Universität Zürich[UZH]

Geographisches Institut

A Decarbonization Frontier for Green Transition: Fosen Wind Park and the Imagination of Geographical Space in Fosen, Norway

GEO 511 Master's Thesis

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Abstract – English version

The Northern part of Scandinavia is inhabited by the indigenous Sámi people. Their territory is called "Sápmi" and there are some differences between the Sámi and the other inhabitants of Norway regarding several cultural aspects (Todal, 1998; Lantto, 2010; Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). Historically, Sápmi has been colonised by Norway because of the territory's potential for the extraction of resources and other strategic advantages (Gaski, 1993; Aamotsbakken, 2008). This shows that already historically, the Sápmi has been contested for resources. Drawing upon that, this Master's thesis has investigated a modern frontier for resource extraction in the central Norwegian Fosen area. In 2020, the Fosen wind park, one of the largest wind farms in Europe, was built and since then produces high amounts of wind energy (Fosen Vind, n.d.). The construction of that wind farm has led to several tensions between different actors, because the space was priorly used as a reindeer winter pasture (Mósesdóttir, 2024). For that reason, in this thesis, the research focus was on the comparison of the interpretations of the space and of the wind park at Fosen. To do so, the South Sámi people's, the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA's and the State of Norway's perspectives have been analysed and compared. For the analysis of the sources, such as scientific articles or YouTube videos, a critical discourse analysis has been applied. This method was insofar useful, as it allowed to critically assess the embeddedness of the sources in their contexts and their underlying power structures (Kress, 1990). Furthermore, the concepts "Frontiers" and "Green Colonialism" have been used to theoretically analyse the findings. Eventually, the analysis has revealed that the geographical space at Fosen does not get interpreted in the same way which led to frictions. On the one side, the South Sámi people have an intimate interrelationship with the Fosen space and consider it as an important part of the Sámi culture (Berg-Nordlie, 2022; Fjellheim, 2023). And on the other side, Fosen Vind DA and the State of Norway imagine the Fosen space as a possibility to extract the resource wind because of its good and strong wind conditions (Kringstad, 2016; Statkraft, n.d.c). They frame the wind park as a way to decarbonise the energy production sector in order to make the green transition happen (Korsnes *et al.*, 2023; Mósesdóttir, 2024). Finally to conclude, this Master's thesis has argued that the wind park in Fosen, instead of a classical (resource) frontier, led to the emergence of a "decarbonization frontier" that makes use of the wind resources at Fosen to achieve carbon neutrality and thus to decarbonise the energy sector (Dietz and Dorn, 2026).

Abstract – Deutsche Version

Der nördliche Teil Skandinaviens wird bewohnt von dem indigenen Sámivolk. Ihr Gebiet wird “Sápmi” genannt und es gibt einige Unterschiede zwischen den Sámi und den anderen Bewohnern Norwegens in Bezug auf diverse kulturelle Aspekte (Todal, 1998; Lantto, 2010; Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). Aus historischer Sicht wurde Sápmi von Norwegen kolonisiert wegen des territorialen Potenzials für die Ressourcenextraktion und weiteren strategischen Vorteilen (Gaski, 1993; Aamotsbakken, 2008). Das zeigt, dass Sápmi bereits früher wegen seiner Ressourcen umstritten war. Auf dieser Grundlage hat diese Masterarbeit eine moderne Ressourcenfrontier in der Fosenregion in Zentralnorwegen untersucht. In 2020 wurde der Fosen Windpark, eine der grössten Windparkanlagen Europas, gebaut und produziert seither grosse Mengen Windenergie (Fosen Vind, n.d.). Der Bau dieser Windanlage führte zu diversen Spannungen zwischen verschiedenen Akteuren, weil der Ort zuvor als Rentierwinterherde genutzt worden war (Mósesdóttir, 2024). Aus diesem Grund lag der Forschungsfokus dieser Arbeit auf dem Vergleich von den Interpretationen vom Raum und vom Windpark in Fosen. Hierfür wurden die Perspektiven der Südsámi, des Windparkbetreibers Fosen Vind DA und des norwegischen Staates analysiert und verglichen. Für die Analyse der Quellen, wie wissenschaftlichen Artikeln oder YouTube-Videos, wurde eine kritische Diskursanalyse durchgeführt. Diese Methode war insofern nützlich, da sie erlaubt hat, die Verankerung der Quellen in ihren Kontexten und zugrundeliegenden Machtstrukturen zu beurteilen (Kress, 1990). Ausserdem wurden die Konzepte “Frontiers” und “Green Colonialism” verwendet, um die Erkenntnisse theoretisch zu analysieren. Schliesslich hat die Analyse ergeben, dass der geographische Raum in Fosen nicht gleich interpretiert wird, was zu Friction führt. Einerseits haben die Südsámi eine intime Wechselbeziehung mit dem Raum in Fosen und bezeichnen ihn als wichtigen Teil der Sámikultur (Berg-Nordlie, 2022; Fjellheim, 2023). Und andererseits stellen sich Fosen Vind DA und der norwegische Staat den Raum in Fosen als Möglichkeit vor, um die Ressource Wind wegen den guten und starken Windbedingungen zu nutzen (Kringstad, 2016; Statkraft, n.d.c). Sie stellen den Windpark so dar, dass er einen Weg zur Dekarbonisierung des Energieproduktionssektors ist, um den Grünen Wandel voranzutreiben (Korsnes *et al.*, 2023; Mósesdóttir, 2024). Abschliessend lässt sich festhalten, dass diese Masterarbeit argumentiert, dass der Fosenwindpark, anstelle einer klassischen (Ressourcen-) Frontier, zur Entstehung einer “decarbonization frontier” führte, welche die Windressourcen in Fosen nutzt, um CO_2-Neutralität zu erreichen und so den Energiesektor dekarbonisiert (Dietz and Dorn, 2026).

Acknowledgements

When I started studying Geography in Autumn 2022, a long journey has begun. Inspired by historic geographers such as Alexander von Humboldt, I started my own journey of trying to understand how the world works. Now, after four years of studies, with this Master's thesis, my academic journey has come to an end. Nevertheless, this journey, and especially this thesis' underlying research process, would not have been possible without the support of many kind people. First of all, I want to thank my supervisor Dr. Asebe Regassa Debelo for his helpful support during the entire process and for his feedback on my thesis drafts; this has improved my thesis a lot. And furthermore, I also want to thank the Political Geography unit for the feedback on my thesis proposal when I presented it to them in Spring. And last but not least, I also want to thank my family and friends for the support they gave me during all the time, not just during the thesis process. With your support, I often re-found motivation when I needed it most. And with that, you rendered my journey much more pleasant!

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1 Introduction

Resources play an important role in our everyday life. We need cotton to produce clothes and oil to drive cars. On the other hand, the imagination of resources and space can cause the establishment of frontier spaces as they imagine a territory to be yet undiscovered (Regassa and Korf, 2018). These resource frontiers are often also part of geopolitical dynamics and lead to tensions (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). In Spring 2025 for instance, the USA and Ukraine have agreed on a resource deal while Russia's war against Ukraine was still going on (SRF, 2025). While this deal was intended to help Ukraine to reconstruct the country after the war, the agreement is also an investment deal that gives the USA access to extract Ukraine's minerals and hydrocarbons (Shaffer and Puig, 2025). This clearly demonstrates how the geopolitical dynamic of Russia's war against Ukraine has established a resource frontier in Ukraine where the USA invests by exchanging aid for resource access (Shaffer and Puig, 2025).

In the context of rising global temperatures due to climate change (Reader, 2022), renewable energy resources such as wind, water or solar power play an important role for a nation's green transition (Mósesdóttir, 2024). For that reason, China is investing heavily in solar power (Ball *et al.*, 2017). China not only produces a vast amount of solar modules, but the country also deploys a majority of the modules in its own country by establishing large solar farms in its provinces (Ball *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, Chinese companies also invest in the propagation of solar farms in other countries in the world (Ball *et al.*, 2017). Tackling climate change by establishing solar power farms hence also leads to frontiers and frontier-making dynamics.

These examples of resource extractions have shown how resources led to the emergence of frontiers. Whether it is due to existing geopolitical tensions or because of global climate change, the U.S.-Ukraine deal or China's solar power investments demonstrate how frontiers ultimately lead to tensions. While on a geopolitical level, the resource deal between the USA and Ukraine for example is seen as a victory for Ukrainian diplomacy, it also assures strategic partnership and acknowledges Russia as the aggressor of that war (Frau, 2025; Shaffer and Puig, 2025). In terms of frontier-making processes, it has been shown that the mining industry affects the everyday life of local communities and thus creates a conflict field of tension and friction between the mining company and the community as in these resource frontiers the existing local structures and property and sovereignty systems get destructed (Bond and Kirsch, 2015;

Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). It thus can be said that resource frontiers have consequences on a more abstract geopolitical as well as on an everyday level.

Another zone of friction due to resource extraction is Fosen in central Norway. The construction of the wind farm “Fosen Vind” in 2020 led to strong tensions with the local indigenous Sámi population (Mósesdóttir, 2024). The Sámi people is a European indigenous people living in the northern parts of Scandinavia (Gaski, 1993). Having their own culture and language, they differ from the rest of the Scandinavian people and their territory even has been partitioned among Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia (Lantto, 2010). The historic relationship between Norway and the Sámi people has been tensed. Through the process of “Norwegianization”, the Sámi were forced to assimilate the Norwegian culture and language and were not allowed to fully live their culture (Hansen, 2022). And even nowadays, the Sámi people face statistically more discrimination compared to Non-Sámi Norwegians (Hansen, 2022). Such an act of marginalisation against the Sámi was for instance also the construction of the Fosen wind park that the Sámi had opposed (Mósesdóttir, 2024). While the Norwegian state framed the project as a means of green transition, it signified a violation to the Sámi culture as the area of the wind park is an important reindeer pasture for the Sámi (Mósesdóttir, 2024).

Fosen wind park therefore is a highly controversial case as the different actors frame it differently: On the one hand, the wind park operator and the Norwegian state see the project as a promoter of sustainable green energy (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Fosen Vind, n.d.; Statkraft, n.d.c). But on the other hand, the wind farm is also seen as a violation of the rights of the indigenous Sámi population (Mósesdóttir, 2024). This thesis has applied a critical discourse analysis that has revealed different strands of discourses which showed how the Fosen space is imagined differently by the three actors and that different perceptions of space eventually led to frictions.

This thesis touched upon several topics such as a different perception of sovereignty and self-determination as well as the transition of the (Norwegian) energy production. To do so, the theoretical approaches of Frontier (-Making) and Green Colonialism were used to investigate the Fosen’s different spatial imagination. And with that, this Master’s thesis’ research interest was to analyse the Fosen case in order to better understand how the wind energy project in Fosen is perceived by the Sámi, Fosen Vind DA and the State of Norway.

1.1 Introduction of the Fosen case

The Fosen wind park lies in central Norway in the county of Trøndelag, near the city of Trondheim (Wikipedia, 2026; Fosen Vind, n.d.). As this is a coastal region, it offers favourable conditions for the production of wind power (Statkraft, n.d.b). After one wind park has been sold, the entire wind farm itself consists today of five wind parks with more than 200 windmills; they are distributed over several municipalities (Fosen Vind, n.d.). Fosen wind park is one of the biggest wind farms in Europe and produces a yearly amount of 2.7 TWh of electricity (Fosen Vind, n.d.). These wind parks were built in an area which also served as pastures for two Sámi reindeer herder groups (see map below) (Sellheim, 2021; Ravna, 2022).

