

## Biodiversity and ecosystem services in the Nordic coastal regions

The current list of pressures on the coastal areas of the Nordic countries is long, including increasing exploitation which leads to loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. In order to address these challenges, this Nordic collaboration aims to provide credible information to support policy development and decision making in the Nordic countries.

### BACKGROUND

A Nordic IPBES\*-like scoping study was performed during 2015 with financing from the Nordic Council of Ministers. (TemaNord report 2016:525, *Framing a Nordic IPBES-like study: Introductory Study including Scoping for a Nordic Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, based on IPBES methods and procedures*, <http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:norden:org:diva-4395>).

The project group consisted of representatives from the Nordic countries' agencies. Consultations were made through two questionnaires, one Nordic meeting and country consultations. A study related to indigenous and local knowledge was performed within the scoping study of the Nordic IPBES-like assessment, financed by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and assigned to the Swedish Biodiversity Centre.

Öland, Sweden

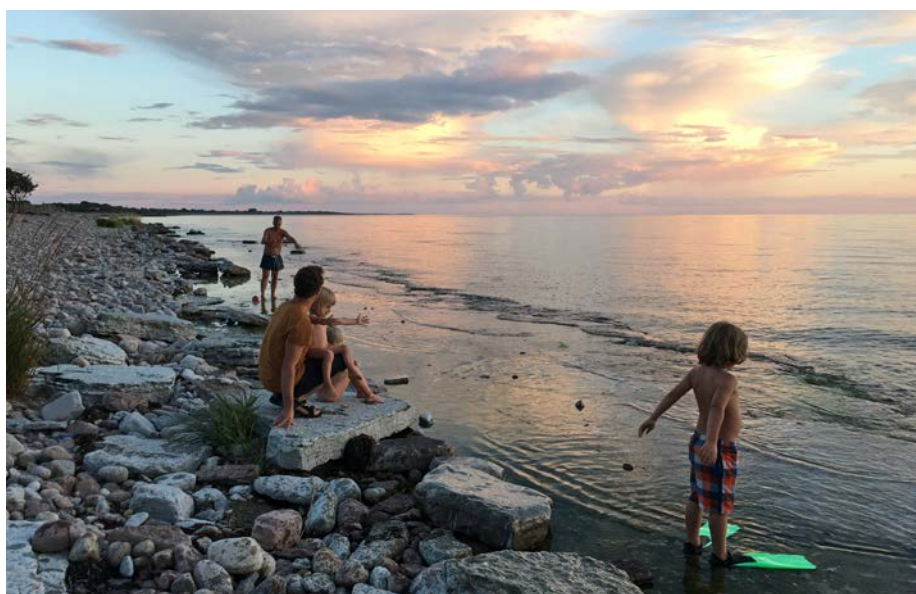


Photo: Elin Viksten/Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

\* The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

## AIMS

The Nordic IPBES-like assessment will focus on the coastal areas including wetlands close to the coast.

The assessment will concentrate on similarities and differences between the Nordic countries, and follow the IPBES chapter outline to cover various aspects and scales of biodiversity, ecosystem services and their governance.

The assessment will be developed across different scales such as local, national and Nordic. For some aspects national or local division in accordance with political and management systems will be appropriate, for other aspects biogeographical regions might be more appropriate to capture cross-border and interconnected issues relevant for biodiversity and ecosystem services. Common drivers in the Nordic countries will be identified, for example land use change along the coast that might affect biodiversity and ecosystems in the whole region, and common cultural/behavioural aspects. In addition, specific Nordic governance aspects will be studied.

The Nordic assessment needs to work in synergy with other initiatives like the EU's MAES and ESERALDA, and national assessments to avoid unnecessary duplication of existing or on-going work.

