or transformation?

The visions expressed in the interviews can be arranged on a scale from incremental change to radical change. In this report, we will refer to this scale as a question of transition versus transformation. The different viewpoints will be briefly described below.



The change will not be big for most people.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*



Some visions of the climate neutral Nordic society describe a future that is very recognizable – with societies very similar to the existing ones in the Nordic countries. Some things will have changed on the path towards climate neutrality, for example continuing existing developments in electrifying transport, production processes and the circular economy, and how we sort and manage waste, but most things are the same – simply decarbonized.

For the individual, change will not be perceived as extreme nor abrupt. It will be a gradual transition, where technological advancements and implementation of existing solutions will help us achieve climate neutrality. It is also a transition that to a large degree does not require individual sacrifices on how we live and act.

In this vision, change towards a climate neutral future will feel natural. There will inevitably be resistance to change but after a certain period of time, people will ask themselves: was it ever any different? We might see changes from owning to sharing, renting and buying services in e.g. housing and mobility. And digital platforms may enable changes in markets. Some jobs will have been replaced or changed, maybe as a cause of developments in AI and similar technology. But the majority of the changes will only have made it easier for the individual.

It is a transformation, not only a transition. It requires rethinking.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

At the opposite end of the scale, we no longer talk about a transition but instead a transformation to a different society. In these visions, we have changed fundamental aspects about our society on the path towards climate neutrality. Transformation – as opposed to transition – would require larger sacrifices and implies disruptive changes. But these short-term changes and disruptions have allowed us to realize a host of other benefits in the process. The co-benefits will be described in further detail throughout this report. In this perspective, climate change is only one out of a range of reasons for the transformation towards a climate neutral society.

The transformation could be a transformation away from things that are destructive to the planet and human well-being and towards things that are much more conducive to human well-being. In this society, products are not just produced, transported, used, and re-used in a climate neutral way, it is also a society where the sustainable choice is the default and easy choice.

The focus should shift towards these fundamental, radical systemic transitions that we will need in the next couple of years if we are really serious about curbing the trend ... about going to a planet that will stay livable in an equitable way.

Hans Bruyninckx, discussions at COP27 in the Nordic Pavilion

In a more transformative version of the vision of the Nordic climate neutral society, we have taken a holistic and systemic approach to achieving climate neutrality. We have recognized that social and environmental goals are indivisible and connected. In the understanding that we needed to do things differently, the transformation became a drive for innovation and development.

Despite this transformation implying radical change compared to today, it will not necessarily be conceived as radical. Many of the habits that structure our everyday life today have not been around for very long and as such, they are all changeable. This is often forgotten. And since the transformation that these visions describe is also a learning process, we will not think back on it as a process of radical change. More as a natural change towards a better society.

In this vision, the core values of society are different compared to today. They will have been reevaluated in the transformation towards climate neutrality. Markers of success and wealth might be very different. It might be less about material wealth and material consumption and more about social wealth and consumption of experiences and less resource intensive services. As such, the transformation would entail a cultural social transition where we revalue what we think is important in life.

Everyone's just waiting for a technical solution to save us ... so we can just continue to make more, produce more, to consume more, to travel more, without having to let go of anything.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

When you think of society in a climate neutral future, how different is that society from the one you currently live in?



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Photos: iStock

Characteristics of the climate neutral society

The sections in this chapter outline the themes and elements that were repeated throughout the interview process.

In summary, a vision of a climate neutral Nordic society could be described as:

- A society in social and environmental balance.
- A healthier society.
- A society with more spare time.
- A society with strong, local communities.
- A society with a global mindset.
- A smarter society.
- An inclusive democracy with long-term policies.
- A new just and climate-friendly economy.

How many of these elements are also part of **YOUR VISION** of the climate neutral Nordic society?

Which of these elements are the most important in **your vision** of the climate neutral Nordic society?

To me, a climate neutral society in the Nordics would be a just and equitable society.

Interview in the project Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality



4.1. A society in social and environmental balance

Balance could be an important element in a vision of a climate neutral Nordic society. It could imply balance in many aspects of society, e.g. a better work-life balance (see also the section on “A society with more time”), a better balance between rich and poor, and a better balance between humans and nature.

In a climate neutral Nordic society in balance, we could leverage the synergies between environmental policies and social policies. We might be able to eradicate poverty. It could be a more equal society, where we – to ensure buy-in from all citizens – have emphasized equality and the just and fair transition as a core part of the pathway towards climate neutrality. Justice, fairness, and equality could be both a means and an end to a vision for the climate neutral Nordic region.

Balance could also imply a better global balance – between countries. It is also a question of security. Can we have a safe Nordic region in a world without global balance?

Climate neutrality is about balance. To not consume more than one Earth can sustain.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

Besides social balance, a climate neutral Nordic society could also embrace environmental balance – beyond achieving a balance between greenhouse gas emissions and removals.

