

Outdoor Recreation and Sustainable Development: Part of the Problem or Part of the Solution?

Presentasjon på seminaret "Verdifull natur – Miljø 2015-konferansen III" arrangert av Norges
forskningsråd
Thon Hotel Opera, 15. - 16. februar 2011

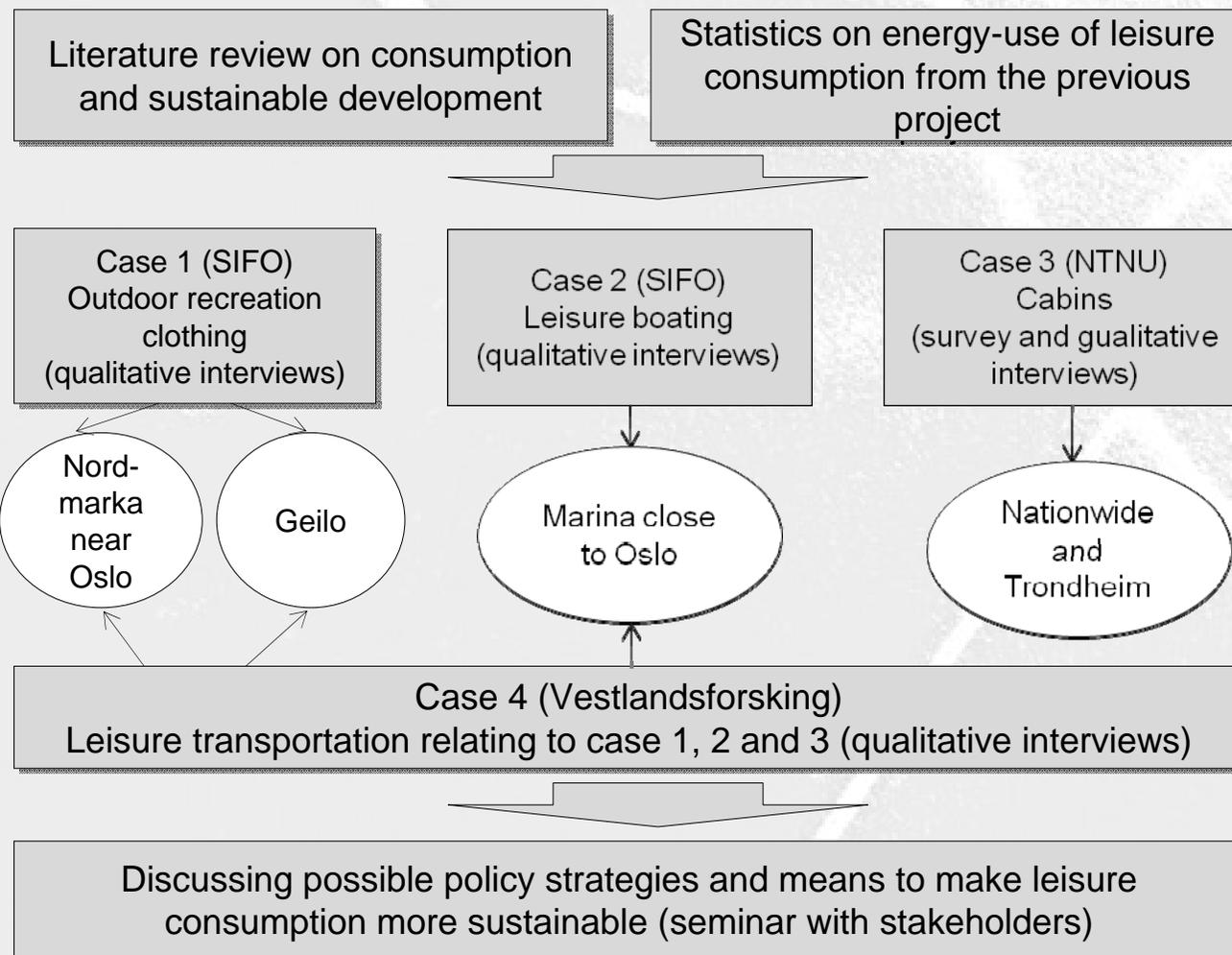
Carlo Aall
Vestlandsforskning



Background and project organisation

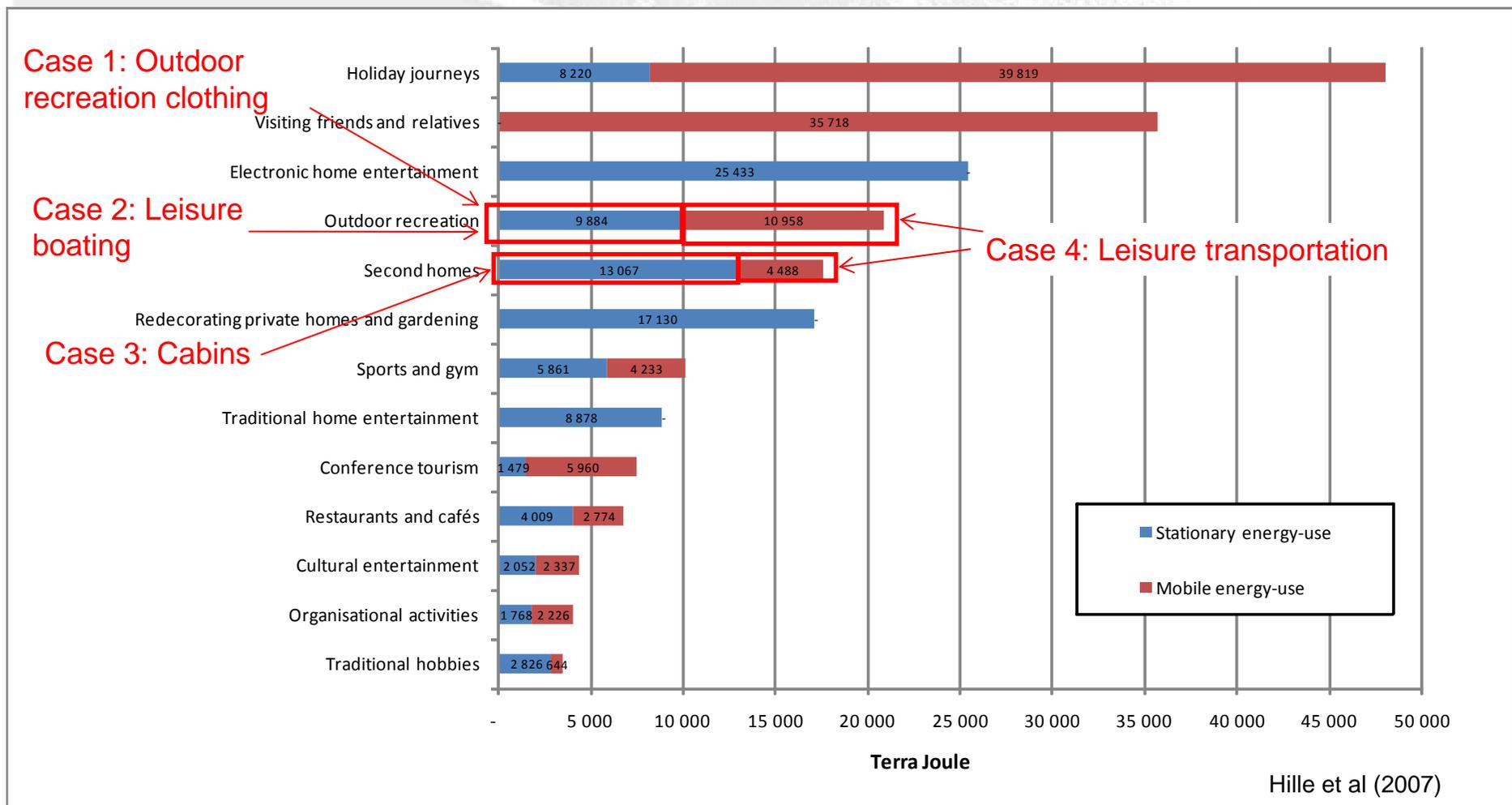
- **A follow-up project of a previous project on mapping the total energy-use of leisure consumption by Norwegians**
 - Hille, J., Aall, C., Klepp, I.G. (2007). *Environmental impacts of leisure consumption by Norwegians* (VF-report 1/07). Sogndal: Western Norway Research Institute. (In Norwegian with English summary). www.vestforsk.no/www/download.do?id=638
 - Aall, C. (2011). The Energy Use of Leisure consumption in Norway: Analysis and Reduction Strategy, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* (in press).
- **Current project: “Outdoor Recreation and Sustainable Development: part of the problem or part of the solution?”**
 - Cooperation between Vestlandsforsking (project leader), SIFO and NTNU
 - Finished in March 2011
 - **RQ 1:** What are the drivers of leisure-time consumption with respect to both structural and individual elements?
 - **RQ 2:** What means and policies can be developed to a) reduce the environmental impacts of leisure-time consumption, and b) enhance the transfer of low-impact practices from leisure to every-day consumption?

