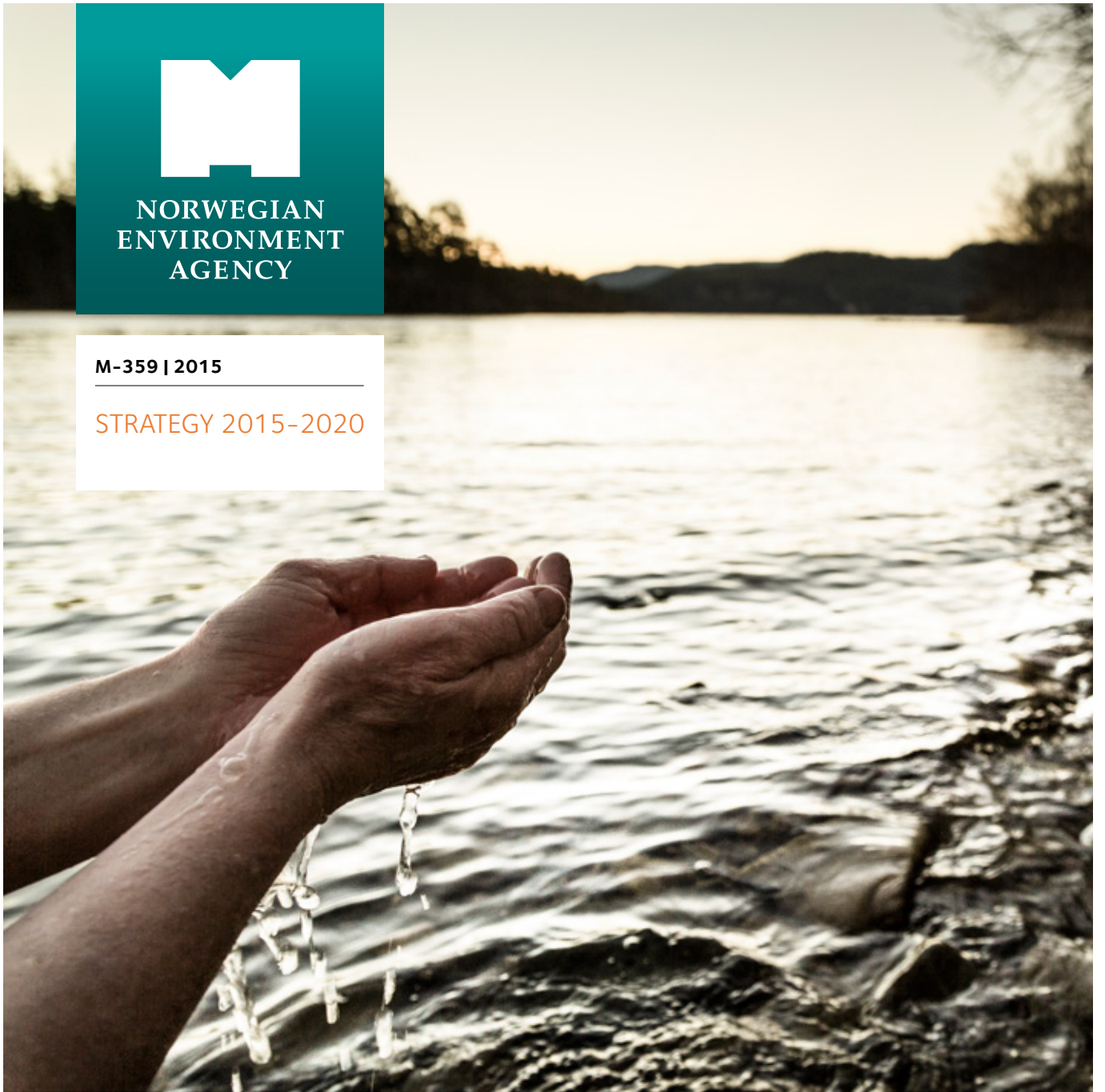




NORWEGIAN
ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY

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STRATEGY 2015-2020



knowledge-based
forward-looking
clear

A clean and diverse environment

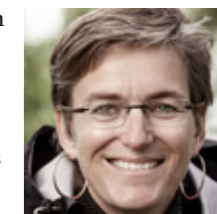
We are lucky here in Norway – we have a relatively clean and diverse environment. Substantial efforts have been made over the past 20 to 30 years to protect nature and prevent pollution. We are working to limit and adapt to climate change. We are working to safeguard nature's diversity of plants, animals and landscape and to limit polluting emissions and discharges to air and water. These challenges are complex and transboundary and require efforts at all levels, from international fora to national and local environmental work. We are working energetically on this every day, in all these arenas.

Success requires an Environment Agency with professional integrity and legitimacy, and that cooperates well with others. An Environment Agency is needed that can work purposefully to achieve a clean, diverse environment, and at the same time make the carefully weighed assessments that are expected of us as an agency. This makes us a relevant and clear authority for the environmental solutions of the future.