It could be a society in better balance with nature. A society where biodiversity thrives. And to be fully balanced, it would be a society where we stay within the planetary boundaries and have stopped overexploiting natural resources. It could be a society with significantly more nature and with easier access to nature for many Nordic citizens to allow them to spend more time in nature and feel more connected to the nature around them. In this vision, nature would also be more present in cities.

It's not just about climate, it's also about biodiversity and the other planetary boundaries. We need to think across these areas and find sustainable solutions that are both benefiting biodiversity and climate and other things as well.

Nadia Gullestrup Andersen, discussions at COP27 at the Nordic Pavilion

This is a society where we recognize that nature requires care in order to keep the balance. In this vision, nature is not something that just provides humanity with resources. It is something we respect, care for, and protect, and we understand the relationship between the parts in the entire ecosystem.

Maybe it is also a society where humans do not have full access to nature. There might be areas reserved solely for nature and biodiversity.

In this vision, nature-based solutions and holistic climate change and environmental policy were a central part of pathways towards climate neutrality. We recognized that the climate- and biodiversity crises needed to be addressed together and not separately. As such, it is also a vision of multifunctionality. Of how land-use can be used for multiple purposes simultaneously, e.g. combined community food production and biodiversity in peri-urban areas.

There is always something that interrupts the good intentions. Green education gives us long-term perspectives.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

A balanced society is closely connected with who we are as humans. How we have been raised. And which values we were taught in school.

A Nordic vision of a climate neutral society could also be a vision of an educational system that supports the path towards climate neutrality. Green education could both be an important driver on the road towards climate neutrality and a core part of the climate neutral society.

In this vision, the educational system teaches people about the importance of nature and how to interact with it and how we need to rethink existing habits and invent new ones. It could also be an educational system with more time spent outside, classes dedicated to learning craft skills and on understanding materials and material use.

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- Would you like a future climate neutral society to be more equal?
- How important is nature and your relation to nature in your vision?
- In your opinion, what should be the role of the education system in the climate neutral society and the road towards it?

If we can escape the culture of increased consumption and economic growth, we will have more time and more focus on people's wellbeing.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*



4.2. A healthier society

In the climate neutral society, people could have a higher quality of life and more well-being. This involves improved mental and physical health facilitated by the initiatives we took on the path towards climate neutrality. For example, it is not difficult to imagine a cleaner world with less pollution and better air quality because we have decarbonized the economy and the means of transportation.

In this vision, health is a major co-benefit of reaching climate neutrality. The different initiatives and policies implemented on the path towards climate neutrality had an explicit health dimension. Maybe we implemented policies to change the production and consumption of food, which again had the purpose of improving our health. Maybe we redesigned our economy to ensure more equality or equity between individuals and their incomes, which again enabled people to make more healthy choices and engage in more healthy lifestyles. Maybe more leisure time also resulted in people engaging a lot more in physical activities, supported by active mobility schemes that make people and citizens move around more

The only pathway to a safe landing is also a prosperous, an equitable and attractive landing. It's a pathway that gives us a more modern civilization, which also has better equity, better security, better economic development and better health outcomes.

Johan Rockström, discussion at COP27 in the Nordic Pavilion

In terms of mental health, the people in the climate neutral society could experience less worry and anxiety. Partly due to having reached climate neutrality by itself – e.g. less worry about extreme climate events, about what is going to happen - but also partly due to the type of society, one could envision this to be – e.g. a society with less stress and more time to spend on friends and family. The vision of better mental health in a climate neutral society is thus closely connected with elements such as “more time” and “social and environmental balance” (see respective sections) and changes in our everyday life (see chapter “*Everyday life in the climate neutral society*”).

I think it's going to move back to what is actually making us happier as humans. I think we will completely reevaluate what in reality gives us quality of life.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

Furthermore, in this society, we might no longer be burdened by bad conscience of our lifestyle choices (in one of the interviews stated as “*subtle self-hatred for your lifestyle and consumption*”) since we live in a society where sustainable choices are the default. In this future, being sustainable is no longer something the consumer needs to worry about. It might be a society where our core values have changed profoundly. Values such as individualism, profit, and productivity might have been replaced by a sense of community, empathy, gratefulness, and appreciation.

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- Is improved health and well-being an important part of your vision of the climate neutral society?
- How would you measure your happiness in a climate neutral society?



The best thing about the climate neutral society? It's that you have more time.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*



4.3. A society with more spare time

"More spare time" could be an important element in a Nordic vision of the climate neutral society. This involves having more time to spend with friends and family and having more time to spend on experiences and culture – or whatever it is that constitutes a valuable use of time for the individual.

A climate neutral society with more time is appealing as a response to today's often stressful society. For some, the vision of a climate neutral society could be a vision of a society where the tempo has been lowered. A society where there is less stress and pressure on the individual. As such, the notion of "more spare time" is closely linked to better mental and physical health.

