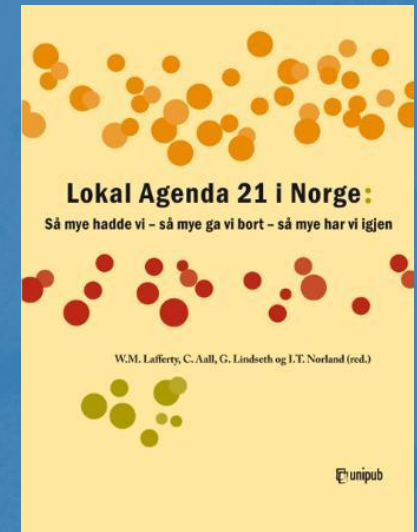
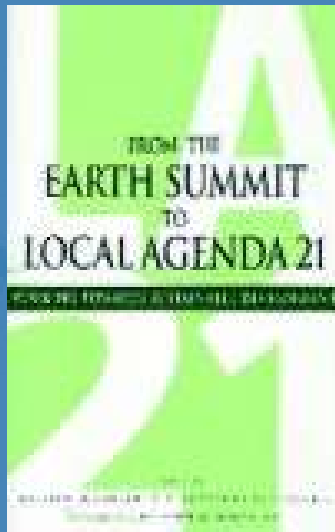


Det kommunale miljøvernets historie



Presentasjon på Vestlandsforskning sitt Finseseminar
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The *short* historic version: the formation of public environmental organisations

- **1970s: at the *national* level:**
 - The Ministry of Environment (1972)
- **1980s: at the *regional* level**
 - The environmental department at the County Governor (1982)
- **1990s: at the *local* level**
 - Earmarked national funding of an environmental officer in all municipalities (1991-97)

An *institutional* approach to the history of local environmental policy

- **Institutions are something more than “organisations”:**
 - (other) *formal* structures (e.g. laws)
 - *informal* structures (e.g. norms, established practices, networks etc)
 - **Environmental policy is produced also by other institutions than those within the environmental policy sector**
- ⇒ **Thus we need to go further back in history and look at the processes leading up to the formation of the public environmental organisations**

