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Mona W Minde, Studio (00:07.056)

Okay, plott.

Hello, and welcome to another podcast in the series on offshore wind. Previously, you have heard from many engaged and enthusiastic people who work in and around the offshore wind industry. But lately, it seems like the activity has calmed down a bit around offshore wind in Norway. And we therefore thought it would be nice to talk to someone who could explain to us what's going on and talk about the reason for what seems to be the lower level of optimism around offshore wind in Norway.

My name is Muna Wetrus Minde, and I work at the Faculty of Science and Technology at UIS. I talk to different people who we believe can enlighten our students on different topics within offshore wind. And today we have asked Jon Evang to join us. He is in charge of offshore wind in Fornybar Norge, or Renewables Norway, which is an industry association for the renewable energy sector and part of the NHO, the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises.

So firstly, Jun, welcome to our podcast. Would you like to tell us a little bit more about yourself?

Jon (01:18.638)

Yes, I can. Thank you for inviting me and having me. Very glad to join you. I can introduce myself. My name is Jon Evang. I work as you said as director for offshore wind in Renewables Norway. My background is from long ago I have a certification as an electrician. But then I started on the university studying philosophy and political science, including some studies in environmental and climate study along. And I've been working in the Ministry of Energy for some years and then in a climate NGO called Zero before I joined Renewables Norway four years ago to work with offshore wind full time.

Mona W Minde, Studio (02:14.205)

Sounds like a good background to to work on the topic. and maybe we could just start with some basics. so why do you think Norway should develop offshore wind?

Jon (02:29.75)

I think we have two main reasons to start with. Firstly, we need more power. There is a green transition going on. It has calmed down a little bit, especially in Norway. But all countries around us, in Europe especially, but also worldwide, are progressing in the green transition, building renewable energy at a high pace, mostly solar, much wind, also offshore wind, and also we're going through a phase of electrification of all relevant emission sectors.

So we need more power and it is quite conflicted to build all of that onshore, which we have seen lately. We believe that it still can be built a lot of onshore wind, maybe some hydropower, especially on the effect side. But for the large volumes, we need offshore wind. So that's why we need offshore wind for more power.

But also the industry opportunity is quite a match for Norway, I think, because we do have a lot of industry capacities like shipyards, like deep water ports and supply industry that are quite well situated to deliver also to offshore wind and is today delivering to offshore wind. We have in 2025 Norwegian offshore wind industry delivered offshore wind components, services, ships for 64 billion Norwegian kroness. So we are already

Jon (04:30.512)

large offshore wind nation in that respect. We have an industry which are delivering mainly offshore wind projects in the North Sea. So that is a huge, if you look at the North Sea as a home market, it's a huge home market. So that's why I think we should engage in offshore wind.

Mona W Minde, Studio (04:51.557)

Yeah, and and as you say, there is a lot going on. So so maybe it's more on the surface it seems like it's going slower, especially for the the the Norwegian developments. but and and as and your organization Fornybar Norge, yeah, you represent

almost all of the supply chain toward the or the or the industry in general and and also towards the offshore wind industry. And and there is everyone there is agreeing that it's time to to speed up now. isn't that the correct assumption?

Jon (05:31.629)

Yes, yes, I think so. Mostly we have developers as members. We have some industry members as well, but mostly developers. And yes, they think so. And many of them, if you look two or three years back, there was a huge interest in Norwegian offshore wind with lots of international companies, large international developers, which were looking into projects in Norway. There was a huge interest in both Sørlige Norsjø and Utsira Nord, the two Norwegian projects, which we can come back to. But through 2024 and 2025, the interest fell significantly due to higher costs and also political uncertainty in Norway. So our mission is still to have a long-term perspective on developing offshore wind in Norway. There is an industry that we are building from scratch, so to speak. We have to do all kinds of stuff to all of the regulation, economics, environmental issues, lots of regulations, large and small, which needs to be done. It's quite a job, and that job is underway now still.

That is how we can build an industry, a significant industry. If we manage to keep a long-term perspective, even though it has been tough the last two or three years, I think Norway can succeed as an off-roading nation. But we still...