The notion of time is also linked to consumption patterns and work. In a vision of the climate neutral society where we consume less, an individual might also need to work less and thus there is more time to spend outside of work. In this society, technology could also be enabler by allowing us to work smarter and more efficiently.

Time is also important for our transportation habits. One could imagine a climate neutral society where we have more time and thus less need for "fast" modes of transportation. Maybe blimps and electric ferries will replace flights in the international transport system in a climate neutral future? It could also imply a change towards more shared forms of transportation (see section on *Transportation*).

Realizing a climate neutral society with "more spare time" is not something that happens naturally in the process towards climate neutrality. The transformation to the vision of a climate neutral society with more time would entail a reevaluation of our

core values: from consumption and earnings as a marker of success to success measured in terms of what we spend our time on and who we spend it with. It could be a future where we spend much more time on our children and our fellow human beings, resulting in a culture of empathy and compassion.

Furthermore, in the Nordic countries and beyond, we might have to solve the demographic issue of falling fertility rates combined with a longer lifespan. When the share of elderly in the population increases relatively to the working age population, this puts pressure on the younger in the population to work harder and more efficiently – unless we decide to do things markedly different in terms of consumption and production patterns.

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- Would you like to have more spare time in a climate neutral society?
- What would you spend the time on?
- What would you be willing to give up to have more spare time?

Neighbourhoods have now become more of a central part of people's lives.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*



4.4. A society with strong, local communities

An important element of a Nordic vision of a climate neutral society could be stronger, local communities. This could be something that happens naturally as part of the path towards climate neutrality as we get together to solve the crisis – or it could be a change furthered by potential developments in other sectors. Developments such as more localized food production (see section "*Food*"), markedly different consumption patterns with more sharing of products (see "*Consumption*"), less time spent at work and more time to invest in your local community (see "*A society with more spare time*"), and less travelling (see "*Transportation*").

In this vision, the local community is where people spend most of their time and their resources. People help each other out more and look after their neighbors and their children. It could be a society with local environments more conducive to human health and well-being as more time and effort is invested into these environments.

Products and food could be produced more locally as we experience homeshoring of previously global supply chains. We might see small scale energy production facilities in the local area tailored to the local community.

It is likely not a society where everything is produced locally. There will likely still be global supply chains and global trade in certain areas of the economy but with the circular economy, more expensive transport and more local food production, the need and desire for global supply chains will be lessened.

Local communities will flourish in the climate neutral society.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

In a Nordic vision of the climate neutral society, strong local communities could enable a larger degree of sharing, e.g. in terms of collective housing, producing food together, sharing means of transportation, and having access to for example communal tools and appliances.

In this vision, luxury is primarily something that is shared between people. One example could be access to good public swimming pools versus having a private swimming pool.

Communities could also be important bottom-up enablers for reaching climate neutrality, illustrating that different ways of living are possible and desirable.

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- Would you like to spend more time and effort in your local community?
- How important is your local community for you in your vision of the climate neutral society?



Photo: Andreas Omvik/ norden.org

It's so important in my view that we all become better at thinking as world citizens.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*



4.5. A society with a global mindset

The previous section described a vision of the Nordic climate neutral society characterized by more emphasis on the local area and local communities. In a positive vision of the climate neutral Nordic society, this does not imply that the Nordic countries isolate themselves from the rest of the world. Instead, the climate neutral Nordic society could be characterized by being locally rooted but with a global mindset.

Global collaboration has not disappeared in the climate neutral society. But it might be different and set up to ensure a more equal distribution of resources globally.

In this vision, well-being in one region is tied to well-being in another region. The Nordic region would be characterized by global solidarity, increased integration and collaboration and open and honest communication with other parts of the world.

It might be a society where we see more collective, global effort towards reducing emissions and adapting to a changing climate, and more global volunteering in places strongly impacted by climate change.

In this vision, the world will also be a safer place. Lack of global collaboration might lead to migration, wars, and conflicts with both direct and indirect consequences for the Nordic region.

We've also made sure to collaborate a lot more with regions of the world that are less fortunate, that are bearing a lot more of the consequences of climate change than we are.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- What role does the rest of the world (not your country/local area) play in your vision of the climate neutral society?
- What do you associate with "global solidarity"?

Behavioral changes will be less important than technological changes.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*



4.6. A smarter society

Technology and technological advancements will play a large role in the climate neutral society and the path towards it. The question is – how large?

One could envision a society that is a lot more digital and “smarter” than our current one. Smarter in terms of technological breakthroughs in how we optimize our use of energy, how we transport ourselves, how we produce food, etc.

It could be a future where advancements in artificial intelligence liberate resources and time – with large impacts on e.g. working life. It could be that technology, AI and automation results in people will losing their jobs – but allows them to find purpose and meaning in other activities, e.g. volunteering and helping out in their local communities (see section “*A society with strong, local communities*”). Maybe a lot of jobs will instead be created in circular industries.