Important elements in the *longer* history of local environmental policy

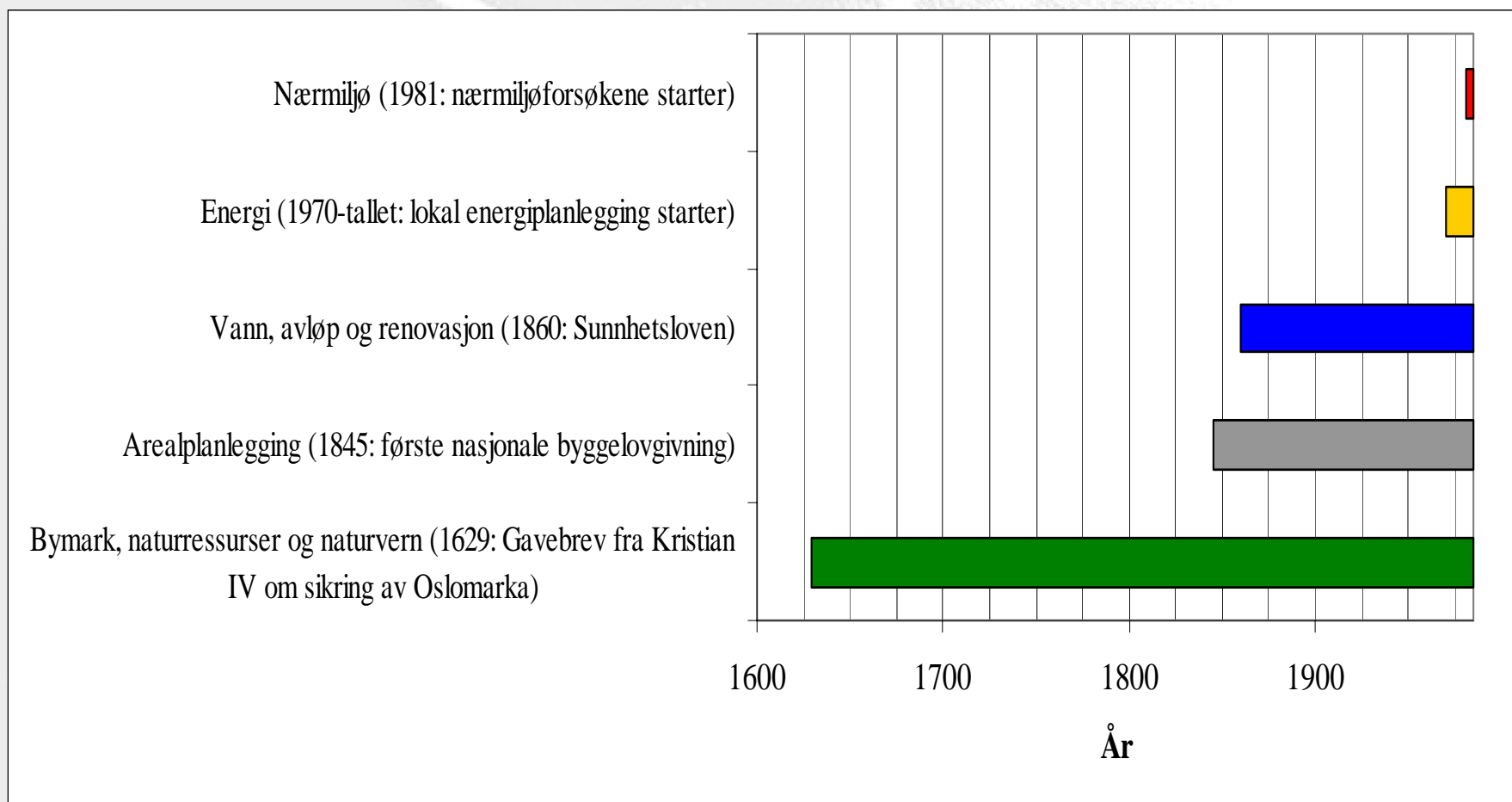
National stages:

- Up to the 1980s: the *pre-institutional* stage
- 1985-2001: the *institutionalising* stage
 - 1985-91: the *trial* period
 - 1991-1997: the *reform* period
 - 1997-2001: the *Local Agenda 21* period
- 2001-06: the *de-institutionalising* stage
 - A strong reduction in the number of municipal environmental officers
- 2007→: the *re-institutionalising* stage
 - “Livskraftige kommuner” and “Grønne energikommer”

International impulses:

- 1972: UN Conference on the Human Environment
 - The energy debate
- 1980s: Emergence of international environmental treaties
 - e.g The North Sea Treaty
- 1987: Report from the UN World Commission for Environment and Development (WCR)
- 1992: UN Conference on Environment and Development
 - Agenda 21
 - Convention on biodiversity
 - Convention on climate
- 2000->
 - The “new” climate change debate

The *pre-institutional* stage: establishing the substantive basis for local environmental policy