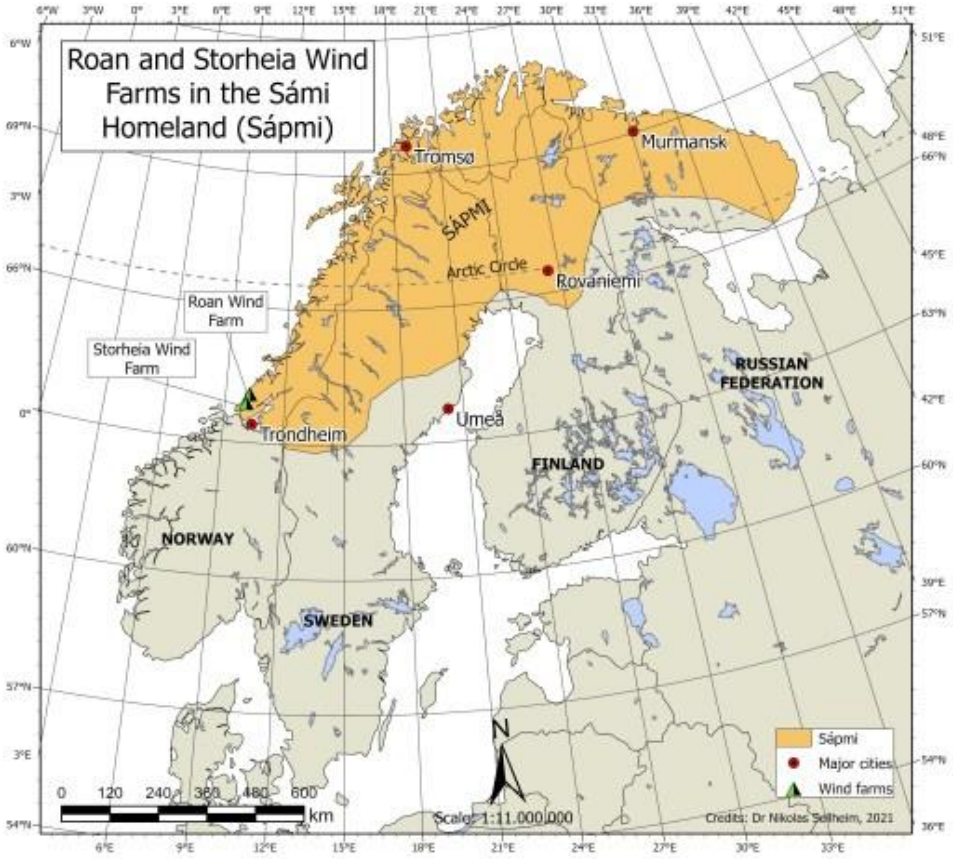


Figure 1: Map of Scandinavia, showing Sápmi (yellow) and the Fosen wind park (Storheia Wind Farm). Only the major cities in and near Sápmi are shown (Sellheim, 2021)

After having briefly described the study site, it is important to delve into the timeline and the incidents of the construction of Fosen wind park. To do so, it first is necessary to state that the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE), which belongs to the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (OED), has the authority regarding the concessions and licences for wind power projects (Mósesdóttir, 2024). NVE hence grants the license which has to be renewed

after 25 years to be valid again, otherwise, the wind park would have to be removed (Mósesdóttir, 2024).

In 2010, NVE granted licenses for four wind parks in Trøndelag and rejected the complaints which arose of the local Sámi population (Ravna, 2022). After that, the wind park operator "Fosen Vind DA" which is owned by the state energy company Statkraft, Aneo and the European investment group Nordic Wind Power DA (of which the Swiss energy company BKW is also part of), started with the construction of the wind farm in 2016 (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Fosen Vind, n.d.). In 2020, the construction of the wind farm has finished (Fosen Vind, n.d.).

A very important aspect in the negotiations of the wind park's construction is that there has been no consent to the project neither from the Sámi parliament nor from the local Sámi population (Mósesdóttir, 2024). After having reached out to two courts which both stated that the wind park meant no violation of the Sámi rights, the Supreme Court eventually also has handled the case (Mósesdóttir, 2024). Finally, in 2021, the Supreme Court explained that the Fosen wind park's construction was a violation of the Sámi cultural rights and declared the wind park void (Ravna, 2022). The Supreme Court stated that the wind park threatened the reindeer pastures because the suggested replacements of the winter feeding areas were not sufficient (Mósesdóttir, 2024). Finally, this ruling was important for the Sámi community insofar as it strengthened their position and demonstrated that there are alternative places to build the wind farm instead of building them at Fosen (Mósesdóttir, 2024).

However, despite the Supreme Court's declaration of the wind park's invalidity, the wind turbines were not dismantled which eventually led to tensions and protests (Mósesdóttir, 2024). After huge demonstrations in 2023, the Prime Minister and the Minister of the OED apologised to the Sámi which marked the beginning of a mediation process between the wind companies and the local Sámi people (Mósesdóttir, 2024). In terms of that, apart from a financial compensation, the local Sámi reindeer herders received an alternative to their winter grazing pastures and a veto right for the granting of future licenses in Fosen (Mósesdóttir, 2024). Additionally, a cultural fund as well as an electricity tax have been established to support and financially strengthen the South-Sámi people and their culture (Mósesdóttir, 2024). The mediation process ended in 2024 (Mósesdóttir, 2024).

1.2 Research gap and research questions

Having mentioned that the space at Fosen is interpreted differently, this Master's thesis has analysed the Fosen case. As my literature review has shown, several empirical and ethnographic studies have already been done (Normann, 2021; Fjellheim, 2023). For that reason, I want to add with this discourse analytical thesis another part to the research about the Fosen case, but rather from an analytical point of view.

What I want to contribute to with my thesis, is a multi-layered analysis of three different actors with their perspectives on the Fosen wind park. Instead of doing empirical research that would have been focused especially on one actor (i.e. the Sámi), this discourse analysis helped to investigate on how the three major actors framed Fosen Vind. With that having said, I want to add to that research gap a critical multi-perspective analysis of how the Fosen space is spatially imagined.

Additionally, I want to highlight with my thesis that resource extraction is also a controversial topic that exists in the Global North, even if a lot of research is done on that issue in the Global South such as on indigenous people in Latin America (Hesketh, 2025).

As it has been stated, the construction of Fosen wind park has led to an intense marginalisation of the local Sámi reindeer herders as well as to different interpretations of space and therefore serves as an interesting case study. Hence, the goal of this thesis is to investigate the implications of the construction of the Fosen wind farm. Therefore, the main research question is as follows: *What are the potentially different interpretations of the space at Fosen and of the Fosen wind park?* Additionally, I want to analyse the following two sub research questions: *(1) How does the space at Fosen get framed by the Sámi, the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA and the State of Norway? (2) Which frictions does the Fosen wind park create?*

With that having said, I am going to argue in my Master's thesis that the construction of the Fosen wind park highlights the tensions and frictions that can arise from different interpretations and imaginations of the (Fosen) space and of the wind park itself by the three different actors.

2 State of the art and theoretical approaches

In order to investigate the wind park's influence on the Sámi people, I used two theoretical perspectives in detail: Frontiers and Green Colonialism. This allowed me to set the focus on the resource extraction in central Norway while still looking at the implication of the imaginations that this frontier produces. Furthermore, framing the project as "Green Colonialism" enabled me to make the connection between green transition and resource extraction which eventually also added a new facet to the classical understanding of colonialism.

2.1 Frontier(-making)

The notion "Frontier" describes the idea that a territory is yet undiscovered, but full of resources (Regassa and Korf, 2018). This idea further leads to the imagination of the frontier space as a place without spatial order and where (hu)men can control the nature (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). To "conquer" these resources, violence is often a central part of the "Frontier-Making" dynamics. Through the appropriation of these frontier spaces, rights often have been restricted which led to resistance of the local population that eventually often ended up in violence against the resistance (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018).

The classical understanding of frontier emerges from the historical colonial settlement in the United States of America (Barney, 2009). The term frontier was used in that context to describe the encounter of savagery and civilisation, hence the colonialisation of the American West (Barney, 2009; Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). This perspective therefore highlights especially the differences between the wild and the civilised, arguing that space can shift from undeveloped to developed (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). Furthermore, it is necessary to mention the racist background of this perspective as it distinguishes between wilderness and civilisation (Barney, 2009). It thus can be concluded that the classical approach to the concept of frontier is directly related to the historical colonial settlement in the United States and therefore also has some aspects of racialisation (Barney, 2009).

When discussing about a second approach to frontier, a first aspect to mention is its relation to space itself. As Rasmussen and Lund (2018) argue, frontier cannot directly be put on the same level as space. Rather, they propose that frontier is linked to space in a way that frontier dynamics happen within space (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). This entanglement is insofar

important to highlight as it shows how spaces, which seem to be “empty” (being for instance ungoverned), can be framed as frontiers in order to control its resources (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). Hence, frontier-making “discovers” new spaces and with that ignores the previously existing structures which eventually brings the possibility of rearranging the space by territorialising it (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). In these frontier-making dynamics it is furthermore interesting to look at its temporal characteristic. As the spaces where frontiers occur seem yet undiscovered (and thus being considered as “Terra Nullius”), this narrative again does not take into account its before existing structures and inhabitants (Tsing, 2003; Rasmussen and Lund, 2018; Regassa and Korf, 2018). Having said that, frontiers on the other hand also shape the space’s future as they have an impact on the space and its landscape (Tsing, 2003). Therefore, this second theoretical approach to frontiers focuses on the frontiers’ relational entanglement with space itself as frontiers happen within space instead of considering themselves as space (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018).

Another aspect of this second approach of frontiers, apart from its relational characteristic, is its focus on resources (Barney, 2009). Being based especially in Latin American scholarship, the emergence of political ecology as an academic field wanted to analyse the interactions between nature and society (Barney, 2009). Within this relationship, resources play an important role. In resource frontiers, the extraction of resources serves as a legitimisation tool to disrupt preexisting structures in that certain frontier space (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018). This perspective therefore opens the possibility to look at space with a focus on resources which enables to have a better understanding of the dynamics happening in frontier spaces as the focus can be shifted towards resources. This again adds another understanding of frontier to its classical concept.

Frontiers are spaces where several processes happen at the same time. While access to and extraction of resources are main characteristics of a frontier, this has several side effects (Wong *et al.*, 2022). The territory is often shaped by the discursive narrative of a place which is undiscovered, but full of resources (Regassa and Korf, 2018). Furthermore, the imagination of a frontier is often entangled with the (colonial) past of a country, thus stating that the (newly) discovered regions now can get modernised and civilised (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018; Regassa, 2022). This imaginative discourse demonstrates that the perception of a territory highly depends on an actors’ point of view as for instance already existing structures of territorial

control get ignored which is reflected in the geographical imagination of “undiscovered territories” (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018; Regassa and Korf, 2018). Drawing upon the fact that countries of the Global South during the Cold War were militarised and experienced capitalist expansion, this enabled new resource frontiers to emerge which eventually highlights the entanglement of frontiers with capitalism (Tsing, 2003). Hence, it can be stated that frontiers experience several processes. And it can also be said that, due to its entanglement with capitalism, frontiers often are associated with spaces in the Global South and with that, similar processes in regions of the Global North get neglected. Finally, it can be concluded that the frontier concept therefore seems to be suitable as well for this case study in Norway, as the construction of Fosen wind park has violated the Sámi culture and additionally also has imagined the space as resourceful (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Statkraft, n.d.c).