The “smarter” climate neutral society could provide people with some of things we might have had to give up to achieve climate neutrality. Maybe digital solutions can provide experiences in a future where travel has gotten more expensive.

The vision of the climate neutral society could also be of a future where technological advancements in e.g. carbon capture and storage have helped us reach climate neutrality but where we have also significantly changed our behaviour in parallel.

The tech industry will have a certain part to play. But it will be a smaller role than we expect. The changes in climate neutral society will be more at the societal level rather than the technical level.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

How large a role does technology and digital solutions play in your vision of the climate neutral society? And in which areas?

Quite often we create this false dichotomy. Should you be talking about 2030 or should you be talking about 2050 or 2040? It's the same thing.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*



4.7. An inclusive democracy with long-term policies

A natural part of forming a vision of a climate neutral society is thinking about how decisions are made and by whom.

One could envision a future where politicians and decision-makers are more focused on long-term planning. In this vision, short-term political initiatives are aligned with and support long-term societal goals. This is especially relevant for natural resource and land-use management.

Visions are an important part of politics in this scenario. They set the long-term targets and describe the reasons for trying to reach them. Politicians ask themselves and their voters: What is the dream society and how do we get there?

Need to focus on back-casting, where you focus on the vision, you focus on the destination and then you work your way back. What needs to be true today for this to happen in 2040 or 2050?

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

It could entail a brush-up of the political system, specifically with regards to breaking down silos and ensuring knowledge sharing and transparency across government branches – and from government to businesses and civil society. It could also entail a more participatory form of democracy, with more decision-making power to local, direct democratic organizations (e.g. citizen assemblies or similar). This furthermore could ensure that everyone is involved in the transition, could address political polarization, and could be a central part in ensuring a just and fair transition.

In this vision, climate policy is also closely linked to most other policy areas. Politics are thus concerned with harvesting and promoting synergies between policy areas and with a holistic view on positive/negative consequences of political decisions, e.g. in a planetary boundaries framework.

Finally, a vision of a climate neutral society could also be about more transparency and disclosure in politics. It could be a society with more clarity on the intentions of political actors; better disclosure on lobbying activities; and better sharing of information between all levels of society.

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- Does the political system function the same way as now or has it been changed?
- Would you like to have the chance to be more involved in political matters – local/regional/national?

We need to change our economic system and laws to not be profit-oriented but centered around well-being and sustainability.

Maija Kuivalainen, discussions at COP27 in the Nordic Pavilion



4.8. A new just and climate-friendly economy

New economic models, especially in relation to the climate crisis, is a topic that has received a lot of attention in recent years, notably lately also in the EU^[11]. A new or changed economy could thus also be a part of the vision of a climate neutral society.

Changes could entail everything from consistent taxation on greenhouse gas emissions and pollution to a radically different economic system. It would likely be an economy with decoupling of growth and emissions – and maybe it is an economic system where monetary growth is no longer the goal. Instead, it could be a well-being economy with the individual's well-being valued higher than monetary gains.

It could be an economic system where the prices of goods and services fully reflect the negative, environmental externalities of producing the good/service. In this vision, ecosystem services are also monetized, rewarding landowners who create and maintain natural carbon sinks, biodiversity areas or similar. This could create a new source of income for a lot of people.

It could also be an economic system that encourages redistribution and thus ensures a just and fair transition and a just and fair climate neutral society.

11. <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC133716>

"The transition is not just from one energy system to another, it's also a transition from one economic system to another.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- What does the economic system look like in your vision of the climate neutral society?
- What is the biggest change from the economic system of today?



Photos: Arla and iStock

Everyday life in the climate neutral society

This section of the report describes how four areas of everyday life could look in a climate neutral Nordic society. The four areas are: Housing, Food, Transportation, and Consumption. These four areas cover a large part of the everyday life of the citizen. The categories are inspired by similar work conducted by the Hot or Cool Institute^[12].

As with the previous section, the ideas and thoughts are gleaned from the interviews and supplemented with material from the discussions in the Nordic Pavilion at COP27.

Maybe we will see new, shared and communal forms of housing, with more shared spaces for social activities.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

5.1. Housing

In a vision of the climate neutral society, houses and apartments are likely smarter and more energy efficient, curbing emissions from this sector. One vision of the climate neutral society could be about urbanization and more liveable cities. In this vision, cities might be denser, with taller buildings, but with more public parks. Public infrastructure and access to essential services might be improved and more efficient, removing some (or all) of the need for private cars and car-necessary infrastructure.