Jon (07:26.146)

We still need that political commitment and a broader agreement and a long-term perspective from the politicians if we are going to succeed.

Mona W Minde, Studio (07:38.151)

Yeah, and this uncertainty, political uncertainty is something a lot of the companies mention that makes it difficult. Do you think it's is it a lack of political win will to to to have this transition or is it change of political opinion in general in Norway?

Jon (07:57.719)

Yes, there has been a change and I think it has to, it comes down to that offshore wind is very more costly. It needs more support, economical support than I think a lot of politicians imagined and which has caused this political uncertainty.

that some parties that were in favor of offshore wind is now more...

ambivalent and also that it is difficult for those parties who are positive to raise the money to build a pipeline of projects, which is understandable. And of course, it has been a tough time for offshore wind generally. lot of countries around us have had trouble. They have had the auctions with no bidders. There have been several

occasions where there has been backlash. But now I'm more optimistic. think there is a drive to build offshore wind in the North Sea that is very, very strong. And we need to understand that. I mean, that's where European countries go to get independence from Russia.

to say put it very simple, to build the volumes of offshore wind that can over time make them independent from Russian gas. So I think it's a huge opportunity for Norway to take part in that transition, in that project.

Mona W Minde, Studio (09:42.873)

And and the the North Sea and and the the area around it, it's also a a very resourceful area with high winds and and good possibilities for power production.

Jon (09:55.791)

Yes, absolutely. It's world class, so to speak, conditions for producing offshore wind. We see that on wind maps, as has been made from, I think, University of Stavanger was part of that survey, which has mapped all the wind conditions, which are excellent on the Norwegian continental shelf. We see that in terms of what is High Wind Tampen is producing.

Norway has already built the largest offshore wind floating offshore wind farm in Norway which is supplying Snorre and Gullfaks with power and that they have extremely good production they have a capacity factor of 58 percent in their best quarter and 51 percent I think in 2025 as a whole which is very good and I think it can be even

better if they don't have to curtail the production due to that they are connected not to grid but only to the off-takers which are the oil rigs. Offshore wind is proving that it produces very good. An average onshore wind farm would produce around maybe 35 % or something. So it is excellent conditions. Also the sea bottom, the sea

bed is a little more tricky but for floating it's an excellent cases and we also see that there are several areas for bottom fix that are very well fitted for producing offshore wind.

Mona W Minde, Studio (11:41.445)

And of course the the it's been discussed many places that the conditions are excellent, but also that that makes some challenges to with with rough conditions, floating and costly installations. But we should have some or we have some experience in Norway in this area with our offshore competence.

Jon (12:07.694)

Absolutely.

Mona W Minde, Studio (12:10.757)

And and I was thinking now go ahead, yes, please.

Jon (12:14.294)

Yeah, we do have that experience with our petroleum sector and building energy production offshore in rough conditions. So I think that is something we also, as I mentioned earlier, we are already supplying lots of offshore wind farms around the North Sea. So yes, absolutely.

Mona W Minde, Studio (12:39.387)

But if we I mean if if things are going a bit slow now, it's been discussed in the media that there is also a supply industry that that needs activity. do we stand to lose something if if we don't speed up? Is there competence that will disappear?

Jon (13:01.646)

That might happen. We see that there is a race, a competitive race in Europe to industrialize on offshore wind. Especially for bottom fixed, it is already industrialized, I think generally, in other countries. Denmark, UK, Germany, Netherlands, all of those have already built industries on...

bottom fixed for floating. think Norway still is one of six to seven countries that are leading the race in terms of what competence we have and what we have actually built. And Equinor Norway has built the two largest floating offshore wind farms that exist. So yes, we do have that. But if we don't build up a pipeline in our home market, we won't get...

that industry position because others are competing very hard to get that. So in that respect there is a little urgent. What we say is that it should be, we recommend that there should be in pipeline another project after it's run to ensure that Norway keeps on track for a position in bloating offshore wind.

Mona W Minde, Studio (14:27.909)

And and how do you see Fornybar Norge as has a role in this? what's your job, so to say?