It is the Storting and the government that determine the level of ambition and instruments of climate and environmental policy. As an agency, we are the servants and advisers of democracy. For us therefore, a strategy cannot be just about the environmental goals, but even more about how we intend to strengthen our efforts in order to contribute to the solution of tomorrow's climate and environmental challenges.


This strategy is primarily an internal document and an expression of my signals to us all for the next five-year period. It is not about everything we do, but it sets out the course for

selected areas where we as an agency wish to stretch ourselves further in order to become even better at fulfilling our tasks.



The Norwegian Environment Agency was created on 1 July 2013 when the former Directorate for Nature Management and the Climate and Pollution Agency were merged. We are located in both Trondheim and Oslo and at the more than 60 local offices of the Norwegian Nature Inspectorate. This is both a challenge and a strength. Getting to know everyone and working together across former organisations and different office locations demands good technical solutions. At the same time, it gives us a range of perspectives and experience that we will put to positive use. The tasks that we must resolve require interdisciplinary competence, and we are dependent on effective interaction right across the organisation.

The competence and experience of all our employees is the basis for everything we produce. Together, we can aim to achieve our ambition of «a clean and diverse environment». Together, we will live up to our values, so that everything we produce is characterised by being knowledge-based, forward-looking and clear. Our ambition is to be the most important contributor for the environmental solutions of the future.


Director General

The environmental challenges

Man-made climate change, the loss of biodiversity and the spread of hazardous substances are the greatest environmental challenges facing our time.

Climate change has already started. If we do not manage to reverse the trend, the mean global temperature could increase by more than four degrees before the end of this century. That would have serious consequences for nature and society, for health and food safety, and it would turn people into refugees. There is broad agreement among world leaders that the aim is to limit global warming to two degrees, compared with pre-industrial levels. The longer we wait, the more expensive it will become, and the less room we will have to undertake the necessary measures. In the worst case, it could become impossible.

Both nationally and internationally, we are facing a fundamental shift into a low-emission society that will affect all social sectors. Even a two-degree increase would have significant consequences. While we are working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we must also work at adapting to the changes we are already experiencing, and those that we know will come.

The world's biodiversity is under great pressure from human activity. Globally, species are disappearing up to a thousand times faster than normal. There is international agreement on the need to halt the loss of biological diversity. Climate change is a growing threat to biodiversity, but the most important cause of present losses is the change in land use.

Nature and biological diversity give us products and services that are essential for welfare and value creation, and a robust nature will be a buffer against the consequences of climate change. Nature also gives us experiences, identity and a sense of belonging. The exploitation of nature has now gone so far that the ecosystems' ability to deliver the services we need has been reduced, and economic and social costs will rise if we do not reduce the pressure.

Hazardous substances are transported over great distances, break down slowly and remain in the environment long after the emissions have stopped. Over the course of time, both people and animals accumulate a combination of hazardous substances in their bodies. This can lead to irreparable damage to health and the environment. There are huge gaps in our knowledge about hazardous substances and their combined effect. Targets have been set for reducing consumption and emissions both nationally and internationally.

Our children will inherit this planet from us. It is our responsibility to ensure that the planet is in at least as good condition as when we took it over.





WE WILL BE THE BEST SOURCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE

Environmental management is based on scientific knowledge. We monitor, point out the need for and make use of new research in our field. We are responsible for comprehensive environmental monitoring and mapping. All this knowledge that we gather, process and manage is an important basis for the development of climate and environmental policy, for other authorities and for the general public's right to environmental information. We, and our website, shall be the best source of information on, and understanding of, our climate and the environment.

WE SHALL BECOME BETTER AT

- analysing information and linking environmental facts to social development
- using knowledge right across professional areas and putting single measures into a wider context, both nationally and internationally highlighting the significance of facts
- making environmental knowledge understandable, relevant and easy to use



WE WILL BE A CLEAR ADVISER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

By means of consultation, analysis and proposals for measures and instruments, we give professional advice and input for the development of climate and environmental policy before the final framework is settled. This advisory role gives us more room for manoeuvre in driving forward further environmental improvements. Our analysis and advice shall provide a solid, decision-making foundation, which is listened to when choices are to be made.

WE SHALL BECOME BETTER AT

- having a clear understanding of our role as to when and how we can best give the advice that contributes to the development of climate and environmental policy.
- clearly communicating what is necessary in order to ensure biodiversity and achieve environmental improvements
- demonstrating what solutions exist and what consequences different choices may have for the environment and society
- showing what the dilemmas are and what we have emphasised in our analyses and advice



WE WILL BE A CONSISTENT EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY FOR GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS

The Norwegian Environment Agency, the environmental protection departments of the County Governors and the administrative bodies of regional and local government exercise very considerable authority in the environmental field. We follow up on pollution, biodiversity and planning regulations. The regulations give us the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting important environmental considerations, while simultaneously making difficult expert judgements between often conflicting views. We shall ensure helpful guidance and the clear exercise of authority that contributes to good environmental solutions.