12. Akenji, L., Bengtsson, M., Toivio, V., Lettenmeier, M., Fawcett, T., Parag, Y., Saheb, Y., Coote, A., Spangenberg, J. H., Capstick, S., Gore, T., Coscieme, L., Wackernagel, M., Kenner, D. (2021). *1.5-Degree Lifestyles: Towards A Fair Consumption Space for All*. Hot or Cool Institute, Berlin. Retrieved from: https://hotorcool.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Hot_or_Cool_1_5_lifestyles_FULL_REPORT_AND_ANNEX_B.pdf

Another vision of the climate neutral society could be about flourishing rural communities. In this vision, people have rediscovered the joy of living in the countryside where strong communities in towns and villages are contributing to human well-being. We could also see the development of new communities around new green industrial investments.

Underpinning both visions is efficient infrastructure. But it is not necessarily good physical infrastructure that enables certain ways of living and ensures liveable cities and rural areas – it could also be good digital infrastructure.

At the same time, our urban areas are less urban in a way than they were in the past because of how we've managed to integrate nature back into urban areas. So, in that sense, in the previously very urbanized areas, there are more people living there, but it may not be as urban as before.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

In the climate neutral society, people might live in smaller houses/apartments but with greater access to shared spaces and facilities. We might also see a return of the "generational house" where multiple generations live together. In both cities and rural areas, greenery could have made a big re-entry into our neighbourhoods.

We might see clearer delineations between cities and the countryside, with areas reserved for biodiversity acting as natural borders between areas of human habitation.

The construction industry will likely have been fully decarbonized. Moreover, renovation before building something new could be the default option. New builds would likely be with new, innovative materials with a smaller environmental footprint. Maybe the walls in our homes are thicker in the future because we store captured CO₂ in new builds. The regulation for the construction business might be stricter, with a more circular business as a result.

It might also be that we move more often to more flexibly allocate the available square meters between us in society. Maybe housing is even something we can bring with us in the future. And maybe it is more a question of multilocality, e.g. the practice of carrying out active everyday life in multiple places with access to more than one residence^[13].

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- How and where do you live in your vision of the climate neutral society?
- Who do you live with and what does your neighborhood look like?

13. Randall, L., Ormstrup Vestergård, L., Rohrer, L., Huynh, D., Lidmo, J., Stjernberg, M., Weber, R., Sigurjonsdottir, H. R., Guðmundsdóttir, H., Kivi, L. (2022). *Remote work: Effects on Nordic people, places and planning 2021-2024*. Retrieved from: <https://pub.nordregio.org/r-2022-3-remote-work-effects-on-nordics/#106561>

I think we need to make significant changes in how we produce food in the Nordic countries. And this will be for the better. It will be better for animal health, for the environment, for climate and for people's health.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

5.2. Food

In a future Nordic climate neutral society, food might be one of those areas of everyday life where we will see the largest changes compared to today.

It is likely that we will eat less meat and dairy products and instead have a diet consisting of more legumes and fish. It is also likely that our diets are more dependent on local produce and on the seasons.

In a Nordic vision of the future of the climate neutral society, maybe consumers pay more attention to the origin of the food – preferring food produced more locally to food transported from across the world.

The pricing of different food products might also be very different to today. It could be that products are transparently priced according to their full environmental impacts, shifting consumer patterns significantly and contributing to the shifts described above. In the Nordic climate neutral society, it might be easier to buy exactly what one needs, thus reducing food waste. It could be a society with a larger variety of interesting foods.

It's going to be much tastier and much more enjoyable than the food we eat today.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

It could be a vision of a society where people are much more connected with their food. Shorter supply chains, more food production in local communities (see section "A society with strong, local communities") and more personal interaction between producers and consumers could contribute to this.

It could be a vision of a society where food is produced very differently from today maybe through regenerative farming. In this vision, more people would be employed in

the agricultural sector and have a better understanding of how food is produced aligned with all the planetary boundaries. As such, it is also a vision of minimizing the strain on other important resources, for example water.

It could also be a vision of lab grown proteins. In this vision, a cultural change has happened, and meat alternatives no longer have to look like meat in order to be desirable. Maybe it also includes farming (and eating) insects.

The vision of food in a Nordic climate neutral society might be a combination of the two visions above. It might include precision farming, carbon farming and storage in agricultural soil, and more attention to biodiversity and environmental impacts.

It could be a vision of a better utilization of food resources, locally and globally. In this vision, we have seen a massive amount of innovation in growing and producing food, and no one goes to bed hungry. It is a vision of both global trade – with a low or no carbon footprint – and resilient local communities.

Basically, the same food as today, with lots of imports and maybe some lab-grown meat.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- What is a sustainable diet in your vision of the climate neutral society?
- Are some foods more costly and some foods less costly compared to today? Which ones and why?



Photo: Roar Paaske

So, our society doesn't look very different, but the ways in which it does look different is in very practical terms. The mobility has changed a lot, so active mobility, public transport, micro mobility, and sharing schemes are a lot more common now than they were before.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

5.3. Transportation

Today, transportation constitutes a large part of our everyday life in the Nordic countries. As such, it is likely to play a large role in a vision of a climate neutral Nordic society.

