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# Ethical dimensions of social conflict in offshore wind

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Teknologi for et bedre samfunn





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# Offshore Wind: The saviour of the Energy Transition?

- Foreseeable fast and intense growth of offshore wind in short period
  - Meeting European energy production targets
  - Reaching climate goals
- Positive institutional landscape for implementation
  - Political & business support: countries (e.g., Norway, Belgium or Spain)
  - New areas and projects all over Europe (and world)
- Growing social awareness and contestation
  - Potential spreading effect

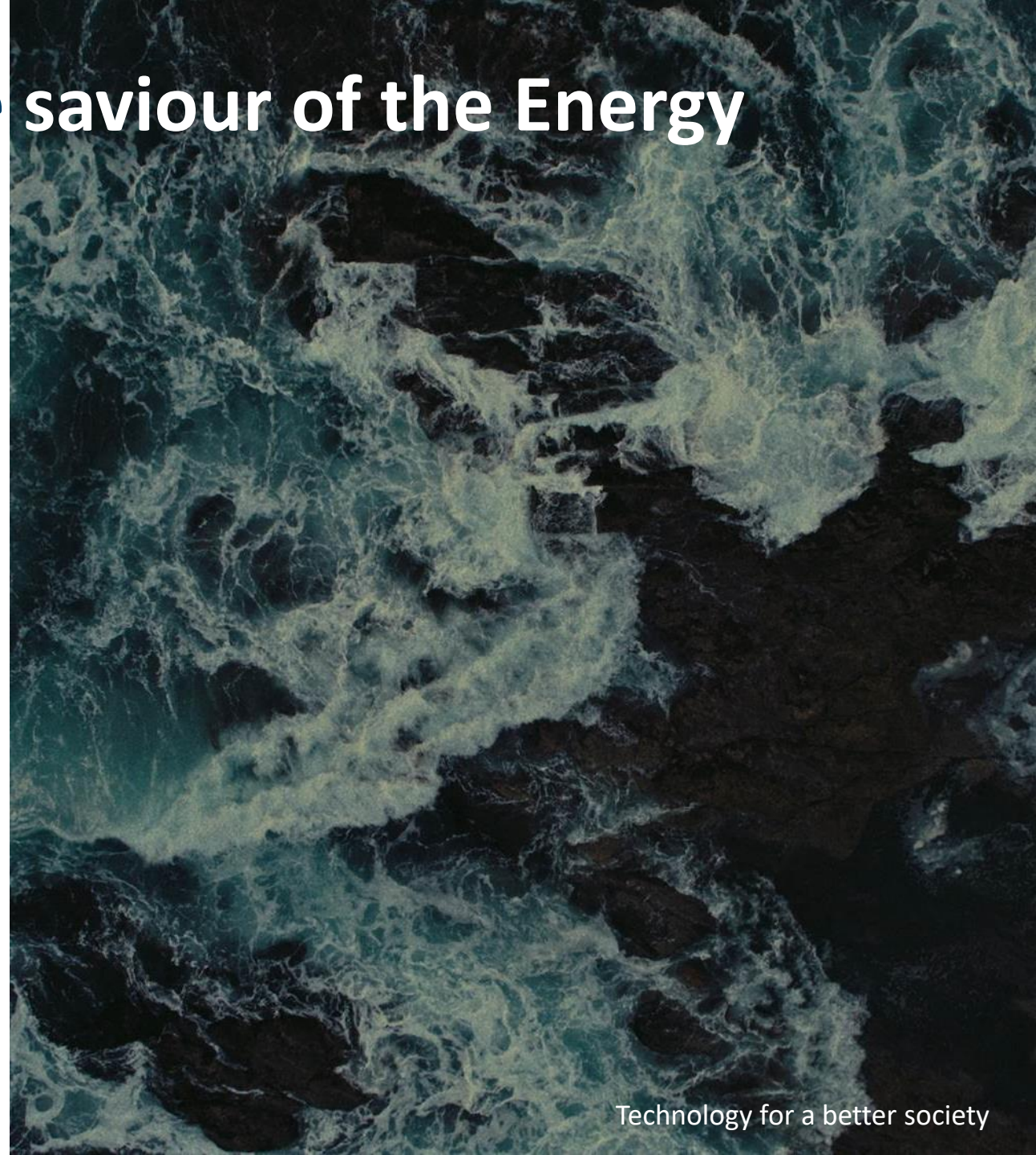




# Offshore Wind: The saviour of the Energy Transition?

## Research Questions:

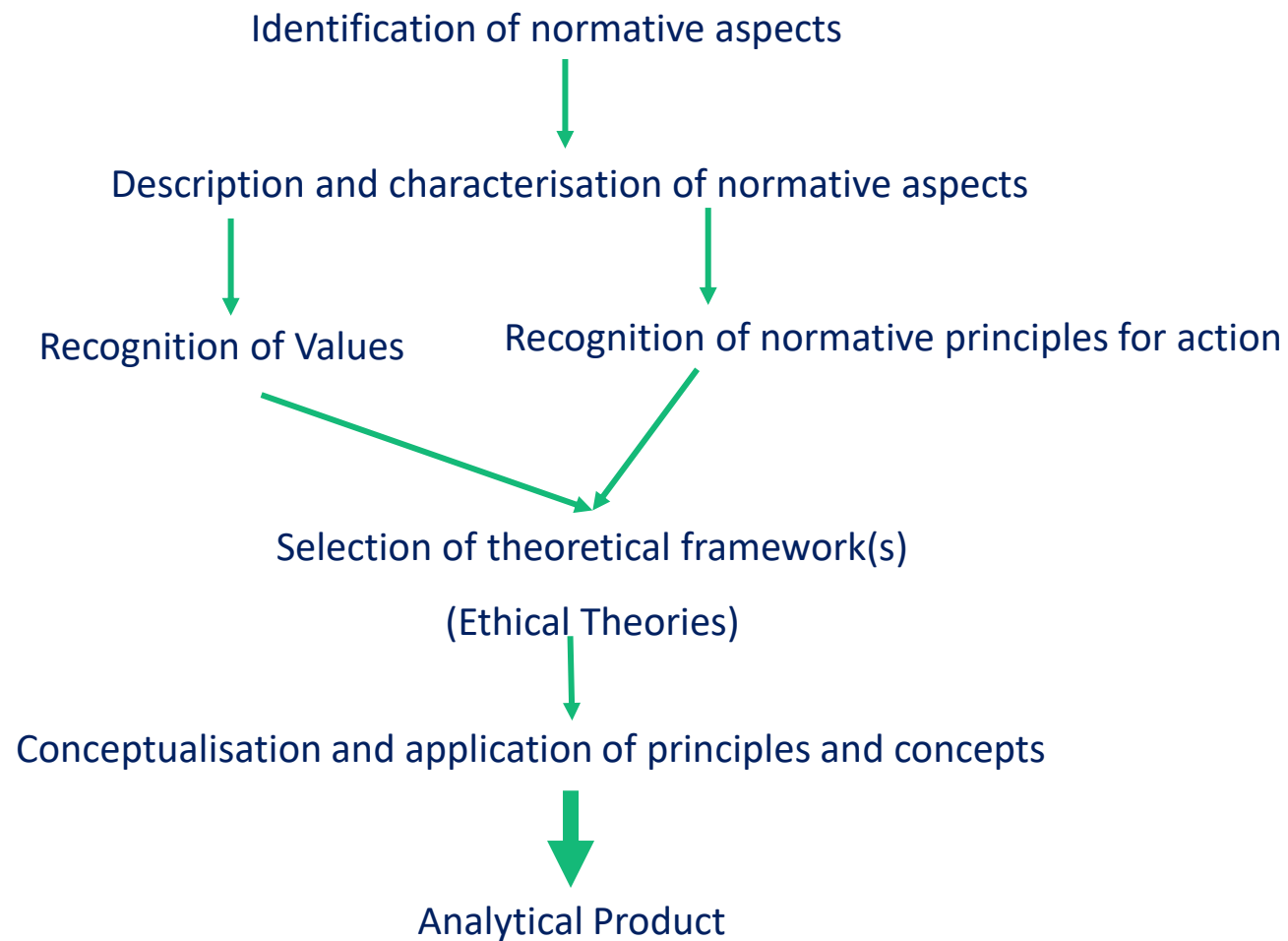
- What are the most relevant **ethical principles** and **values** embedded in offshore wind debate?
- What **competing** normative **frameworks** fuel contestation?





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# Methodology



## Ethical Analysis

- Normative principles
- Axiological examination
  
- General debate
- Case Studies



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# Social Controversies: Normative Aspects

- Key Values

- Justice
- Nature

Axiological examination

- Normative principles

- *Great (er) Good*
- Right to fruition
- 'No harm', 'No Interference'

Principle examination





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# Social Controversies: Normative Aspects

## Axiological examination

### Main Findings:

- Equitable distribution of benefits
- Recipients of the benefits (Which agents?)
- Compensations (How?)
- Fair representation
- Actual agency
- Lack of good process guidelines
- FG representation
- Acknowledgement of misrepresentation and underrepresentation