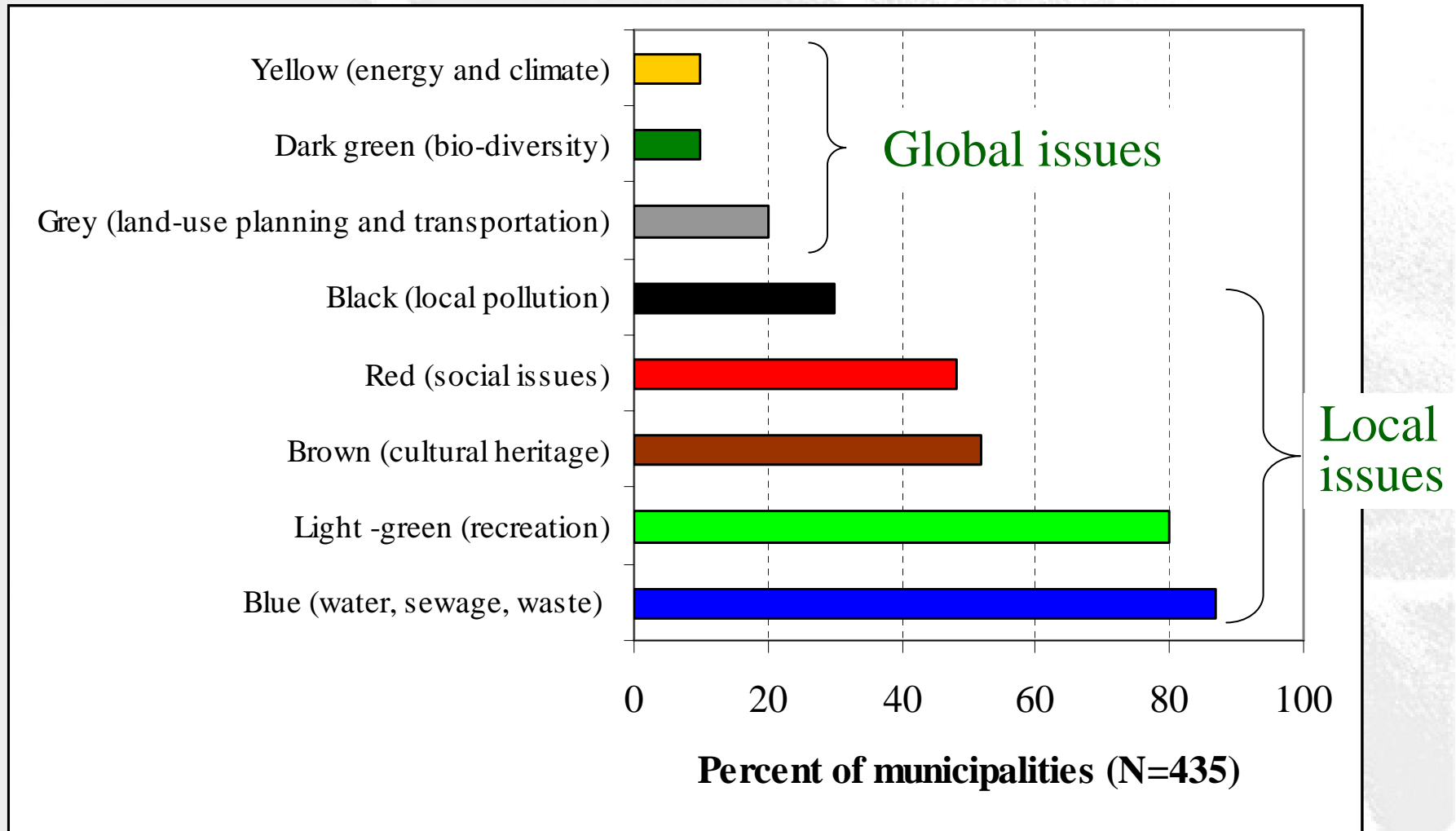
The institutionalising stage (1): 1985-1991: the *trial* period

- Four different programmes with national funding of environmental officers in 25 % of Norwegian municipalities
- A *national* impulse in strengthening the local competence within the **green nature protection**, **blue water/waste/sewage**, black pollution and **grey land-use planning** line
- An *international* impulse in involving local level of government in the **yellow energy and climate** and **red social** line

The institutionalising stage (2): 1991-1997: the *reform* period

- **Gov. White Paper in 1991:**
 - National funding of environmental officers in *all* municipalities from 1991 to 1997
- **Many development projects within three subjects:**
 - Further develop the national-local steering dialogue
 - Test the transfer of responsibility from national to local level within the **green nature protection** and **blue water/sewage/waste** line
 - Develop new local policy areas: **cultural landscape**, **bio-diversity**, and **transport and energy**
- **Diverging national steering signals**
 - *Little horizontal integration* of sustainability within important sectors like transport and energy at the *national* level
 - *Unclear* signals as to whether or not the local level should work also with global environmental problems (in addition to local problems)

The institutionalising stage (3): What did the municipalities prioritise (as for 1994)?