2.2 Green Colonialism

Even if the colonial age is over, its patterns and dynamics still continue to have an effect today (Fischer-Tiné, 2016). As already during the colonial age indigenous people were facing oppression and marginalisation, this is still persistent today (Cassidy, 2003), and nowadays, with the expansion of the renewable energy sector to peripheral regions, this can be seen as a continuation of colonialism, a so-called “Green Colonialism” (Dunlap, 2025). The associated consequences of that postcolonial form of colonialism are diverse and can lead to negative implications on the local population (Dunlap, 2025). This Green Colonialism eventually has as consequence that the socio-environmental costs of green transition get outsourced, thus prioritising the propagation of renewable energy over local needs (Dunlap, 2025). Taking this perspective will help to see the Fosen case from another point of view. This is especially interesting, as Norway is not considered as a country with an intense colonial past (Aamotsbakken, 2008).

The term “Green Colonialism” consists of two parts. The first part deals with the seeming green character of energy projects. Considering the increasing temperatures due to global warming (Reader, 2022), Norway has set the goal to become carbon neutral by 2050 and for that reason has set up several climate policy strategies and has signed a treaty for a Green Alliance with the European Union (Vanhanen, 2025; Climate Policy Database, n.d.). Drawing upon that, Norway is fostering several projects for green transition to increase the renewable energy production

(Mósesdóttir, 2024). Wind power therefore seems to be an interesting way to produce green energy in a sustainable manner as wind is a renewable resource (Vanhanen, 2025). The word “green” in “Green Colonialism” therefore highlights a way and a narrative of how energy projects get framed, building on the fact that some resources are renewable and thus support the transition to a carbon neutral nation.

And the second part of the concept “Green Colonialism” highlights the colonial character of it. According to Osterhammel and Jansen’s (1995) definition of colonialism, an important aspect of it is the control of colonialists over the colonised people which is legitimised through the colonialists’ superiority (Osterhammel and Jansen, 1995). This can now be applied to Green Colonialism in a way that projects of green transition impose a power structure of one actor upon a marginalised one. On the one hand, this means that dominant actors rule upon the nature and exploit the local environmental conditions to produce energy (Dietz and Dorn, 2026). But on the other hand, this also signifies a domination over the local people living in these places (Dietz and Dorn, 2026). Hence, Green Colonialism is a form of wielding power which through the propagation of green energy projects creates an imbalance of power between the actors, eventually leading to the marginalisation of the local population and nature as well.

Finally, the two concepts “Frontier” and “Green Colonialism” can be brought together by bringing the concept of a “decarbonization frontier” (Dietz and Dorn, 2026). The urgency of the earth’s global warming leads to the need for a green transition of the energy sector in order to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions (Mósesdóttir, 2024). This decarbonisation process eventually contains the exploitation of resources such as minerals, water or wind (Dietz and Dorn, 2026). And it is this demand of resources that opens resource frontiers in as empty imagined territories which shows the connection with “Terra Nullius” (Buchan and Heath, 2006; Dietz and Dorn, 2026). The term “decarbonization frontier” is insofar important as it highlights that entanglement between climate change, resources (and their extraction) as well as (post)colonial legacies (Dietz and Dorn, 2026). This perspective thus helps to better understand the implications of green energy projects.

2.3 Concept of sovereignty

Sovereignty is not merely given; rather, *„[…] sovereignty is claimed, asserted, and enacted"* (Bauder and Mueller, 2023: 157). This underscores the relational character of sovereignty, showing that its interpretation depends on the point of view. Historically, the concept of the Westphalian sovereignty has its roots in the medieval period, particularly after the Thirty Years' War in 1648, which laid the foundation for modern international law (Bauder and Mueller, 2023). A crucial aspect of the Westphalian sovereignty is that the state has the authority over its territory, meaning that it can independently govern it without interference from other external actors, and that it also has authority over its foreign policy (Bauder and Mueller, 2023). John Locke further argues that in order to have sovereignty, a state, as well as customs, is needed to have the right to sovereignty (Oskal, 2001; Buchan and Heath, 2006). Hence, this Eurocentric approach particularly highlights the intertwining of the state with its territory, while simultaneously excluding other forms of self-determination (Bauder and Mueller, 2023). Finally, it is only one possible concept of sovereignty, even though it has dominated international law up until now.

In contrast to the Eurocentric Westphalian concept of sovereignty stands the concept of Indigenous sovereignty. Bauder and Mueller (2023) explain that the indigenous perspective on sovereignty can be seen more broadly as a way of defining a community from a social and cultural perspective. It can be argued that from an indigenous perspective, sovereignty is insofar entangled with the indigenous people's culture, as they claim self-determination and feel responsible for affairs which are related to their culture, independent on the established nation borders (Bauder and Mueller, 2023). Unlike the Westphalian concept, the indigenous perspective does not seek sovereignty to be separating, but instead it wants to emphasise the relational and interdependent character of territories, thereby highlighting the importance of negotiation among actors (Bauder and Mueller, 2023). Additionally, sovereignty is highly dependent on its context, showing that it is not rigid, but rather it can vary according to its spatial, temporal and social conditions (Thorner *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, Indigenous self-determination, being part of the notion sovereignty, often gets insufficiently protected, despite international legislation that partially tries to implement it (Radhuber and Radcliffe, 2023). The indigenous concept of sovereignty, therefore, is a quite different view from the Westphalian perspective, as it is conceptually much more flexible.

After having briefly introduced the two views on sovereignty, it has become clear that they differ on various levels. First, given that the Westphalian concept is very Eurocentric, this attribution gets further strengthened as other ideas, such as the Indigenous sovereignty, are judged by the Westphalian standard, rather than considered as independent forms of self-governance. This is even more important, as the Westphalian sovereignty is strongly intertwined with the colonial settlers who claimed their right to self-determination while neglecting the existing indigenous peoples' rights, which ties into the imagination of a "Terra Nullius" (Postero and Fabricant, 2019). Even if the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples tried to combine and complement the Westphalian and the indigenous concepts of sovereignty, the Westphalian understanding remained superior; thus, the UN Declaration was not able to bring them on an equal level which reinforced the Eurocentric framework (Bauder and Mueller, 2023). To conclude, it can be stated that the way we think about sovereignty is strongly influenced by the Westphalian perspective, however, in terms of decolonisation, this is challenged by alternative concepts such as Indigenous sovereignty (Bauder and Mueller, 2023).

Drawing further upon the afore mentioned idea of "Terra Nullius" and of an "empty, but full-territory" (Regassa and Korf, 2018), the concept of "sovereignty" can also be attributed to the frontier dynamics (Duffield, 2007). In his research, Nils Oskal (2001) notes that the English philosopher John Locke argued that indigenous people do not have the right to sovereignty, a narrative which has been used later on as well (Oskal, 2001). This framing thus ignores the way of life and culture of indigenous peoples. The argumentation is insofar even more controversial in a country where several peoples live, such as Norway (Beckman, Gover and Mörkenstam, 2022). According to the general understanding of sovereignty of a state, the people has the authority about the state (Beckman, Gover and Mörkenstam, 2022). If in multi-people states there is a minority of a people, then this also affects the way sovereignty is exercised. This eventually leads to the situation that different peoples with different perspectives on sovereignty encounter, which may result in the exclusion of indigenous peoples and in friction between the actors, as the local structure is not acknowledged (Beckman, Gover and Mörkenstam, 2022; Rasmussen and Lund, 2018).

Having argued that, according to Westphalian sovereignty, a nation's sovereignty relies on its territory (Bauder and Mueller, 2023), states try to create a common sense of their nation by creating national symbols such as anthems or flags (Kolstø, 2006). The Sámi people has

established such symbols, too. They not only have a national anthem and flag, but they also share a national day and speak about their territory using the term Sápmi (see chapter 3.1) (Lantto, 2010; Saami Council, n.d.). As Kolstø (2006) described, these symbols can be used in relation to nation-building and sovereignty, as is also the case for the Sámi. Or rather it can be said that these symbols are the outcome of a growing common Sámi identity and community which began to take place after World War II (Lantto, 2010). Eventually, the Sámi also highlighted that they belong to the Sámi community first, and just second, are citizens of Norway (Lantto, 2010). With that it was shown that after World War II the Sámi identity was strengthened which was also reflected in the creation of Sámi symbols.

Another important aspect in the course of the strengthening of the Sámi identity was the establishment of the Sámi parliament in 1989 (Oskal, 2001). This was meant to be an act of empowerment so that the Sámi population had the possibility to be better represented (Oskal, 2001). With that, the Norwegian State has established a possibility so that the Sámi were politically better integrated into the system and furthermore, the Sámi parliament also helped to increase the perception of the Sámi within Norway (Lantto, 2010). However, even if the Sámi parliament has the authority about certain aspects, its sovereignty is insofar restricted as the parliament at the end still is embedded in the Norwegian's national administration and thus often only has an advisory function (Oskal, 2001; Lantto, 2010). Further, the founding of the Sámi Council in 1956 was another act of empowerment (Lantto, 2010; Saami Council, n.d.). The organisation's main task is to support and strengthen the rights of the Sámi (Saami Council, n.d.). And additionally, it operates between the states and the Sámi parliament in order to support a common Sámi identity (Saami Council, n.d.). It therefore can be stated that the establishment of the Sámi parliament and the Sámi Council both have strengthened the political participation and status, although their means are limited.

And on the other hand, the State of Norway also tried to create commonality among its territory by creating national symbols (Kolstø, 2006). As Norway became independent from Denmark and Sweden in 1905 (Hansen, 2022), Norway has invested in the nation-building and created national narratives which was especially important as Norway was a new state emancipating from its previous unions (Kolstø, 2006). These common values and symbols became even more important after the second world war when Norway was occupied by the Nazi regime, because the national symbols were considered as an act of resistance (Kolstø, 2006). And more generally

said, it can be argued that national symbols are a way to unify a people (Kolstø, 2006). So, the Norwegian State has created national symbols as well to unify its people and strengthen its claim to sovereignty within its territory.

To bring the debate about sovereignty back to the Fosen case, as mentioned before, the Sámi population's opinion was not enough considered during the construction process of the Fosen wind park (Mósesdóttir, 2024). This can be seen in a wider spectrum as a contestation over resources, such as wind power, that in Sápmi led to friction between the Sámi claim to sovereignty and the Norwegian state's claim for using the land to promote green energy (Lawrence, 2014; Mósesdóttir, 2024). Coming back to the framework of "Terra Nullius", this concept can be applied to the Fosen case. Buchan and Heath (2006) show how John Locke had argued that when an indigenous people has no state, this signifies that they have no right for sovereignty. In the Fosen's case this means that the Sámi claim to self-determination gets undermined (Lawrence, 2014) which on the other hand allows the Norwegian state to exploit the resources. It can therefore be stated that in the frontier at Fosen a friction arose between two understandings and perspectives of sovereignty of the Sámi and the Norwegian state. Interpreting and treating the Sámi territory with its reindeer pastures as a "Terra Nullius" hence legitimises the exploration of its resources.