Justice

Intersectionality

**(Energy) Justice** (McCauley et al., 2013)

- Distributive
- Procedural
- Recognition



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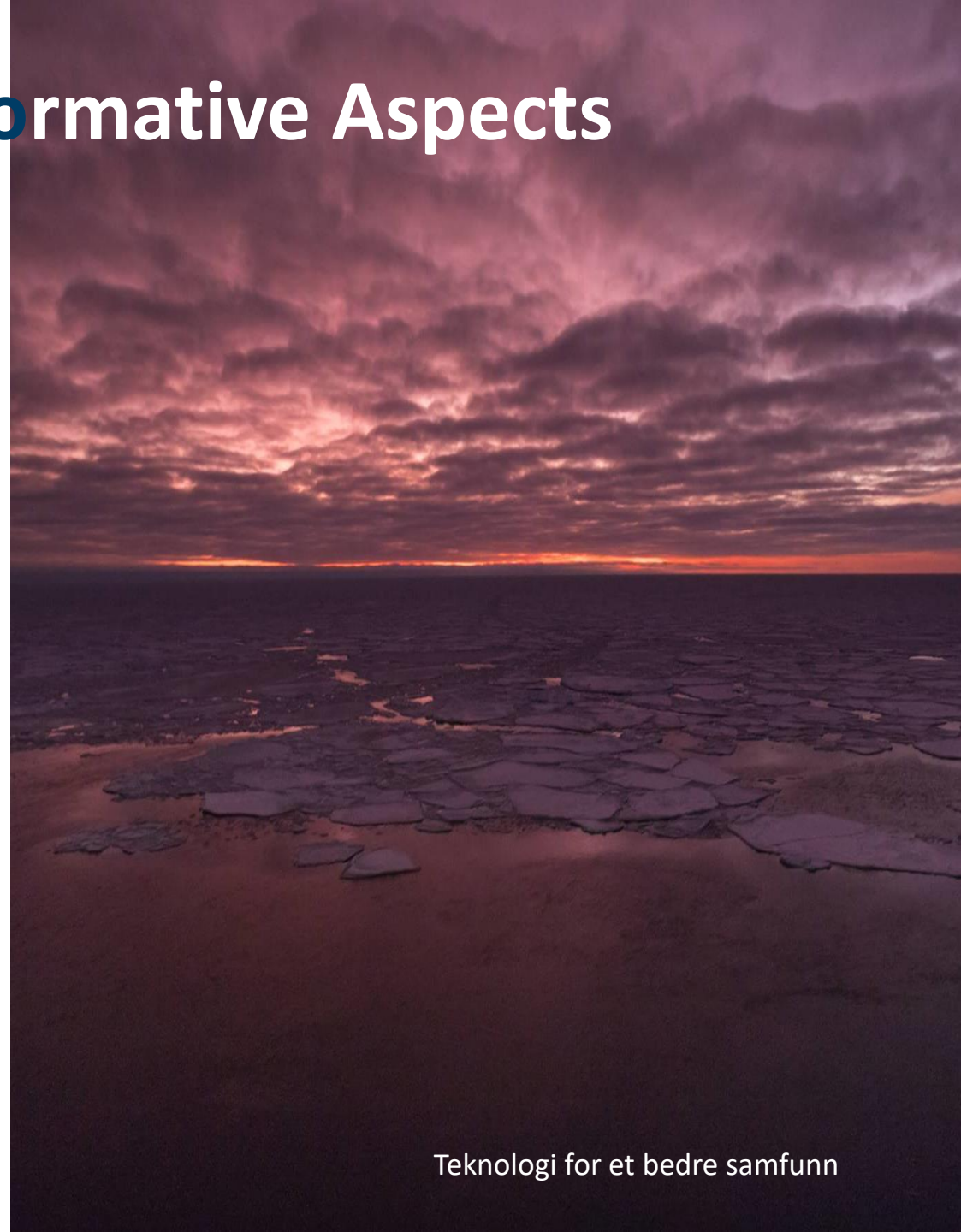
# Social Controversies: Normative Aspects

## Axiological examination

### Main Findings:

### Nature

- With (moral) Value
  - Non-human welfare
- Without (moral) Value
- Raking of relevance (climate vs biodiversity)
- Source of resources
  - Human wellbeing







# Social Controversies: Normative Aspects

## Principle examination

### Main Findings:

- *Good* Technology
  - Increase amount of good (benefits – burdens)
  - (Increase or decrease) Human wellbeing
- *Right* Technology
  - Our duties towards nature- potential effect on environment
  - Rights (freedom, fruition...)





# Case Studies: Taggen Wind park

- (10 year) Process to licence an offshore wind power in Sweden
  - Did not succeed
- 183 wind power poles
- Conflicts:
  - Population
  - Local authorities vs central government
  - Other economic and social sectors (e.g. fisheries, army)

## Main Findings:

- Opaque licencing process
  - Uncertainty about (unforeseeable) negative impacts
  - Changes in perception by local authorities
- To what extent was the project *good (enough)*?
  - Uncertainty how negative it could be (e.g. shooting range, creational activities ...)
  - How what extent it would affect human wellbeing

# Case Studies: Utsira Nord

- Section of Norwegian sea dedicated to offshore wind power
- More than 100km<sup>2</sup>
- Conflicts:
  - Populations
  - Other economic sectors (e.g. fisheries)

## Main Findings:

- To what extent will the project be *good (enough)*?
  - Uncertainty how positive it will be (e.g. Norway, climate...)
  - How it will potential affect human wellbeing
- *Right* technological option and/or site
- *Unfair* competition (rules) with other sectors

# Preliminary Conclusions

## Social controversies on offshore wind have strong normative roots

Face heads on clashing concepts of nature and justice

Positive (economic, social, environmental...) impacts do not concede moral acceptability

Identify an address conveniently the agents and their normative stance

Need to reflect on compensation for lost wellbeing (individual scale)

(Un)definition of procedural guidelines

Integrate temporal and dynamic dimensions

**Addressing normative issues later in the process can jeopardise altogether the project**



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