It could be a vision of a society where the modes of transportation are very similar to today. It is likely that the costs of transportation closely reflect the environmental impacts. There will still be large numbers of private vehicles, but they will shift to alternative fuels, especially electricity.

Alternatively, it could be a vision of a radically different transportation system with fewer cars, better public transportation, and more focus on active forms of mobility. In this vision, the pathway towards climate neutrality might have been more focused on avoiding transport as opposed to improving transport.

Or the society could be a combination of both perspectives. For both, it is a vision of a less polluting transport sector, conducive for human health and well-being.

In a Nordic climate neutral society, cars might no longer be the dominant mode of everyday transportation. In this vision, cars have been (largely) replaced by better, more efficient, and more accessible public transportation. Accessible implies that public transport vehicles are all fitted with adequate means of addressing everyone's needs for transport and that the shared mobility and micro mobility have also been equipped with those accessibility measures.

In rural areas, where public transportation is more difficult to implement, private car ownership might have been replaced with different types of transport-sharing schemes, e.g. mobility-as-a-service (MaaS), car-sharing schemes, and/or micro mobility sharing schemes. Good digital infrastructure, flexible and/or remote work could also contribute to a reduced transport need.

Private cars do not exist anymore. They are used solely for, uh, very specific circumstances.

It will take us like 10 hours to travel to other places in Europe, but we will see this as a good working day, as a cozy working day

Interviews in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

It could be a society with infrastructure tailored to support an active lifestyle. In this vision, most of everyday transport is public transport combined with either biking or walking. The infrastructure might be recognizable – roads originally meant for cars – but it has been taken over by public transport and active mobility.

For longer distance travelling, the vision could be about reduced use of airplanes but better options with e.g. trains. It could also be about reviving "old" modes of transportation such as ferries or airships (blimps). It would mean that travelling is a more time-consuming activity but with more time on our hands (see section on "More spare time"), this might be seen as positive by citizens in the climate neutral society. In this vision, people have adapted to these new, slower ways of moving around by filling up that time doing things that they enjoy doing. The means of traveling have been accommodated with the necessary facilities to enable people to enjoy the travel for long distances, despite it taking longer.

It could also be a society where people spend more time in their local/regional areas (see section on "A society with strong, local communities"), and as such, the need for long-distance travel has been reduced compared to today.

In the Nordic countries, I hope we have high speed trains that connect our countries. Highspeed train service between Stockholm, Oslo and Copenhagen would be great. I think this would make aviation largely unneeded in this region.

I know this sounds strange. I hope we can travel more. To be honest, I hope flying will be the dominating mode of transport in some areas. And you say: how? Yeah, well, if you have electrified, then you don't need to build as many roads and railroads that actually destroy the landscape.

Interviews in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- What does sustainable transport look like in your vision of the climate neutral society?
- In your vision, how do you transport yourself in your everyday life? And going on vacation?

Maybe we will actually spend more on expensive, high-quality things, which means that automatically, we will consume less.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

5.4. Consumption

A Nordic vision of the climate neutral society could be about a society that is more conscious about what it consumes. From government to companies to citizens. It might be a society where awareness of the ecological footprint of things has grown, with a profound effect on consumer patterns.

It could be a society characterized by a sufficiency thinking, where we replace cheap, low-quality products with high-quality items – maybe even produced closer to home.

It could be a vision of a society where both the cultural, institutional, and economical structures around consumption have undergone large changes. Culturally, it might be a society where consumption only plays a miniscule role in defining your identity. Where having the right car, the right watch, or the right clothes are less important.

Our total consumption in the Nordic region must go down.

Johan Rockström, discussions at COP27 in the Nordic Pavilion

Institutionally, it could be a vision of a society where “buying green” is no longer a thing. Instead, the environmentally friendly option is the cheap, accessible option. It might also entail a fully circular business sector focused on producing products that are easy to repair, to recycle, and to reuse.

It could also be a vision of a society where we rent or share more things (see section on “A society with strong, local communities”). Maybe it is a society where more than half of the things that people use are either borrowed or rented, facilitated by various public and private schemes and initiatives.

In this vision, most people do not own their appliances, but rather they lease them from an entity that then is responsible for making sure that they work and are repaired when necessary. The rate of repairability has increased dramatically and discarded products are taken apart and re-entered fully in the circular business loop.

Companies have played an essential role in achieving what we have achieved. A lot of them stepped up to the challenge and took responsibility.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

In this society, products are designed to last and to be easy to repair.

Economically, it could be a vision of a society where the price on products fully reflects the environmental impacts and where there is full transparency for the consumer in how and where products have been produced. It might be a society without advertisements.

New, innovative types of business models might also be viable in this society.