Project design



The energy-use context of our selected cases

Total energy-use of leisure consumption by Norwegians in 2001



Two competing hypothesis on the relationship between outdoor recreation and sustainability

- **Outdoor recreation as sustainable consumption**
 - Directly: If more leisure time imply less working time, this could in turn lead to less time to earn money and less consumption.
 - Indirectly: When doing outdoor recreation we learn more sustainable consumption habits which we can bring back home and introduce in our everyday consumption.
 - Thus, more leisure will result in more sustainability
- **Outdoor recreation as conspicuous consumption**
 - Directly: During leisure time people take time “off” from their environmental attitudes as well as their daily activities and allows for more luxury.
 - Indirectly: When doing outdoor recreation we learn less sustainable consumption habits which we can bring back home and introduce in our everyday consumption.
 - Thus, more leisure will result in less sustainability

Case 1 Outdoor recreation clothing

Observed changes

- Increased consumption (+135% in money spent from 1999-2009)
- Increased use of problematic materials and technologies, such as nanotechnology and healthy chemicals like Gore tex ®
- Increased diversification in outdoor recreation clothing available - not only for particular activities, but also for particular users

Possible drivers

- Reduced prices per unit of equipment, partly due to increased import from Asia
- Rapid technological changes, partly driven by ongoing development in competitive sports clothing
- Increased focus on health, slimness and exercise
- Increased focus on safety
- Diversification of outdoor activities
- Limited offer of environmentally labeled outdoor recreation clothing

Case 2 Cabins

Observed changes

- Increase in number (+ 5.000/ year 1973-2008; presently 0,09 cabins/capita)
- Increase in average floor area (ratio residential home/cabin has decreased from 170/100 in 1983 to 129/100 in 2008)
- Increased technical standard (share of cabins with electricity, water supply, water closet, bathroom and dishwasher increased from 13% in 1970-89 to 43% after 1990)
- Shift from medium size cabin areas with private ownership to multi-activity leisure towns with time-share
- Still, few changes when it comes to motivation to own a cabin (outdoor activities and relaxing with family and friends still the main motivation)

Possible drivers

- A shift in ideology of having a cabin, from achieving “a simpler life” to “an easier life”
- A shift in perceived changes, from change of daily life routines to change of place
- Limited focus on environmental issues in land-use regulations and permits for building cabins

Case 3 Leisure boats

Observed changes

- Increase in number (+24.000/year 1970-2010; presently 0,19 boats/capita)
- Increase in size, comfort, technical standard and motor capacity
- New marinas for leisure boating established, opening up new coastal areas for leisure boating
- Still, few changes when it comes to motivation to own a leisure boat (experiencing nature)

Possible drivers

- Increase in prices of cabins, making it even more popular to buy leisure boats
- “The three foot disease”: a tendency to constantly buy boats that are slightly bigger (namely three foot) than the previous
- Limited offer of environmentally labeled leisure boats