Jon (14:37.614)

My job is to take care of the framework for building offshore wind in Norway and that is our task in this. So I try to speak to politicians and the opinion to make a social and political acceptance for offshore wind.

Because that is only offshore wind floating and bottom fixed that can provide

Norway with enough power through the 2030s.

it won't be sufficient with offshore wind and hydro and nuclear is further down the road. So we do need to build some more and that is our industry organization's perspective that we need to push forward on offshore wind because we're going to need quite some volume of that the years to come.

Mona W Minde, Studio (15:37.763)

Norwegian government has promised an updated plan for offshore wind or or strategy for offshore wind in Norway, where where Fornybar Norge, amongst others, have given input. Do you think there will be a change from the political side?

Jon (15:52.719)

Yes, I really hope so. think that is the most welcome strategy plan that will come this autumn. We are along with other organizations in NHO and also the trade unions together has given an input to the Ministry, to the government. So I hope so. even more important is that this plan or at least

a common agreement broadly in the parliament is necessary if we're going to succeed to proceed with the offshore wind because we need a quite robust political support over time if it's going to be stable enough to attract investors and developers to engage in new Norwegian projects.

So, but I'm a little optimistic and I think there is a majority of offshore wind positive parties at the parliament. So I hope that this autumn we can have a majority for a way forward for offshore wind networks.

Mona W Minde, Studio (17:09.893)

It's great to hear you say you are optimistic and if I understand you correctly, you're saying that we need to think long term. Don't panic if things are are now a little bit uncertain. Is that correct? Yeah.

Jon (17:25.066)

Absolutely, having this job you have to be optimistic and impatient in a combo to stay in this game.

I think we need to... It's a good thing that Norway is still in offshore wind, even though it has been bumpy. It has been bumpy all over, but especially difficult in Norway due to we were starting exactly at a time where things were lagging internationally, globally. But...

It is an industry and a technology that has a future in front of it. I say that, as I can just repeat that, it's that's where Europe go to build enough power to get independent from Russia and also to electrify and achieve climate goals. And still there will not be available areas on the shore to build all the energy we need in the energy transition.

So I believe it's going to proceed.

Recently Denmark had two auctions which ended with a strike price of 74 Norwegian øre per kWh and 80 Norwegian øre per kWh which are very good prices. Practically

that means that there will not be many taxpayer kroner to the developers because

Jon (19:08.56)

energy price in Denmark in 2025 for instance were 96 Norwegian øre per kilowatt hour so that means that that will be a positive that will be a could be even be a net positive project for the Danish state so so it's it's it's also showing very clearly that the prices are now going down again the LCOE cost is going down which makes me optimistic

on behalf of Bottom Fixed. For floating we still have an industry way to go to get the cost down, but I think Norway is well situated to take part in that development.

Mona W Minde, Studio (19:53.999)

I agree with you and I think what you said is a good signal to to our students. Are there any last words before we end off you want to say to our students?

Jon (20:09.038)

I would like to say that I think Offshore Wind has the future in front of it.

Even though it's tough in Norway at the moment, it might return. It could take some time. But I think on a European level, working in offshore wind will be still an attractive place to be the next 10 and 20 years, because it's going to be built a lot of renewable offshore wind in the North Sea. Up to 200 300 gigawatt hours, no, gigawatt are planned in total capacity in the

North Sea areas, so it's going to be huge and if you are willing to move around in that area, among countries in that area, it should be lots of opportunities years to come. And I believe in the long term also for Norway, in Norway.

Mona W Minde, Studio (21:12.945)

A lot of exciting opportunities in the job market. That's good to hear.

Jon (21:17.492)

Absolutely.

Thank you very much for your time. it's been great talking to you.

Jon (21:24.92)

Thank you, glad to be here.

I learned more about the situation in Norway at the moment, and I hope also our listeners are happy to hear your that even though it's things seem to be a bit

Mona W Minde, Studio (21:40.123)

slow in Norway it's still reason to be optimistic. so it's great to hear. So thank you very much and thank you to our listeners for listening to the podcast.