The institutionalising stage (4) 1997-2001: the *LA 21* period

- **National initiatives**

- LA21 one out of four main topics in a new Gov White Paper (1997) on sustainable development
- Policy notes signalling more weight on municipalities working with global environmental problems
- National funding of regional LA21 coordinators in all counties
- Establish a LA21 Internet resource (www.agenda21.no)
- National funding to support local mapping of *bio-diversity* in all municipalities
- Develop new local policy areas: projects on *sustainable consumption* (7 municipalities) and *climate change mitigation* (35 municipalities).

- **Main experience in the municipalities**

- Lack of a corresponding *National Agenda 21* a major hindrance when trying to work with global environmental problems

The 2002 → de-institutionalising stage (1): *general* trends in society

- **Loss of interest among the public for global environmental problems**
 - Share of population deeply concerned with the problems of climate change:
 - 1995: 30%; 2001: 9%.
- **Neo-liberalism and New Public Management**
 - Increase in number of municipalities with investment restrictions:
 - 2001: 13%; 2004: 25%.

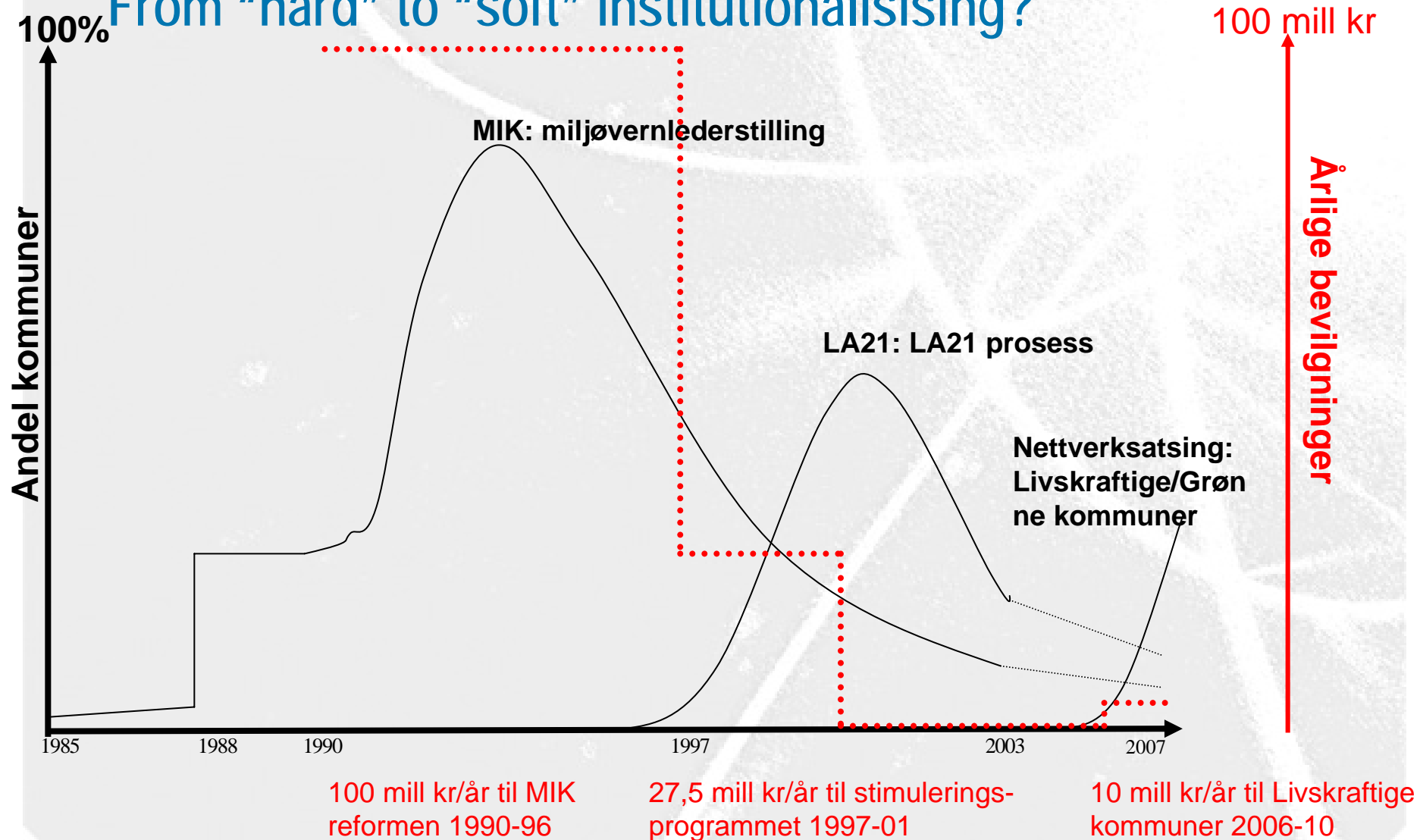
The 2002-2006: de-institutionalising stage (2): trends in *local-national* policy