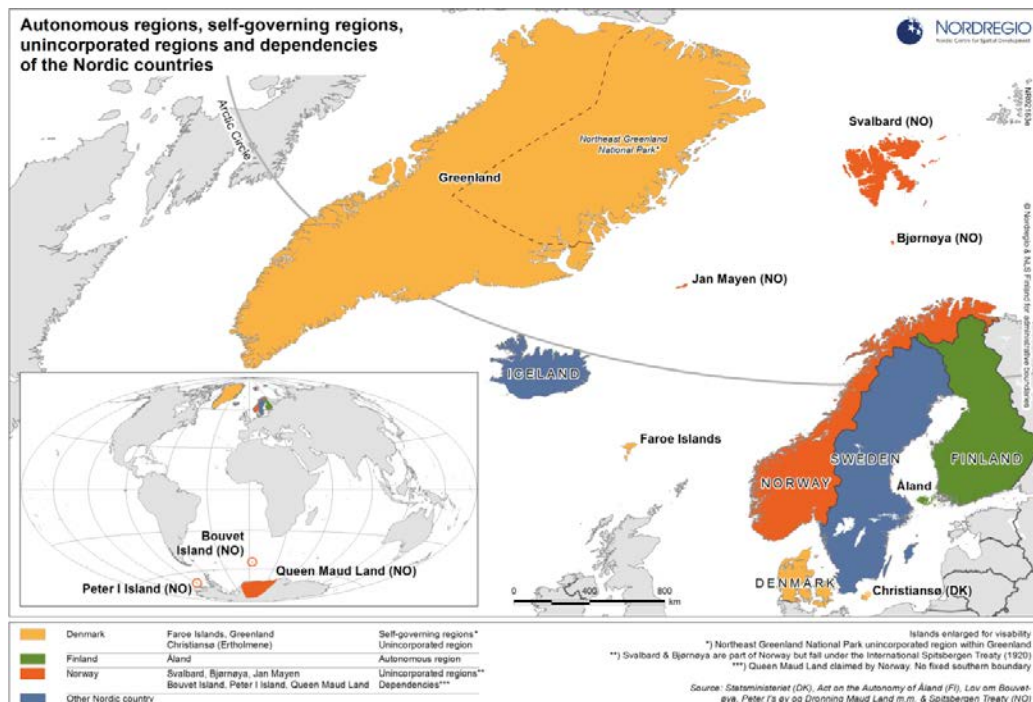
The Nordic assessment will follow the IPBES methods and guidelines to the extent possible, and use existing knowledge and data held by global, regional, Nordic and national institutions, such as scientific literature and other information including citizen science, indigenous and local knowledge.

### The assessment will include:

Biodiversity, ecosystem services and their status, trends and interlinkages.

Impacts on and contribution to human well-being.

Threats and the legitimacy and effectiveness of responses.



## RESULTS

This study will be valuable for the Nordic countries seeing that a Nordic assessment will benefit from being linked to a global process and science-policy platform such as IPBES. Strong sub-regional assessments performed according to IPBES standards will also benefit IPBES as a whole. In addition, a shared assessment of the Nordic coastal region has the potential of giving issues relevant for the Nordic countries a stronger weight in IPBES. Other goals are to make the IPBES platform more known in the region, and to strengthen cooperation between Nordic countries on issues such as biodiversity, ecosystem services, and indigenous and local knowledge.

The 2017 phase of the project will be crucial in finalising the draft assessment report and start the review process, as well as preparing for dissemination of result during the latter part of 2017 and beginning of 2018.

This study is financed through the Terrestrial Ecosystems Group (TEG) of the Nordic Council of Ministers, and national funding from participating countries.

Oqaatsut, Greenland



Photo: Silje Bergum Kinsten/Norden.org

### Members of the project group

**Denmark:** Eva Roth, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental and Business Economics, University of Southern Denmark, and Mette Gervin Damsgaard, Agency for Water and Nature Management

**Faroe Islands:** Maria Gunnleivsdóttir Hansen, the Environment Agency

**Finland:** Petteri Vihervaara, Research Programme Manager, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)

**Greenland:** Inge Thaulow, Special Advisor on International Environmental Affairs, Government of Greenland

**Iceland:** Sigurdur Thrainsson, Head of Division, Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources

**Norway:** Jørund Braa, Senior Adviser, Norwegian Environment Agency

**Sweden:** Cecilia Lindblad, Senior Adviser, IPBES NFP, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

**Åland:** Inkeri Ahonen and Maija Häggblom, Department of Social Affairs, Health and Environment, Government of Åland

**Project leader:** Britta Skagerfält, Programme coordinator, biodiversity/ecosystem services, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

**Expert group:** The report will be compiled by a multidisciplinary cluster including expertise in biology, economy, social sciences, indigenous and local knowledge, governance etc.

Hvalba, Suduroy, Faroe Islands



Photo: Erik Christensen/Norden.org

Ilulissat, Greenland



Photo: Britta Skagerfält, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Hamarøy, Norway



Photo: Karin Beate Nøsterud/Norden.org

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