2.4 Importance and meaning of space

The word "geography" has its etymological origins in Greek and combines the two words "geo" (meaning earth) and "graphein" (meaning writing) which hence already highlights the entanglement of geography with space (Mazúr and Urbánek, 1983; Johnston, 2026). This relationship between geography and space is for instance displayed in the use of geographical information systems (GIS) or in the creation of maps which analyse and convey spatial information (Mark *et al.*, 1999; Coetzee, Carow and Snyman, 2021). In that sense, geographical space refers to the entirety of the elements composing that space, recognising the values attributed to these elements and acknowledging the relations between them (Mazúr and Urbánek, 1983). Finally, this shows that geographical space in the scientific discipline of geography is important as it is part of its own fundament (Mazúr and Urbánek, 1983).

Drawing upon the contestation about space in Fosen regarding the different views of sovereignty further raises from an epistemic point of view the discussion about the meaning of space itself. Space in geography can be seen as a relational concept (Mazúr and Urbánek, 1983). While it is considered not to be empty, space gets filled with values and qualities which come from the interaction between elements within space (Mazúr and Urbánek, 1983). Having stated the relational character of space, this can be adapted to Fosen. As already described by Mósesdóttir (2024), indigenous peoples attribute several aspects to their territory. Apart from its economic relevance, space also involves cultural and ecological values (Mósesdóttir, 2024). The Sámi people also have different connections to the land (Vanhanen, 2025). By highlighting the relationship of living beings (especially their reindeers) with land, the Sámi see land as a synonymous for life which shows the values they attribute to space (Vanhanen, 2025). This stands in contrast to the more economic view of the Norwegian state and the energy company Statkraft who consider the Fosen wind farm as a promoter of renewable energy (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Fosen Vind, n.d.; Statkraft, n.d.c). In general, the economic benefits are often driving forces to foster new wind park projects (Vanhanen, 2025). With that it can be concluded that space is a relational concept and in the concrete case of the Fosen conflict, the different values attributed to space create different discourse strands of the actors which then led to tensions between them.

After having discussed the meaning of space, it can therefore be said that space not only is a relational concept, but, seen in a broader context, gets produced and creates different discourses (Smith, 2010). This shift away from space as naturally given opens the possibility to look into more detail at its entanglement with people and nature. On the one hand, capitalist interests have a powerful driving force which, for example, in resource frontiers contributes to the imagination of a space, framing it, for example, as ungoverned or natural and thus as a space which can be exploited (Barney, 2009; Rasmussen and Lund, 2018; Smith, 2010). And on the other hand, the local plays an important role, too. The production of space is strongly influenced by the repeated, everyday interactions of local people with local nature (Barney, 2009). This comparison between the rather capitalist and the rather local framing shows how the production of space finally is a product of the interests of the diverse actors (Barney, 2009). Space, therefore, is not merely given, but is produced and thus fulfils different interests.

Based on the economic meaning which is attributed to the Fosen wind park by the Norwegian state and Statkraft (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Fosen Vind, n.d.; Statkraft, n.d.c), it is important to say that significant proportions of land, which are not economically used, are situated in or near to indigenous territories (Mósesdóttir, 2024). This means that for the further expansion of renewable energy production projects, the Sámi people may lose an increasing amount of their land (Mósesdóttir, 2024). It can be argued that this is an outsourcing process of socio-environmental costs, which prioritises the increase in renewable energy, thus fostering Norway's green transition, while not considering the local needs of the Sámi (Dunlap, 2025). This form of Green Colonialism of Norway, which is legitimised through international agreements on the expansion of renewable energy, hence increases the pressure on the Sámi people (Fjellheim, 2023). And this is insofar interesting as Norway is not considered to be a country with an intense colonial past (Aamotsbakken, 2008). Finally, the resource extraction in Fosen can be seen as an outsourcing process, but which is argued as well to be an act of Green Colonialism.

2.5 Shared experiences of the Global North and South

Dividing the world into the binary system of the Global North and Global South has been an established perspective on the world (Müller, 2020). This binarity has been persistent since the end of the Cold War and has shaped how the world is imagined and how research is done based on that categorisation (Müller, 2020). However, this distinction fails to recognise the (social) relations and entanglements between different countries or regions (Müller, 2020). By acknowledging that, it becomes possible to epistemically look deeper into the blurring boundaries between the global regions as their shared experiences can then be better grasped (Müller, 2020). Such similarities may be for instance recognised in the research about indigeneity as indigenous peoples of the Global North often get underrepresented (Grote, 2006). So, it can be stated that the binary division of the world should be overcome in order to epistemically better identify the shared experiences between the regions in the world.

An act of neglection happens to the narrative of "indigenous people". During the age of British colonialism, when the British colonies were established in Australia, the land in Australia was considered and framed as "Terra Nullius" (Buchan and Heath, 2006). This colonial concept described the idea that a space is uninhabited (and thus empty of civilisation), hence not

acknowledging the (property) rights of the local indigenous people and with that erasing their local existence (Buchan and Heath, 2006; Regassa and Korf, 2018). This eventually served as a legitimisation for the imposition of British law in Australia (Buchan and Heath, 2006). Furthermore, when mentioning "indigenous people", one often is talking about the peoples in America or Oceania and hardly ever thinks about the indigenous peoples in Europe (Grote, 2006). As European countries imposed their rule, culture and structure upon other regions in the world during the era of colonialism (Kohn and Reddy, 2024), these foreign cultures outside of Europe also shaped the narrative of indigenous people and how we think about them (Grote, 2006). This shift away from Europe had the consequence that the rights of European indigenous peoples were not sufficiently protected as the European national legal instruments were focusing instead on the individual human rights (Grote, 2006). So, even if European indigenous peoples share similar experiences with peoples of the Global South for example in relation to the non-recognition of their rights, they often still remain underrepresented and forgotten, which results in a lack of sufficient legal rights for them (Buchan and Heath, 2006; Grote, 2006).

2.6 Norway's energy sector and resource extractivism

Norway has large reserves of oil and gas in the North Sea and has been exploiting them for more than 50 years (Höök and Aleklett, 2008). Since this fossil resource plays an important role in modern economic systems, Norway is an actor with great significance, particularly in Europe because Norway can export more oil than it consumes (Höök and Aleklett, 2008; Bang and Lahn, 2020). Hence, Norway is one of the countries that exports the most in the world which highlights the role it plays in the global oil market (Sollund, 2012). However, the Scandinavian State has reached the maximum production, and the oil extraction has been declining since 2001 (Höök and Aleklett, 2008). And as these oil fields will not produce oil for ever, the Norwegian State is trying to find new oil fields, for instance, in the Barents Sea (Höök and Aleklett, 2008). It can be stated that the exploitation of oil is an important aspect of Norway's economy and shapes its role as global actor.

Drawing on that, fossil resources play a crucial role in Norway's economic system. Oil and gas contribute significantly to Norway's gross domestic product (GDP) and exports (Bang and Lahn, 2020). But as oil is a resource that will dry up some day, the Norwegian State has decided in 1990 to create an oil fund which invests the oil exports' revenues in a pension fund so that the

money can get used in the future as well (Höök and Aleklett, 2008; Bang and Lahn, 2020). With that having said, the discovery of oil and its subsequent use fostered Norway's economy leading to an increase in welfare (Bang and Lahn, 2020). Finally, Norway's oil production is significantly important regarding its (current and future) economic and financial situation.

Even if the oil production is economically important, the exploitation as well as the use of oil lead to an increase in carbon dioxide emissions, which eventually increases the Earth's temperature (Sollund, 2012). As Norway is aware of the necessity to cut down carbon dioxide emissions, it wants to reduce them by increasing the energy production of renewable energy (Korsnes *et al.*, 2023). For that reason, renewable energy production projects have been established, such as the expansion of wind or water plants (Normann, 2021; Korsnes *et al.*, 2023). The construction of these hydroelectric power plants and wind farms lead to a high degree of renewable energy in Norway's electricity (Korsnes *et al.*, 2023). This shows that Norway's energy sector not only depends on oil, but also on renewable energy production to foster the green transition.

Such a hydroelectric power plant project was for example the construction of a dam in the Alta River in Kautokeino in northern Norway in the 1970's (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Vanhanen, 2025). Given the fact, that this dam lies in an area which was very important for the Sámi, as there were winter grazing pastures, the dam's construction led to a conflict with the local population (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Vanhanen, 2025). And even if the construction led to intense protests, Norway's Supreme Court confirmed the project's validity (Mósesdóttir, 2024). However, in the aftermath of the Alta conflict, the Sámi rights have been strengthened as the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) has been integrated into Norwegian legislation which signified the protection of minority groups (Mósesdóttir, 2024). This legislative implementation has eventually been important also during the Fosen conflict as the Sámi claimed for their rights by pointing to the ICCPR (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Vanhanen, 2025). The construction of the Alta dam in Kautokeino hence highlights the entanglement of projects for green transition and the local Sámi population which on the other hand had significant legislative consequences as the ICCPR has been integrated into Norwegian legislation.

In terms of green transition, there is another crucial component of it: rare earth elements. These minerals are needed for the functioning of electronic devices, for instance electric cars (Owen *et al.*, 2023). As Europe is highly dependent on imports of them, the European Union

seeks greater independence and therefore aims to establish an industry to extract European rare earth elements (Balomenos *et al.*, 2017). And Norway is insofar relevant as it has some of the largest deposits in Europe which means that they are an important actor in the process of the establishment of a European rare earth elements industry (Rare Earths Norway, n.d.). These rare earth minerals finally constitute the link between Norway's resource extractivism and green transition.

It therefore can be claimed that Norway's resource extractivism not only is about the drilling of oil, but also about the exploitation of other resources such as rare earth elements or renewable energies. While the oil industry has increased revenues through its exports and thus plays an important economic role (Bang and Lahn, 2020), the renewable energy sector is also crucial. Especially considering the green transition as well as the attempt to become more independent, the establishment of rare earth element extraction projects as well as wind and water resource projects is planned (Balomenos *et al.*, 2017; Mósesdóttir, 2024). Additionally, it is interesting that some of these resource projects, such as the Alta dam, lie in a territory inhabited by the Sámi population, thus adding another layer of complexity to the resource extractions (Vanhanen, 2025).

3 Introduction of the Sámi

As previously mentioned, there are indigenous peoples in Europe as well. The Sámi is such an indigenous people living in Scandinavia (Lantto, 2010). While the term "Sámi" represents the name of this indigenous group, the Sámi people is quite heterogenous, as for instance they speak different languages and have cultural differences (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). For that reason, it is more precise to say that "Sámi" is a name for several indigenous groups in north-western Europe who share similar cultural features (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). One aspect that is often associated with Sámi culture is for example reindeer herding (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). The Sámi territory (called Sápmi) is not seen as an official state, but it is partitioned in the northern parts of Scandinavia among Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia (Lantto, 2010).

3.1 Sápmi

Drawing upon the fact that the Sámi territory, "Sápmi", nowadays is divided into four countries, this already highlights the contestation about space in that region in northern Europe (Lantto, 2010). Historically, the Sámi lived in a large geographical region which led to early contacts with other Nordic and Russian peoples (Lantto, 2010). As the Sámi did not have a strong military apparatus, in the 18th century they became dominated and ruled upon from the three states Denmark-Norway, Sweden-Finland and Russia (Lantto, 2010). Eventually, Sápmi was partitioned among these countries and the inhabitants were forced to become citizens of these countries (Lantto, 2010). This process exemplarily shows the marginalisation of the Sámi people.