It might be a society where business models have moved away from physical commodities to services, e.g. from producing light bulbs to lightning, or from owning a car to carpooling.

Maybe some businesses have even specialized in landfill mining, digging through existing landfills to procure raw materials, plastics, and metals for the circular economy.

I think some old habits from our parents and will return. Keeping and reusing things instead of throwing them away. Repairing broken things. It's part of our nature to do this and it makes us feel good. On the contrary, seeing good things being thrown away makes us feel bad.

Interview in the project *Nordic Stocktake and Visions – Pathways to climate neutrality*

What does **YOUR VISION** of a climate neutral society look like?

- What do you consume more or less of in your vision of the climate neutral society?
- Where are the things produced that you buy and consume?



Photos: Emily Wilson Photography and Photopop

Recommendations for the Nordic Council of Ministers

Realizing the visions, or at least certain elements of the visions of the climate neutral Nordic society outlined throughout this report, requires action. This section contains five recommendations for what can be done/instigated at the Nordic level.

Instigate Nordic dialogue on “the good life” in a climate neutral society

Visions are conspicuously absent in Nordic climate change politics and thus, mobilizing citizens for a green transformation proves challenging. The Nordic Council of Ministers could fund/support Nordic dialogues on “the good life” in a climate neutral society, for example through citizen engagement activities and/or communication activities.

Fund/support research on multifunctionality in land-use

There is an underdeveloped opportunity for combining different land-use (multifunctionality), e.g., combining food production and nature conservation, combining energy development, nature conservation and agriculture. Good examples and experiences should be shared across the Nordic countries.

Collect Nordic and international examples of efficiency- and sufficiency policies

To stay within the planetary boundaries, there is a need for new inspiration for policy- and decisionmakers across the Nordic countries with respect to efficiency and sufficiency policies. Stimulation of a less consumption-focused/growth-oriented and more sufficiency-based lifestyle can catalyze the green transition and make many sustainability goals more achievable. An outcome could be a sufficiency policy toolbox, building on international experiences and examples.

Fund/support research on how to achieve a fair, just green transition

This could include research on the potential of improving equality and other social issues in climate- and environmental policy. This should build on existing research in the Nordic countries, e.g. the project *Not Just a Green Transition (NJUST)*^[14], conducted by Nordregio in collaboration with the Nordic Welfare Centre.

Fund/support research on the planetary boundaries

A Nordic society in balance is a society that stays within planetary boundaries. But what does that mean for the Nordic region and the individual Nordic countries? More work can be done on translating the planetary boundaries framework^[15] from a scientific exercise to a practical framework for future policies.

14. <https://nordregio.org/research/not-just-a-green-transition-njust-examining-the-path-towards-a-socially-just-green-transition-in-the-nordic-region/>

15. <https://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/planetary-boundaries.html>

Appendix 1: Interview guide

Part one – characteristics of a climate-neutral Nordic society

Note for interviewer: The questions in parentheses are supplementary and can be asked if the interviewee does not understand the question or require more direction.

Envision a Nordic region in the future where the five Nordic countries have achieved climate neutrality. I will now ask you a series of questions about this society. In part two of this interview, we will explore how this translates into changes in the everyday life of the citizens in this society.

1. What does this society look like? Can you elaborate a bit on the characteristics of this society? *(What other characteristics than "climate neutral" can be used to describe this society?)*
2. What would you describe as the core qualities of this society?
3. How different is this society from the one we know today? What are the biggest changes? *(Are there changes to the way citizens act and behave – their lifestyles? Are there changes to the way companies act and behave? What is the political focus in the Nordic region/the Nordic countries?)*
4. From where did the changes originate? *(Bottom-up, top-down or a combination – who led/enabled/facilitated the transition to a climate neutral Nordic region?)*
 - a. Who were the key actors in the transition?
 - b. What were the main instruments or initiatives?
5. Were other environmental and societal issues addressed while achieving climate neutrality – or solved as a consequence of achieving climate neutrality? If so, what are they? *(Are there any positive externalities of achieving climate neutrality? Any negative?)*

Part two – The climate neutral everyday life of citizens in the Nordic region

Note for interviewer: The interviewee's experience and perspective might determine what categories are talked most about. Try to get through as many as possible while allowing the interviewee to focus on those areas that they have specific interest and expertise in. The questions are deliberately open-ended to avoid imposing our ideas of the future upon the interviewee. Feel free to challenge their vision however if there are inconsistencies of it clashes with the premise of climate-neutrality.

I will now ask you a series of questions on how everyday life are impacted by the transition to a climate neutral Nordic region. There might be areas that you have not thought about or have little interest in. If this is the case, just let me know, and we will spend the time on the other areas.