WE SHALL BECOME BETTER AT

- guiding regional and local authorities in environmental management and facilitating the clear and consistent exercise of authority within and between levels of administration
- working to ensure that environmental considerations are given their true importance, so that the exercise of authority helps to stimulate new climate and environmental technology and new forms of operation that safeguard biodiversity
- clarifying all the other social considerations that can and must be included in our evaluations and demonstrating how different considerations are weighed up against each other
- ensuring that all supervision is risk-based and rigorously followed up on behalf of the environment in all follow-up work



WE WILL BE A GOOD PARTNER THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental problems affect all sectors and areas of society and must be resolved by a range of instruments where the Norwegian Environment Agency cannot do the job alone. The various sectors have a joint responsibility to achieve national climate and environmental targets. We cooperate extensively with many sector authorities. We shall continue to develop as a good, active and collaborative partner.

WE SHALL BECOME BETTER AT

- facilitating effective work processes where several sector authorities are involved
- ensuring dialogue based on mutual recognition of each other's competence and areas of responsibility
- sharing knowledge and listening to others, so that our environmental knowledge can be of benefit and help our partners to take responsibility for the environment in their own areas

The Norwegian Environment Agency will be a well-run organisation

A well-run organisation is essential for meeting our strategic challenges. At the same time as resolving the agency's tasks, we must continue to develop into a consistent, effective and learning organisation with a good working environment. This is the basis for recruiting and keeping employees with the right professional integrity and drive to work on the environmental solutions of the future.

We shall develop our organisation to become even more

CONSISTENT

To achieve this, we will

- ensure a common understanding of our administrative and professional roles
- develop a common working methodology and culture
- develop a management culture that focuses on results, priorities and a good working environment
- have uniform work routines and processes and streamline activities so as to contribute to effectiveness and coherence
- stimulate innovative thinking and open discussions that produce well-thought-out solutions
- always talk to the outside world with one, consistent voice

EFFECTIVE

To achieve this, we will

- prioritise efforts and distribute resources according to significance and risk
- respect our own time and that of others when we organise and solve tasks
- ensure effective work processes by means of clear mandates, clear work distribution and clear deadlines that are followed up on
- have ICT tools and technical systems that provide users with good digital services
- be so good at using modern ICT technology and collaboration tools that the distance between offices is not a barrier to good communication

LEARNING

To achieve this, we will

- develop routines and attitudes that facilitate the systematic exchange of information right across the organisation
- develop a consistent programme for competence development
- use evaluation actively, so as to learn and spread knowledge
- stimulate employees to take responsibility for their own development

OUR FRAMEWORK AND FUNCTIONS

We are a government agency, subordinate to the Ministry of Climate and Environment. We implement and give advice on the development of climate and environmental policy. We are professionally independent. This means that we act independently in the individual cases that we decide and when we communicate knowledge and information or give advice. At the same time, we are subject to political governance.

Legislation, white papers, parliamentary bills, instructions for activities and the annual letter of allocation set the framework for our activities. These determine what instruments we administer, our budget ceiling and guidelines for the performance and prioritising of our input.

In all our environmental challenges, we have the following five functions:

Collate and communicate environmental information

We monitor and map the state of the environment. We systematise and communicate relevant and understandable environmental knowledge in various arenas and channels, including through guidelines on nature to the general public.

Exercise regulatory authority

We administer laws, regulations and subsidy schemes and make decisions based on these. We facilitate the implementation of administrative

measures in nature. We have a supervisory role to ensure that rules and requirements are followed.

Supervise and guide regional and local government levels

The offices of the County Governors are our external apparatus, which we supervise and guide. We also give guidance on important environmental tasks that are delegated to various regional and local bodies, including local and county authorities, national park and protected area committees and predator-control boards.

Give professional and technical advice

We prepare analyses and give advice on the development of environmental policy goals, propose measures and instruments and act as a support player to the Ministry of Climate and Environment in the development of climate and environmental policy.

We coordinate work in the environmental field across sectors and work with other authorities on the integration of environmental considerations into their work and on analyses and proposals.

Participate in international environmental activities

We participate on Norway's behalf in international environmental activities, including under the EEA agreement and global conventions and we contribute to the development of common international regulations. We work bilaterally with environmental agencies in other countries and we are a partner in the exchange of administrative expertise.

A clean and diverse environment



Norwegian Environment Agency

Telephone: +47 73 58 05 00 | **Fax:** +47 73 58 05 01

E-mail: post@miljodir.no

Web: www.environmentagency.no

Post: P.O. Box 5672 Sluppen, NO-7485 Trondheim

Visiting address Trondheim: Brattørkaia 15, 7010 Trondheim

Visiting address Oslo: Grensesvingen 7, 0661 Oslo

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