Historically, the origin of the Sámi is shaped by myths (Gaski, 1993). Sources trace back early Sámi settlements to be located in northern Norway up to the start of the Christian era (Gaski, 1993). The social structure of the Sámi was organised in so-called "siidas" which had the purpose of merging different hunting families (Gaski, 1993). These social structures persist until today and seek to organise the reindeer herding among the herders (Mósesdóttir, 2024). In the region of the Fosen wind park live two of these Siidas as well: the South-Fosen Sijte and the North-Fosen Siida (Mósesdóttir, 2024). The Sámi origin thus already dates back to ancient times, while the people, as well as their social organisation, exist up to nowadays.

While borders often do not follow natural boundaries, these political structures still shape the lives of the people living within the borders. Furthermore, borders separate those from one side

of those from the other side of the border (Lantto, 2010). For the Sámi population, the establishment of borders signified a spatial imposition that cut through their territory (Lantto, 2010). This means that when in the 17th and 18th century the above mentioned three states began to control the Sámi territory, this can be seen as a colonisation of Sápmi (Lantto, 2010; Lindmark, 2013). It can therefore be stated that the partitioning of Sápmi was an imposition of spatial borders which also signified an asymmetrical relationship between the Sámi and the other Scandinavian states (Lindmark, 2013).

3.2 Culture

When talking about the Sámi, their culture is a crucial aspect of their people. As their culture consists of several important parts, reindeer husbandry is one tradition which is often related to the Sámi culture (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). For reindeer herders, large pastures are a prerequisite for their work as the reindeers need enough land for grazing (Vanhanen, 2025). Reindeer herding further is also a reason for the Sámi nomadic way of life as the Sámi herders often change the pastures (Lantto, 2010). But reindeers not only play an economic role in the Sámi culture, they also appear in traditional myths and songs (Gaski, 1993). For example, there is a song which tells the tale of the beating heart of a reindeer cow which lies in the earth and can be heard when the Sámi people listen to the ground (Gaski, 1993). And if they can hear the reindeer's heart beating, this means the Sámi people still has a future (Gaski, 1993). This shows that reindeers play an important role in terms of economic value as well as from a cultural point of view.

As has already been mentioned, music is also a part of the Sámi culture. The traditional Sámi singing, which is called "yoik", is an integral part of the Sámi cultural life (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). While yoik has a long history and has been sung for several centuries, this traditional singing also became part of the everyday life of the Sámi (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). Yoiks are considered as self-expression or as a creational act by singing (or yoiking) about human life, hence also expressing the singer's own emotions (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). It is important to highlight that yoik has different variations, for instance on the use of words, which depends on the region where yoik is sung; thus, yoik also reflects the heterogeneity of the Sámi people (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, yoik can be used in terms of storytelling as well, showing the broad potential of application of yoik (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). Yoik therefore is

an ancient traditional Sámi singing which is applied in several areas of the (everyday) life of the Sámi.

Another aspect of the Sámi culture is their language. Even if Sápmi is surrounded by Norway, Sweden and Russia, the Sámi language is not closely related to the national languages of those countries (Todal, 1998). However, as Sámi belongs to the Uralic languages, there are some similarities between Sámi and Finnish (Todal, 1998). Furthermore, it has to be stated that there does not only exist one Sámi language, but rather there are about nine Sámi languages (Todal, 1998; Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). Those differ from one another which is why not every Sámi speaker can understand someone else's dialect (Todal, 1998). However, the Sámi language remains a central point of their culture which is also reflected in a statement of the Sámi Council stating that the Sámi language is part of their identity (Lantto, 2010). Hence, the Sámi language, even if it is heterogeneous, is a central aspect of the Sámi culture.

3.3 Norway's entanglement with colonialism

While Norway was in a union with Denmark, the monarchy Denmark-Norway possessed colonies in Asia as well as in the Caribbean (Aamotsbakken, 2008). And apart from these non-European colonies, Norway also has colonised within its own national borders (Aamotsbakken, 2008). In the 18th century, when the Nordic states began to take control over the territory in Sápmi (Lantto, 2010), the colonisers saw great potential in that territory for various aspects, such as resources or strategic advantages (Gaski, 1993). Given that the Sámi people has a nomadic way of life (Mósesdóttir, 2024), the population was often dispersed, which then facilitated the colonisation of the territory, as the Sámi were unable to unite for opposing the colonisers (Gaski, 1993). Additionally, the Sámi people lacked the necessary military resources to fight against them (Lantto, 2010). To conclude, this demonstrates that Norway, a country not considered as one of the greatest colonial powers, indeed also had colonies outside of Europe and has also been colonialistically active in Scandinavia (Aamotsbakken, 2008).

In the course of the colonisation of Sápmi, resources have played an important role. For instance, in the 17th century, the Swedish state has designed plans to open mines in Sápmi after they had discovered silver deposits (Lindmark, 2013). And also the expanding Norwegian nation had an interest in the resources provided by nature which were lying in the Sámi territory (Gaski,

1993). The control over resources is important insofar as they provide economic benefits. Furthermore, regarding the physical properties of the Sámi territory, their ice-free harbours are important as well for national strategic purposes (Gaski, 1993). These harbours are further important because they enhance international trade and therefore also play a political role (Gaski, 1993). So, it can be stated that the physical properties of the Sámi territory have played a crucial role in its colonisation, as the resources as well as its ice-free harbours have provided strategic benefits.

The Norwegian colonialists furthermore also saw in the Sámi territory the possibility of raising more taxes (Gaski, 1993). The taxation started in the 17th and 18th century and was executed by the states among which Sápmi has been partitioned (Denmark-Norway, Sweden-Finland and Russia) (Lantto, 2010; Lindmark, 2013). The control over the Sámi and their territory was further reciprocal: the state which taxed the Sámi (meaning it had the control over them), had, on the other hand, also control over the Sámi territory (Lantto, 2010). But the Sámi sovereignty was restricted even more as the territorial claims of the other states where overlapping and that's why the Sámi sometimes had to pay taxes to more than one country (Lantto, 2010). This taxation had also the consequence that the Sámi only could have taxed territory within the state they had taken the citizenship of, which highlighted the superiority of the newly emerged nation states over the Sámi understanding of their sovereignty (Lantto, 2010). The taxation of the Sámi during the colonisation of their territory starting in the 17th century therefore played a crucial role as the domination of the territory and the people was mutually linked with their taxation (Lantto, 2010; Lindmark, 2013).

And a final aspect to mention regarding Norway's colonisation of Sápmi is the nation-building process of Norway itself (Hansen, 2022). Building on the fact that several countries were interested in the Sámi territory with its economic potential advantages, this led to a contestation of that territory, as it was important for those nations to establish borders, hence to spatially define the nations' concrete spatial expansion (Lantto, 2010). For that reason, the colonial appropriation can also be seen as a means of securing a nation's border in the context of its nation-building (Hansen, 2022). Finally, all the above-mentioned aspects of Norway's colonialism in the Sámi territory played into this entire process of nation-building. There were several strategic and economic factors that Norway sought to profit from in order to establish its nation, which highlights why Norway was colonialistically active.

3.4 Assimilation politics

Sámi people have experienced discrimination and marginalisation in the entire Sápmi territory throughout a long period of time and still face challenges nowadays (Hansen, 2022). The partition of the Sámi territory and its subsequent consequences, such as the imposition of a citizenship, led to violations of the Sámi culture (Lantto, 2010; Hansen, 2022). Hansen (2022) states that these colonial practices shaped the Sámi way of living which resulted in a shared colonial trauma. Sámi were often treated as if they were not at the same level as the others and with that became devalued (Hansen, 2022). And still nowadays Sámi get discriminated (Hansen, 2022). To conclude, the indigenous Sámi people faces several challenges as they experience(d) discrimination due to their ethnicity.

When looking back in the history and considering the initial partitioning of Sápmi among the other nations in the 18th century, their culture and rights first were respected (Lantto, 2010). However, this state did not persist for long as the Sámi people was forced to take the citizenship of either Norway, Sweden, Finland or Russia (Lantto, 2010). Additionally, the Sámi which traditionally is a nomadic people, also had to decide where to keep their taxed lands as the Sámi were no longer allowed to hold taxed land in more than one of the four nation states, hence enforcing them to choose one country (Lantto, 2010). This process of the enforced citizenship and the following consequences thus signified a violation of the Sámi sovereignty. Even if the Sámi then were part of a nation, they were still considered as different and did not have the same status within that country (Lantto, 2010). And apart from that, this division also signified an internal division of the Sámi people as they did not belong to the same country anymore (Lantto, 2010). Thus, the Sámi experienced a loss of sovereignty already in the 18th century which resulted in several division processes.

Such marginalisation and assimilation processes led to the emergence of terms such as “Norwegianization” (Hansen, 2022). With the independence of Norway from Denmark and Sweden in 1905, the newly emerged nation-state pushed the Norwegian culture to spread among the country which had drastic consequences for the Sámi (Hansen, 2022). Towards the end of the 19th century, school programs were only taught in Norwegian and the Sámi language was forbidden to be used for teaching in order to establish the Norwegian culture in the entire country and also to strengthen Norway’s national security (Gaski, 1993; Hansen, 2022). Additionally, Sámi children had to go to boarding schools where they had to learn and adapt the

Norwegian culture, while not only being separated from their families, but also being limited in exercising their Sámi language and culture (Hansen, 2022). In terms of Norway's nation-building process it can therefore be stated that the Sámi culture was severely restricted and the Sámi culture has been devalued in favour of the establishment of the Norwegian culture (Gaski, 1993; Hansen, 2022).

The impact of this Norwegianization assimilation politics was traumatic for the Sámi people (Hansen, 2022). Through the imposition of the Norwegian language and culture, the Sámi have faced a situation in which they were devalued, due to their ethnicity racialised and thus not put on the same level as the rest of Norway's population even if they had the same citizenship (Hansen, 2022). According to Hansen (2022), the Sámi children experienced in the boarding schools physical as well as psychological violence. So, Norway's assimilation politics not only led to marginalisation and violence of the Sámi on a personal level, but it also had an influence on the sovereignty and self-esteem of the Sámi people as their culture was intensely restricted (Hansen, 2022). Drawing further upon the fact that the Sámi language is considered as an important aspect of the Sámi culture (Berg-Nordlie, 2022), their experiences within the practices of Norwegianization can be framed as a colonial trauma which simultaneously is a shared experience of other indigenous peoples as well (Hansen, 2022).

3.5 Recent marginalisation

Even if the Norwegianization policy has come to an end in 1980 (Minde, 2003), the Sámi face challenges regarding their ethnicity and get discriminated still today (Yasar *et al.*, 2024). While the economical discrimination does not appear to be present in Norway, meaning that the Sámi ethnicity does not have a significant influence on their income, the cultural discrimination is more significant (Yasar *et al.*, 2024). An aspect of this cultural discrimination is the use of Sámi language. When the Sámi speak in their indigenous language, they face for example problems in accessing social activities (Yasar *et al.*, 2024). A further argument emphasising that the Sámi are still not on the same level as the majority of Norway's population is that the Sámi often experience societal preconceptions and negative stereotypes (Hansen, 2022). This can for instance be seen in racist jokes about them (Hansen, 2022). And furthermore, it is criticised that in Norwegian schools the Sámi culture does not get taught sufficiently, however, this might be getting better with the implementation of new programmes in schools (Hansen, 2022). Finally,

these points state that even if the assimilation politics is officially over, the Sámi still get discriminated nowadays.