Case 4 Leisure transportation

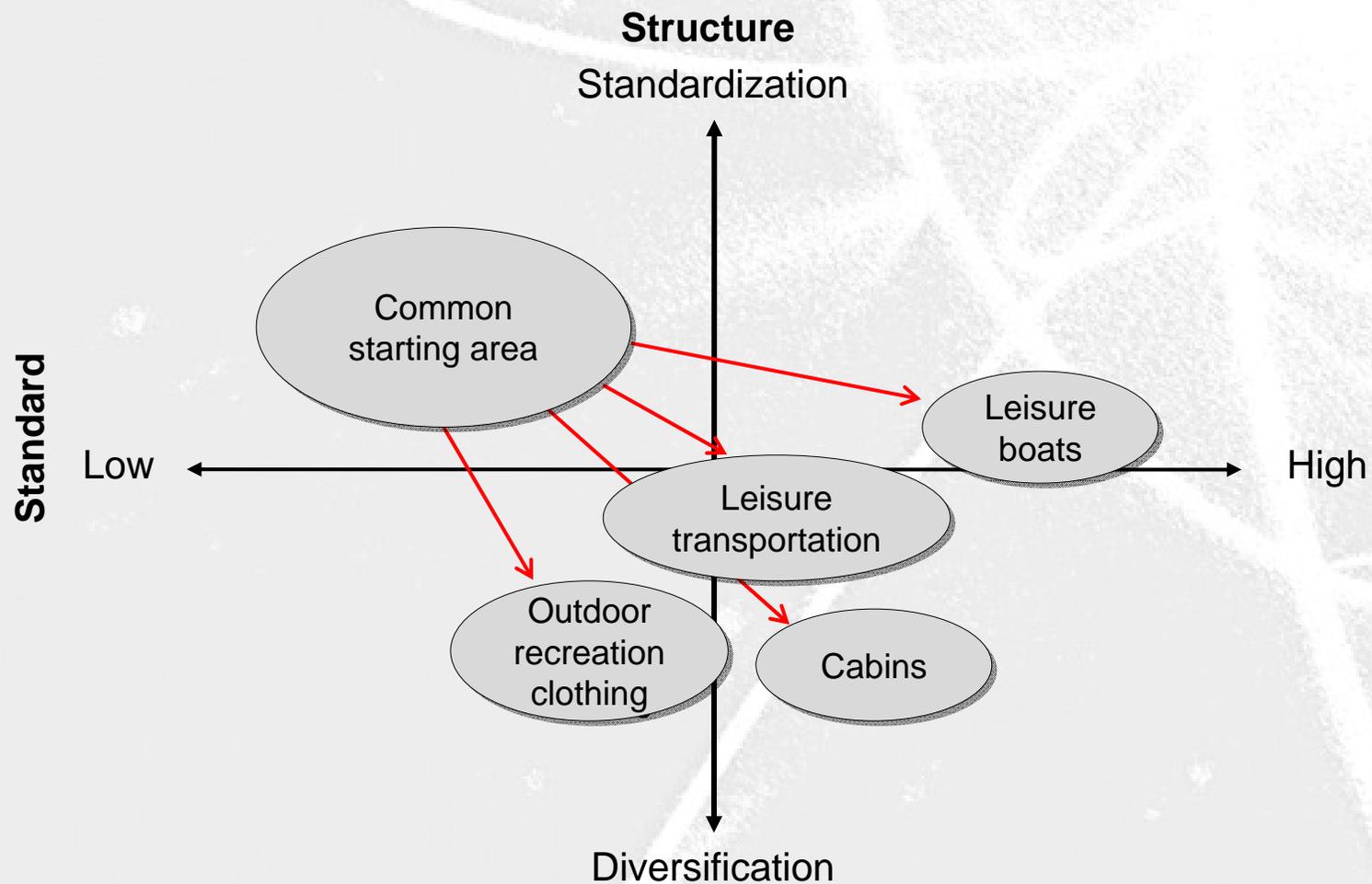
Observed changes

- Increased transportation work and share of private car use for long-distance transportation to and from outdoor recreation areas and cabins (on a pkm bases, car share of 95% and 85% respectively in 2001)
- Only small changes in short-distance transportation to and from outdoor recreation areas (6% increase in total pkm; share of private car decreased from 56% to 52% and share of walking increased from 29% to 33%; all figures for the periode1992-2009)