- **Total stop in national funding of LA21 or any other local environmental policy initiatives**
- **No national follow-up of the local trial activities on *sustainable consumption* and *climate change mitigation***
- **A shift from “local + global” to “only local” in the policy signals from national to local government**
- **A dramatic reduction in formal environmental competence at the local level**

2007->: re-institutionalising of local environmental policy

- **A shift back to the "old" MK-line; stressing the importance of the local level**
 - happened at the end of the last "borgelig" government, after a shift from Børge Brende (H) to Knut Hareide (Krf) as minister of environment, and was further strengthened after Norway got a new socialist government.
- **Ministry of Environment commissioning studies on how to strengthen the role of local government in environmental policy**
- **Still – the role of local government in climate policy is unclear!**
 - Part of the discussion on whether or not climate policy regulation also should include "consumption" or should be restricted to "production"

From "hard" to "soft" institutionalising?



Conclusion (1)

- **Norway had a *formative period* during the 1970s regarding the *national policy level*:**
 - Discussions on establishing a *superior* Ministry of natural resources as a parallel to the Ministry of finance
 - However; the formative moment never materialised, thus ending of with a “mainstream” Ministry of environment
 - [Christiansen, P. (ed.) (1996): *Governing the Environment: Politics, Policy, and Organization in the Nordic Countries*. Nord 1996:5. Nordisk Ministerråd, Copenhagen]

Conclusion (2)

- **Norway had also a *formative period* during the 1990s, but this time regarding the *local* policy level:**
 - Large scale development and reforms aiming at institutionalising environmental policy at the local level
 - Also here the formative moment never materialised. After a strong period during the 1990s we have experienced a *de-institutionalising* of local environmental policy due to neo-liberalistic trends in public management combined with a drop in public concern about global environmental problems
 - [Aall, Carlo (2000): *When is change change? From environment protection to sustainable development in Norwegian municipalities?* PhD-thesis, University of Aalborg, Danmark]

Conclusion (3)

- **We are presently witnessing efforts to re-institutionalise local environmental policy**
 - New policy signals in national policy documents
 - New laws strengthening the role of local government in environmental policy (adjustments in the planning act, new biodiversity act)
 - Setting up of a large scale network project (Livskraftige kommuner og Grønne energikommuner) involving up to 1/3 of all municipalities
- **Still – some unresolved challenges:**
 - How to deal with the challenges of “small municipalities”
 - How to deal with the challenges of “loss of environmental officers”
 - The still ongoing (?) de-regulation and “modernisation” of public management