An act of marginalisation and violence against the Sámi people in recent past was the construction of the wind farm “Fosen Vind” in central Norway (Mósesdóttir, 2024). The wind park was framed as a means to promote the transition to green energy in Norway and hence to tackle the issue of global warming; the Fosen wind park was eventually built and started to produce energy by 2019-2020 (Mósesdóttir, 2024). While the project was viewed as a way to foster sustainable energy, the wind park was an interference with the local Sámi reindeer pasture area, hence violating their culture. This is insofar even worse, as the affected Sámi herders did not give their consent to the project which signifies a loss and violation to their own sovereignty and self-determination (Lawrence, 2014; Mósesdóttir, 2024). Finally, it can be said that even if the Sámi people has partially been integrated for example with the establishment of a Sámi parliament (Saglie, Mörkenstam and Bergh, 2020), there are still major challenges. In terms of the green transition towards renewable energy, Sámi face in the case of the Fosen wind park huge marginalisation as their opinion was not enough considered which is also reflected in the different framings of the wind park as the perceptions of it strongly differ.

4 Methodology

After having explained the thematic frame and state of the art of this thesis, I am now going to state the methodological approach of this research.

As has already been mentioned, space is not just neutrally given, but rather certain values are attributed to it (Mazúr and Urbánek, 1983), which means that space can be imagined in different ways and as a result, space is attributed with varying meaning. Eventually, such different imaginations and attributions of meaning get expressed by the use of specific language and discourses. This means that the attribution of values can also be adapted to language because language has an influence on human thinking and perception (Imai, Kanero and Masuda, 2016). This argument gets further strengthened as language is a part of culture which also has an influence on human thinking, which means it influences the way how we perceive things (Zlatev and Blomberg, 2015). When language gets considered as a communication system, then this shows how humans use language as a means of social interaction (Zlatev and Blomberg, 2015). These considerations eventually demonstrate that language and human thinking is intertwined with each other and thus language has an influence on how things get perceived showing that language is not just neutral.

As Zlatev and Blomberg (2015) already mention, language is intertwined with discourse. As I conducted a discourse analysis for my research, it is therefore worth providing a definition of discourse. Phillips and Jørgensen (2002: 1) define discourse the following way: *„[…] a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)."* But despite that definition, the term discourse remains not totally clear as there are different perspectives on it which propose different ways of dealing with it (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). However, it still can be stated that a discourse influences the way how knowledge and the (social) world in general are structured and how identities get shaped (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002; Hannam and Knox, 2005). It can therefore be stated that the term discourse is a vague term with different possible interpretations, while still having an influence on social structures.

As language is the key to access the reality, humans use language within its socio-cultural context to construct a representation of the reality which in turn also leads to the construction of reality itself (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002; Zlatev and Blomberg, 2015). Phillips and Jørgensen (2002) make the example of a river: while the river physically exists by itself, the attribution of

meaning to the river by humans creates a discourse. In that example, the river could be framed as a natural phenomenon which eventually would lead to the emergence of discourses, for instance a meteorological discourse (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Here it is important to say that only through discourse, a physical object (in this example the river), has been attributed with and thus has gained meaning (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Finally, this has shown how language can attribute meaning to an object through the creation of discourse (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). And for that reason, in this thesis, I also investigated how discourses contribute to the creation of meaning in Fosen and how these meanings differ between the actors.

Despite the ambiguity of the term discourse, discourses have a strong impact on our social realities (Hannam and Knox, 2005). This can further be illustrated with the example of discourses that can create institutions which in turn then have an influence on our perception of the world (Hannam and Knox, 2005). An example of such a creation of an institution would for instance be the opening of parks for leisure activities due to leisure discourses (Hannam and Knox, 2005). Drawing upon the before given definition of a discourse, it is also important to say that different discourses lead to different understandings of our social realities which thus highlights the consequences of discourses (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Additionally, discourses lead to the reproduction of several power structures such as racism (Kress, 1990). With that in mind, discourses are far more than only texts, but rather they have the potential to shape and influence (everyday) lives by (re)producing power structures, institutions and social realities in general.

4.1 Discourse analysis

Drawing upon the introduction of the term discourse, we now can move on to its analysis: the discourse analysis. Simply put, discourse analysis can be defined as the analysis of discourses, thus the analysis of the patterns which arise from language use in social life (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Being influenced by different movements such as post-structuralism (Jacobs, 2018), discourse analysis provides an analytical tool to investigate on how discourses are shaped by the social world and their context (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002; Hannam and Knox, 2005). It is furthermore important to state that discourse analysis is a theoretical as well as a methodological model which signifies that it is also a way to empirically study a subject (Phillips

and Jørgensen, 2002). With that having said, discourse analysis is a technique and method to analyse discourses in the social world (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002).

Discourse analysis is strongly influenced by social constructionism, a theory similar to social constructivism (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). This theory generally describes how knowledge is socially constructed (Bazerman, 1990). That signifies that the reality and meaning of objects are socially negotiated through processes and actions that, through habitualization, gain stability and thus are constructed (Bazerman, 1990). And language plays a key role within this process (Bazerman, 1990). Having said that, a crucial aspect of social constructionism is to recognise that knowledge as well as reality are not barely given and do not represent an objective truth, but rather they get accessed through categories (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). This eventually means that reality can be seen as the product of discourses (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002).

This thought can be further expanded by incorporating the influence of the historical and cultural context (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). As the production of social realities is dependent on and changes with different historical and cultural contexts, Phillips and Jørgensen (2002) argue that our understanding and representation of these social realities are contingent, thus they are not always stable and pre-given, but rather, the social world can be negotiated and constructed in different ways. This thus means that the manner how we understand the world is in a constant interaction with social processes which leads to the (social) construction of knowledge and that in turn also has consequences on our social actions as different ways of understanding the social reality get constructed (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). To bring this idea back to discourse analysis, that demonstrates that discourse analysis is an interesting method to investigate on how discourses shape the construction of social realities and which consequences they have.

When discussing discourse analysis, it is important to note that there is not only one single method, but there are several approaches to it (Hannam and Knox, 2005). Apart from critical discourse analysis, which will be touched upon a bit later, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's discourse theory is another important approach (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002; Jacobs, 2018). The latter refers to the idea that discourses construct social realities which leads to a struggle between different discourses to achieve a dominant and hegemonial position (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Additionally, Laclau and Mouffe argue that discourse analysis can be used for

the analysis of every social phenomenon (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). It can therefore be stated that discourse analysis refers to a collection of several approaches that differ from each other, even if there are also some commonalities between some of them such as their roots in social constructionism (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002).

Even though there are several forms of discourse analysis as research methods, a strength of this methodology is that it recognises the intertextuality of texts (Hannam and Knox, 2005). This perspective further acknowledges that texts are not only neutral, but rather, the production is influenced by their relation to power (Hannam and Knox, 2005). Treating sources as products embedded within their contexts and systems (Hannam and Knox, 2005) therefore shifts our understanding of how to interpret them. To conclude, conducting a discourse analysis seems to provide interesting ways to gain a deeper understanding of and insight into the contestation of Fosen wind farm as space.

The fact that there are different perspectives of discourse analysis also allows to combine different elements of each of them in order to create an appropriate approach for the aim of the research (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). With that, one can use the theoretical differences to apply the strongest aspects of these perspectives (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). This multiperspectival approach therefore might lead to a more adequate methodological way of doing research as it can consider the different strengths of each perspective (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002).

However, despite the advantages of the methodology, discourse analysis also has some limitations. One point is the insufficient recognition of people's agency (Reed, 2000). While discourse analysis places great emphasis on the construction of the social world through discourses (Hannam and Knox, 2005), they seem to determine human life without acknowledging the human agency (Reed, 2000). This deterministic view thus hinders to get an integral view of discourses because by denying the agential potential of humans, humans then seem to be passive and with that, it also becomes difficult to explain why certain discourses are stronger than others (Reed, 2000). This aspect thus needs to be kept in mind when doing a discourse analysis.

4.2 Critical discourse analysis

The critical discourse analysis is another facet of discourse analysis. While critical discourse analysis shares several aspects of discourse analysis, such as the embeddedness of text in different contexts, it goes a step further (Kress, 1990). However, critical discourse analysis tries to add a critical perspective on the texts' embeddedness in order to investigate and question the entanglements of the texts with the power structure they are embedded in and intertwined with (Kress, 1990). With that having been said, critical discourse analysis also aims to reveal the background structures of these discourses and it tries not only to look for what is to be criticised, but rather critical discourse analysis wants to reveal the "how" and the "why" a background shapes a discourse and its (social) consequences (Kress, 1990; Fairclough, 2023). And it considers discourses as a crucial part of how knowledge is shaped, but acknowledges that there are also other aspects which construct the social world and not only discourses, an aspect which sets critical discourse analysis apart from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Furthermore, applying a critical discourse analysis also acknowledges the researcher's own background, which is not considered problematic for the research process (Kress, 1990). It can therefore be concluded that critical discourse analysis differs from the discourse analysis as it aims to go a step further to reveal the texts' underlying power structures and the general influence of discourses and with that explains why this approach is called "critical" (Kress, 1990; Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002).

With that in mind, I have also tried to unveil the power structures of the background of the Fosen discourses. I not only analysed the existing discourses on the Fosen space and the wind park, but as mentioned above, I tried to reveal the "how" and the "why" such discourses shape the understanding of the Fosen space. Specifically, this means that I critically analysed the discourses within their power structures of the different actors. Additionally, I decided to apply this critical discourse analysis also with regard to its view on the researcher's positionality. As this method considers the researcher's background as part of the research process (Kress, 1990), that was an important reason for me to apply this methodology. Because by acknowledging my positionality as inseparable from the research process, I was able to conduct an even more critical analysis.

Another interesting aspect of critical discourse analysis is the way it approaches the notion of "discourse". Considering language and discourses as social practices, scholars of that approach

see a mutual influence of discourse on the social world and vice versa (Kress, 1990; Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). This means that discourses partially shape the social world, but the social world is also reflected in discourses (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). And this in turn also has an influence on how knowledge is (re)produced which highlights the importance of acknowledging this interplay between discourses and social structures (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). And to bring the argument back to the afore mentioned aspect of uncovering power structures (Kress, 1990), critical discourse analysis also focuses on how discursive practices are shaped by power relations, but also how these power relations (and other social structures as well) are shaped by discursive practices (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002).

To further go into detail regarding the term "discourse", Fairclough considers three different ways of discourse (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). As already explained above, discourse can be seen as a social practice, however, it can also be considered as the language use within a certain field as well as a manner of speaking (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). It is further important to state that the analysis of a discourse signifies that a text gets understood as a product of authors who themselves rely on other texts, which then continues with the consumer of that text who again draws upon discourses to understand and interpret that text (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). To bring this argument back to the interdependence of discourses and the social world, it thus can be argued that the interpretation and understanding of a discourse of a text consumer is also part of the social world itself (Fairclough, 2023).

Having explained the critical discourse analysis' characteristic of combining the text analysis with its social context (Fairclough, 2023), this is the main reason why I applied this approach for my thesis' research. In the realm of my research field in Fosen, I think it is especially important because the application of this critical approach allowed me to reveal hidden power structures instead of only describing the patterns and meanings which are attributed to the Fosen wind park. Building on the fact that critical discourse analysis considers structures as human-produced, it can further be argued that it takes these circumstances into account and tries to embed texts in that context to explain the bigger picture (Fairclough, 2023). And that is exactly what I aimed for as well: to explain the potential differences and interrelations in the perception of the Fosen wind park within a broader frame.