Possible drivers

- Use of private car is experienced as cheaper than public transportation
- More outdoor recreation equipment leads to more frequent use of cars
- Higher car ownership
- Increased number of outdoor recreation activities increases the need for private car in order get to all the recreation locations
- Poor public transportation service at destinations
- Lack of applying transport reducing land-use planning for the case of establishing new areas for outdoor recreation and cabins

Conclusion 1: Main changes in outdoor recreation consumption



Conclusion 2: Main drivers of outdoor recreation consumption

Direction	Drivers			
	Policy	Consumer	Market	Infrastructure
Creating <u>more</u> sustainability	Few if any	Limited environmental focus Dominating purpose of activities is about experiencing nature	Few if any	Few if any
Creating <u>less</u> sustainability	Land-use planning and regulations relating to outdoor recreation and cabins Public transportation not focused on leisure transportation	A shift in outdoor recreation ideology from achieving “a simpler life” to “an easier life” Diversification of outdoor activities	Reduced prices on outdoor recreation products and services	Increasing in number and types of outdoor recreation activity locations available

Conclusion 3: Policy suggestions

- The outdoor recreation industry needs to change!

22.07.2008

Klimaspark fra Stormberg

STORMBERG

Den norske turtøyprodusenten har innført pant på brukte klær og var den første som ble klimanøytralisert med FN godkjente klimakvoter. Nå etterlyser Stormberg et større miljøengasjement fra andre norske bedrifter. Turtøyprodusenten mener det er på tide at næringslivet tar sin del av ansvaret for klimasituasjonen.

- However – outdoor recreation should not be “free time” for environmental policymaking! An even more important task is to **expand existing policy strategies and means** directed at changing everyday consumption patterns to **include leisure consumption**

	Reduce the <u>least</u> sustainable modes of consumption	Promote the <u>most</u> sustainable modes of consumption
Clothing	Mandatory labeling of environmentally harmful chemicals and problematic technologies	Establish better borrowing or renting schemes
Cabins	Regulating size and technical standards of buildings should also apply for cabins	Expand system of energy standards for buildings to include cabins
Leisure boats	Tougher regulations on maximum power on motor boats Limitations on boat size for access to berths, public sheltered harbors and guest harbors in order to reduce boat size	Tougher regulation of speed and noise and secure public access to the shoreline in order to promote the use of paddling, rowing boats and small sailing boats Establish more day and night harbors nearby surroundings of major cities in order to encourage shorter boat trips
Leisure transportation	Transport reducing land-use planning should also apply for outdoor recreation facilities and cabin areas Include leisure transportation in strategies for limiting car	Include leisure transportation when strengthening public transportation
General	Expand eco labeling to include outdoor recreation services and products	“Green consumer advice” should include leisure products and services

Final comments

- **What characterizes leisure consumption for the case of Norwegian outdoor recreation?**
 - Definitely not “sustainable consumption”
 - Probably not “conspicuous consumption”
 - Perhaps an intermediate concept - **“convenience consumption”** - is more appropriate signaling that current outdoor recreation consumption patterns in general leads to less sustainability, not due to the consumer forgetting his or her environmental attitudes, but more due to structural failures of society
- **What is then The Main Driver that lies behind the unsustainability of leisure consumption development?**
 - Leisure consumption reveals itself as a crucial factor in maintaining the economic structure of Western society. Thus in order to increase substantially the sustainability of leisure consumption we have to **challenge the hegemony of economic growth** as the number one goal of society.

Kontaktinformasjon:

Carlo Aall

Mobil: 991 27 222

E-post: caa@vestforsk.no

Vestlandsforsking

Postboks 163

6851 Sogndal