1. Housing

- Where do Nordic citizens live? (*In the cities, on the countryside – is it different from today?*)
- How do they live? (*How much living space do they have? Are there limits? What types of housing? Communities, shared spaces, etc.?*)
- What does their local area look like? (*What is their access to services, transportation, nature etc.?*)

2. Food

- What does a typical meal look like for a Nordic citizen in your vision for a climate neutral Nordic region?
- Where does the food come from? (*Local, regional, national, imported, etc.; farmed, laboratory grown, etc.*)
- What is expensive and what is not? Why? (*e.g. are food products priced after their environmental impact? Are there equal access to different kinds of foods products? Is there a limited consumption of specific foods? How is this enforced?*)

3. Mobility

- How does Nordic citizens move around on a day-to-day basis? What forms of mobility are typical?
- For what is mobility used? (*Is it easier or harder to transport yourself in a climate neutral Nordic region?*)

4. Consumer goods

- What are the consumption patterns of the Nordic citizens? (*Do they buy new/used? Is it easy to get your things repaired if they break?*)
- Where are the consumer goods produced? (*In the Nordic region or elsewhere?*)
- How do companies in the Nordic region contribute to climate neutrality?

5. Leisure

- How much time do Nordic citizens have for leisure activities in your vision for climate neutral Nordic region? What do they spend the time on?
- What is their relationship to nature? (*How do they use the natural environment? Is it similar to today, different?*)

6. Final questions and remarks

- In your envisioned climate neutral Nordic region, what has been the biggest quality of life improvement relative to today?
- What has been the biggest challenges for the individual citizen?
- Any other remarks on your vision for a climate neutral Nordic society?

Appendix 2: List of interviewees

Disclaimer:

Interviewees should not be held responsible for the content and views expressed in this report. They have neither seen nor approved the results of the analysis. Interviewees have only provided qualitative data for the analysis and some of them have contributed to a discussion of possible recommendations for Nordic actions in order to realize some of the potential co-benefits of the transition to a climate neutral Nordic society.

The views of interviewees do not represent their organizations, workplaces, or any other affiliations they might have.

Name

- Aleksi Neuvonen
- Andri Snær Magnason
- Anita Fossdal
- Clara Halvorsen
- Connie Hedegaard
- Edda Aradóttir
- Filip Johnsson
- Finnur Ricart Andrason
- Geir Seljeseth
- Glen Peters
- Gunn-Britt Retter
- Halla Sigrún Sigurðardóttir
- Halldor Thorgeirsson
- Hanna Hoijer
- Isabella Lovin
- Jakob Fritzbøger Christensen
- Johan Kuylenstierna
- Lars Petter Maltby
- Markku Ollikainen
- Martin Skancke
- Sarah Hellebek
- Sirkka Heinonen
- Tinna Hallgrímsdóttir

Interviews were carried out by the following members of the project team:

- Denmark: Andreas Lind
- Finland: Helena Määttä and Kati Berninger
- Iceland: Nina Maria Saviolidis
- Norway: Asbjørn Torvanger
- Sweden: Kenneth Möllersten and Lars Zetterberg

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YouTube: 10 highlights from the Nordic Pavilion at COP27
(<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRzSENBt6RqIHU5K1Y551JhoWGYebhKmg>)

About this publication

Nordic Visions of Climate Neutrality

Author: Andreas Lind

Nord 2023:038

ISBN 978-92-893-7719-5 (PDF)

ISBN 978-92-893-7720-1 (ONLINE)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.6027/nord2023-038>

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Cover photo: Getty Images

Illustrations: Knud Andersen

Published: 27/10/2023

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The views expressed in this document are those of the project institutions and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

About the project

As part of the Nordic Stocktake and Visions project funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers, CONCITO, CICERO, IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute, University of Iceland and Reykjavik University, and Tyrsky Consulting have taken stock of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the Nordic countries, assessed national pathways, and identified ways forward towards climate neutrality in the Nordic region. The project is a part of the initiative "Climate transition in the Nordics" to support the Nordic Vision 2030. The overall aim of the Nordic Vision is to become the most sustainable and integrated region in the world by 2030.

The Nordic region aims to be the world's most sustainable and integrated region by 2030 (Our Vision 2030^[16]). The most recent status report^[17] (2023) shows that Nordic green ambitions are challenged and points to a need for greatly accelerated efforts. The report, *Nordic Stocktake*, reaches a similar conclusion.

16. Nordic Council of Minister (2020). *The Nordic Region – towards being the most sustainable and integrated region in the world: Action Plan for 2021 to 2024*. Retrieved from, <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1508295/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

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Nordic co-operation

Nordic co-operation is one of the world's most extensive forms of regional collaboration, involving Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

Nordic co-operation has firm traditions in politics, economics and culture and plays an important role in European and international forums. The Nordic community strives for a strong Nordic Region in a strong Europe.

Nordic co-operation promotes regional interests and values in a global world. The values shared by the Nordic countries help make the region one of the most innovative and competitive in the world.

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