As already has been touched upon, a strength of critical discourse analysis is that it critically tries to reveal the background and underlying power structures of discourses and questions

them by investigating how these could emerge in order to bring about change to the situation (Fairclough, 2023). This is insofar crucial, because the critical discourse analysis also tries to replace the questioned discourses by others to create alternative and less problematic discourses in order to emancipate suppressed social groups and thus creates social change (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002; Fairclough, 2023). Therefore, this can be seen as a reframing of the discourses by considering the discourses' contexts which also contains the including of different ways of communication (Kress, 1990). Finally, it can be stated that a strength of critical discourse analysis lies in the way it approaches discourses. By investigating on how language is shaped by power relations, this analysis technique can critically grasp and potentially reframe them.

The above explained strength of critical discourse analysis can further be expanded on its perspective on language. First, by considering language as a social practice, the social context of it can be seen (Kress, 1990). This is insofar even more interesting as texts then can be looked at as the result of a person who is situated within a power relation, thus operating in a certain frame of possibilities which define the person's way of using language (Kress, 1990). And this in turn is exactly what critical discourse analysis tries to reveal; the entanglement of text with its (social) context (Fairclough, 2023). Having said that, it can be highlighted that language highly depends on the person itself (Kress, 1990). The way a person's background is shaped, shapes the way how language is used, which shows that a text may differently be understood as the language varies between different social and personal contexts (Kress, 1990). For that reason, considering the setting of a text (i.e. of language) is highly crucial as it is influenced by and reflects its context. And this is also what I tried to analyse; how the three different actors frame the space and the wind park within their contextual frameworks in order to investigate also on potential nuances of the same terms used, but differently understood, such as the notion of "green".

However, even if the critical discourse analysis has some strengths, it also has some critical aspects. According to Phillips and Jørgensen (2002), the critical discourse analysis does not sufficiently consider the psychological aspects of group formation and the control of people over their language. This means, that critical discourse analysis scholars such as Fairclough may insist too much on the influence of the social context on the use of language, instead of including also social psychological influences (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). And additionally,

another point of critique is that the critical discourse analysis does not only represent one single approach, but there exist several, among which, there are even some major differences (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). Having said that, this might undermine the theoretical and analytical focus. Hence, it can be argued that among the strengths of critical discourse analysis, there are also some blind spots which do not get sufficiently covered.

4.3 Data acquisition

As already mentioned above, a discourse analysis relies on the analysis of discourses (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002). For my Master's thesis, I analysed discourses about the space of the Fosen wind park. To do so, I focused on the perspective of three actors: the Sámi, the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA as well as the Norwegian State. This comparison eventually allowed me to elaborate on how the Fosen wind park gets framed by these actors and what frictions this wind park generates so that I was able to answer my research questions. To do so, I mostly relied on scientific articles and literature. However, I also analysed YouTube videos. Nevertheless, drawing upon the work of others meant that I analysed patterns which have been created through their perspectives and their approaches to the topic.

For the purpose of a discourse analysis, the Fosen wind park serves as an interesting case study because that space brings together different actors having different perspectives on the wind farm which intersect at that place. On the one hand, there is the Sámi people whose culture is intimately connected to the Fosen area because, amongst others, it serves as a reindeer pasture (Mósesdóttir, 2024). And on the other hand, the energy company Statkraft and the Norwegian state attribute economic values to the Fosen wind farm as they consider it as a promoter of renewable energy (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Fosen Vind, n.d.; Statkraft, n.d.c). For that reason, these three actors differently frame and interpret the Fosen wind park. Having said that, conducting a critical discourse analysis thus is a method that fits well for that case as it can investigate on how the actors create discourses and frame the Fosen space.

The Sámi people represents a very important actor within the analysis of that thesis. As this indigenous people has been living in Scandinavia already for many centuries, the Sámi culture and way of life is tied to that space (Lantto, 2010; Vanhanen, 2025). Having said that, the Sámi perspective of how they consider and frame space, in specific the Fosen space, is interesting

because it shows their opinion and relation to space. Furthermore, as the Sámi historically have been colonised and have experienced a Norwegian political strategy of assimilation and get marginalised still nowadays (Hansen, 2022; Yasar *et al.*, 2024), their opinion is of high value and that's why they are a relevant actor within this discourse analysis. And as I conducted a critical discourse analysis, which also tried to point to the marginalisation of certain social groups (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002; Fairclough, 2023), the Sámi therefore fit well within this analytical framework.

There has been done a lot of empirical research on the Sámi people, also on the Fosen case and several other projects are planned (Drugge, 2016). Hence, different researchers have already visited Fosen and had the opportunity to conduct interviews with local inhabitants and to do research. These insights provide meaningful qualitative data and eventually helped me to investigate the discourse strands that have been created from the Sámi perspective and how they frame the space where the wind park has been built. It is especially interesting to look how the Sámi frame the Fosen space as part of their cultural identity. And that's the reason why I mostly focused on that academic state of the art to analyse the Sámi view.

A second important actor is the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA. As it is a company that operates in an economic structure, it is interesting to investigate which goals Fosen Vind DA pursued in building the wind park in Fosen. Having said that, it can be argued that Fosen Vind DA acts at an interface between different interests. On the one hand, they pursue their own objectives. But on the other hand, when they built the windmills, they were not only confronted with the interests of the local population but also with the State of Norway. The relationship between Fosen Vind DA and the State of Norway is especially interesting because Fosen Vind DA is, among others, also owned by the State of Norway (Mósesdóttir, 2024). That's why it is worth going more into detail of the discourses produced by Fosen Vind DA.

To elaborate and analyse the wind park operator's discourses, I mostly relied on academic literature. But additionally, I analysed some YouTube videos by the Norwegian energy company Statkraft, too. Those were insofar interesting as they provided another perspective on the issue as they have been published by Statkraft itself. These sources helped me to analyse how Fosen Vind DA frames the wind farm as a promoter of the green transition for a (local) development act.

And thirdly, I also looked at which role the Norwegian state played in the construction of the wind farm. In terms of the green transition, Norway wants to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions to slow down the global warming (Korsnes *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, as rare earth elements are also crucial for the production of renewable energy such as wind turbines, Norway plays an important role as it possesses large deposits of these minerals (Rare Earths Norway, n.d.). With that in mind, the Norwegian state therefore is an interesting actor to analyse because of its role concerning renewable energy and rare earths is not only limited to domestic interests, but it also has international implications which might influence the created discourses.

Similarly to the analysis of Fosen Vind DA's discourses, to investigate Norway's framing of the wind park, I mostly focused on scientific literature, too. That allowed me to investigate on how the State of Norway has framed its discourses regarding the need of more renewable and "green" energy, also in terms of international relations.

4.4 Positionality

When doing research, it is important to clarify its own researcher's positionality and relationship to the topic of this thesis. First of all, I want to highlight that I am generally interested in other countries' cultures and languages, especially Scandinavia. I have learned Norwegian some years ago and have visited Norway's capital Oslo once. During the process of learning Norwegian, visiting Oslo and geography classes in high school, I had the possibility to learn a bit about the Sámi culture which aroused my interest for this indigenous people. After having attended several human geography and history courses as well as numerous physical geography courses, I found it interesting to analyse the Fosen case. Having a human and physical geography background, allows me to approach the topic from different points of view.

Doing a discourse analysis signifies a selection of sources. It is neither possible nor desirable to consider every existing source on the Fosen case. For that reason, it is even more important to state my positionality in order to explain and to classify the way how I did research on this topic. The selection of sources is always a decision I take. This means, I decide whether an article or a video seems to be meaningful for my research or not. Having said that, I want to highlight that this Master's thesis at the end only is a selection of sources I considered to be meaningful for my research.

Additionally, I am aware that, as I am doing a discourse analysis, my Master's thesis is built upon the work and articles of other people. This means that I was restricted to the sources that were already existing and that I was not able to include other possible meaningful articles which will be published only after the submission of my own thesis. Therefore, it is even more crucial to critically assess and evaluate the sources I chose for my own research.

Having said this, conducting research always also carries the risk of producing epistemic violence. As this thesis is part of a scientific research process, that creates a power imbalance between the researcher and the research object (Teo, 2011). Therefore, I tried to, on the one hand, transparently show which sources I used. And on the other hand, I tried to embed the perspectives of the different actors into my thesis so that different opinions were reflected in the work. By doing so and by using different sources as well as types of sources, I minimised the risk of reproducing prejudices. And additionally, I constantly critically reflected on my positionality and my relation to the topic in order to keep a critical eye on the discourses. Having said that, I wanted to remain open-minded for any (new or unexpected) finding. Nevertheless, I was aware that despite this critical approach, I might not have been able to exclude every risk.

In terms of positionality, my personal background shaped this thesis, too. I grew up in a rural village in a mountainous Canton where I completed my entire education before doing my studies in the city of Zurich. Having said that, my intersectional background is shaped by a white, middle-European (school) system. As I grew up in this setting, I am aware of this frame which is also influenced by colonial and Eurocentric perspectives from the Global North.

However, for my Bachelor's thesis that I wrote in spring 2025, I have researched the "Decolonial turn". In that thesis, I investigated how geography is shaped by colonial and Eurocentric narratives and how they are still entangled today. That thesis helped me now for my Master's thesis as I was more aware of these intertwinings of geography and colonialism.

Another aspect I want to point out is that in my home Canton Glarus, there have also been discussions of building windmills. For me it was highly interesting to follow the political debates as well as the discussions in the society. Already then, it was a very contested debate and there were several good arguments on both sides. For that reason, I personally also have already experienced discussions regarding the construction of a wind park, even if the park would have been much smaller than the wind farm in Fosen. But in the end, the wind park was not constructed, which is why I do not have a personal experience of living in a wind park area.

To conclude, I acknowledge that this Master's thesis is strongly shaped by my positionality. Having said this, I did not strive for objectivity or neutrality, rather, as I have explained my background, I tried to demonstrate my starting point of this research. This description of my perspective and positionality hence is intended to allow to comprehend the way I did research on this topic and how I developed my argument.

4.5 Ethical challenges and limitations to the study

Research about the Sámi has been facing several ethical challenges regarding unequal and discriminatory research processes (Drugge, 2016). There is often high uncertainty among researchers about how to ethically do research on the indigenous Sámi people (Drugge, 2016). For that reason, it is highly important to be aware that also this Master's thesis rose some ethical challenges and limitations. Since my thesis builds on data and research of other persons, I potentially reproduced some of the already in academia existing biases and limitations of Sámi research. For that reason, for my thesis, I used different sources providing me with different points of view so that I had a more balanced analysis. However, I was not able to cover all the existing sources due to time constraints which itself is another limitation to my own research. But as I looked at the perspectives of three actors with different interests, it nevertheless showed the contested situation of the Fosen wind park.

Drugge (2022) mentions also some other general ethical questions regarding research on the Sámi. Because given the fact that the Sámi are a minority in Norway, research is often conducted from a top-down perspective as research is done on the Sámi instead of research that is done by the Sámi what eventually would shift the power relation (Drugge, 2022). In that sense, it is important to add to the commonly used research method other approaches which are done more directly through the perspective of the Sámi so that the term "research" can shed its negative connotations (Drugge, 2022). For my own research, however, I am aware that I did research through my own analytical position and that I analysed the different discourses and contrasted them with each other. But I did not directly represent the perspective of the Sámi people. For that reason, it is crucial that I provided my positionality so that it is understandable from which point I did my analysis.

It is also important to explain how I approached the sources. The scientific articles and YouTube videos that I read and watched were mostly in English. Additionally, some other articles and videos I used were in Norwegian and German. And what needs to be pointed out here is that I was not able to use any source that is written in a Sámi language because I do not know any of them. Thus, this further limits me insofar, as I was not able to incorporate any directly in a Sámi language written source. And that is exactly also a point that Drugge (2022) addressed, that the Sámi need more self-determination within the research process in order to make it more ethical. Publishing articles in a Sámi language could for instance be a way to support that. Therefore, it was important for me to be aware of that limitation.

Finally, I want to mention that when I started planning my Master's thesis, I first wanted to do empirical research. To do so, I had planned to conduct fieldwork in Norway and to interview different actors such as the Sámi or also some representatives of Fosen Vind DA and that's why I have sent several interview requests to different organisations. However, if at all, I only received rejections. But despite that, one person, apart from providing me with useful sources, also mentioned that it might in general be difficult to find interview partners on the part of the Sámi as they seem to experience a certain research fatigue. This is also an aspect that Fjellheim (2023) touched upon by stating that reindeer herders mentioned their research fatigue. And that is what brings me back to Drugge (2016) who stated for instance that in Sweden the research on Sámi people has increased a lot. I appreciated that that person shared this information with me, because following up on that mail, I eventually decided to switch my methodological approach and to do a discourse analysis instead of empirical research in Norway. This shows that first, it is necessary to remain flexible in a research process to be able to adapt to things and secondly, it also demonstrated the importance of direct contact to people as they can provide meaningful information.

5 Analysis

In this chapter, the discourses which were produced by the three different actors – the Sámi, the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA and the State of Norway – were analysed. Based on a critical discourse analysis approach, I investigated how these actors framed differently the space and the wind park at Fosen. Furthermore, based on the ruling of the Supreme Court, this has also allowed me to make some temporal comparisons between the topics mentioned before and after the ruling.

5.1 Sámi perspective

5.1.1 Meaning about landscape and space

For the Sámi, the Fosen territory is intertwined with cultural aspects, such as reindeer herding because it is an important part of their traditional life and is generally considered as a tracer of the Sámi culture (Berg-Nordlie, 2022; Mósesdóttir, 2024). Given the fact that reindeer herding areas cover about 40% of the territory of the Norwegian state (Vanhanen, 2025), this already demonstrates that reindeer herding contains a high spatial relevance. And this additionally increases the significance of reindeer herding because on the one hand, as shown, it has a territorial relevant meaning, but on the other hand, reindeer herding is also associated with the Sámi culture (Berg-Nordlie, 2022). And even though a small part of the Sámi population are reindeer herders, only reindeer herding Sámi are meant to be the "real" Sámi (Vanhanen, 2025). This mixture of the territorial and cultural relevance of reindeer herding also accounts for Fosen. The South-Fosen Sijte and the North-Fosen Sijte represent important pastures for the Sámi because they use those sites as winter pastures (Vanhanen, 2025). To bring that together with the before made argument of the combined relevance of reindeer herding, the two reindeer pastures in Fosen represent on the one side a territorial importance for the Sámi population. But, and above all, they are an essential space and place for their reindeers and thus for living a part of their personal life but as well as of an imagined general Sámi culture as reindeer herding is considered as part of the general Sámi tradition (Berg-Nordlie, 2022; Vanhanen, 2025).

To further expand that point, the disruption of the reindeer pastures of the South and North-Fosen Sijte have several implications. On an intimate level, the construction of the wind park in

these Sijtes led to the concrete loss of grazing land (Mósesdóttir, 2024). These pastures are essential insofar, because they provide stable winter herding conditions, which emphasises the reason why that area also already historically has been important for the Sámi reindeer herding (Stubbe, 2024). However, the construction of infrastructure in the pastures increases the pressure on the reindeer herders which is why these interventions get framed as "attacks" in which the Sámi fought (Nilssen, 2019). These "attacks" therefore mean a loss of space which has been important for a long time for the Sámi and that's why the Sámi needed alternative pastures after the construction of the wind farm in Fosen (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Stubbe, 2024). The wind park in Fosen therefore had negative implications on the intimate life of Sámi reindeer herders. They lost an important winter pasture area, which threatened their pastoral way of life, and with it, their personal lives, too, because an insecurity in their labour means insecurity in their lives as well. And this might eventually explain why the construction of the wind park was framed as an "attack" they had to fight against (Nilssen, 2019).

This implication on the intimate level can further be expanded. Eva Maria Fjellheim (2023: 154) provides a quote from a young reindeer owner who said: *,,At Fosen, reindeer herding is the only Saami practice that provides an environment where we can meet. Reindeer herding is our core, and the very foundation of the Southern Saami language and traditions."* In that quote it is salient that the reindeer owner highlights the social aspect of reindeer herding which demonstrates that reindeers are not just a source of labour for the Sámi to earn money, but they attribute values to the interplay of landscape, reindeers and themselves (Fjellheim, 2023). This therefore shows that the loss of Fosen as a winter pasture not only has effects on the economic character of the herding of the reindeers itself (Stubbe, 2024). But it has especially highlighted the intimate entanglement of that space with the Sámi identity mentioning the integral part of the Sámi culture as well as of the farmer's own identity (Fjellheim, 2023). The reindeer herding practice, the reindeers, the Sámi people and the landscape (at Fosen) thus build a reciprocal relationship which shapes the way how knowledge is produced in a Sámi context; shaping for example the identity of a single Sámi herder (Fjellheim, 2023). That brings me to conclude that reindeer herding at Fosen includes diverse reciprocal dynamics of knowledge production which signifies that a loss of these pastures due to the wind park also has as a consequence the loss of a Sámi core value and part of its identity (Fjellheim, 2023).

The construction of the wind farm in Fosen further also had implications on the perception of the overarching South Sámi identity apart from the intimate level. To analyse that, it first must be stated again the importance of reindeer herding for the (South) Sámi culture. Because reindeer herding does not only have an economic value, but it especially gets also considered as a "cultural shield" (Mæhlum, 2019; Vanhanen, 2025). Having said that, reindeer herding gets attributed with the South Sámi culture as it fulfils social and cultural tasks by strengthening for instance the South Sámi language (Mæhlum, 2019). So, this means that the loss of winter pastures due to the wind farm in Fosen also directly signified a violation of the South Sámi culture considering their strong association of reindeer herding with their culture. Fjellheim (2023) further reinforces this line of argument by explaining that many of the reindeer owners' ancestors have already had reindeers. This therefore adds another layer to the significance of reindeer herding for the Sámi because of its familiar characteristic further highlighting the reason why reindeer herding is regarded as crucial for the South Sámi culture and identity (Fjellheim, 2023). Thus, the loss of grazing areas because of the Fosen wind farm's construction posed a threat to the South Sámi identity as reindeer herding constitutes an important part of the South Sámi identity (Fjellheim, 2023).

This strong association of the space of the Fosen winter pasture with the cultural identity of the South Sámi indicates how space is not neutral and how values are attributed to it (Mazúr and Urbánek, 1983; Fjellheim, 2023). For that reason, when the wind park was constructed, this signified a violation to the values that the South Sámi attribute to the Fosen space. However, the mobilisation within the Sámi against the construction also led to a connecting power within the Sámi community, which put further emphasis on the high importance of the Fosen space (Nilssen, 2019). Through that attribution of cultural importance to Fosen, a discourse is being produced by connecting the space Fosen with the South Sámi culture. To add a temporal facet to the wind park construction, also after the ruling of the Supreme Court in 2021, the Sámi population remained partially dissatisfied with it (Stubbe, 2024). Despite the financial and territorial compensation the Sámi have received (Mósesdóttir, 2024), they still argued that the construction of a wind park and reindeer herding are not compatible with each other (Stubbe, 2024). The Supreme Court came to a similar conclusion, arguing that the wind farm was a violation to the Sámi rights; highlighting again the significance of reindeer herding at Fosen for the Sámi culture (Stubbe, 2024). To sum up, it can be said that a discourse was produced by attributing to Fosen as a space with values representing the South Sámi culture.

The relationship of the Sámi with space can be extended and considered also from another perspective by looking at the associations and values they attribute to landscapes. Landscape from their point of view is strongly linked to the South Sámi culture which is interesting because the use of the landscape gets connected with Sámi traditions as well as memories (Nilssen, 2019). Nilssen (2019) goes more into detail regarding the interconnectedness of landscape and cultural practices; the author states that landscape has served (and still serves) as a place where the Sámi gather, negotiate and practice their culture; and these processes eventually shape(d) the South Sámi identity (Nilssen, 2019). This exemplifies how space can produce meaning as it serves as a place where experiences and negotiations happen or "take place". However, with the construction of the Fosen wind park, these landscapes turned out to be also a place of contestation over renewable energy production which for that reason also was a threat to the South Sámi identity (Normann, 2021; Fjellheim, 2023). Landscape therefore can be seen as a space which is important for the Southern Sámi as it serves as a place where culture takes place and gets constructed through the negotiations of cultural practices (Nilssen, 2019).

5.1.2 Responsibility for future generations

To the relevance and significance of space from the Sámi perspective, a temporal layer can be added to it. To highlight that, Fjellheim (2023: 154) provides a quote from a reindeer owner stating:

> *„[…] I am glad to have received values of how to think about nature and share, not only exploiting from it. We look after each other and we have respect for the lands that have traces of history, hold memories of the past, and also hope for the future."* (Fjellheim, 2023, p. 154).

From that quote, several aspects can be extracted. First, as it says, the Sámi owner demonstrates that nature is not purely given so that it can be exploited, but it is associated with respect (Fjellheim, 2023). And this brings me to the second point that the South Sámi lands are perceived as spaces filled with meaning which is reflected in the way how the lands get ascribed as holding memories (Fjellheim, 2023). And further, this brings the argument that is made that for the Sámi, land is also intertwined with time (Fjellheim, 2023). That can be expanded as Nilssen (2019) for instance explains that places, which are important for identity building, serve as a continuity in their culture. Furthermore, the quote above can be linked to the concept of "communicative memory" which Nilssen (2019) touches upon. He describes "communicative

memory" as a relationship to the past through the creation of discourses which eventually signifies that this knowledge gets passed on to the next generation (Nilssen, 2019). And it is exactly this transmission of values which the Sámi owner in its quote describes, too (Fjellheim, 2023). Hence, the way how landscape is perceived today has traces back to the value attributions of former generations. These discursive practices therefore strongly shape which values landscapes embody which is also reflected in the responsibility a Sámi highlights regarding the influence of wind park projects: *„This is not about me, it is about the future for my descendants"* (Nilssen, 2019, p. 175).

Analysing the discourses which are produced by the Sámi regarding the space at Fosen reveals patterns of knowledge production. Fjellheim (2023) elaborates further on this point in her paper saying that: *„The integral and reciprocal care between humans, non-humans and the lands can be understood as taking place within a "Saami cultural landscape""* (Fjellheim, 2023, p. 154). And this is exactly the important point to consider. As the Sámi people attribute values to space and as the landscape serves as a place of mutual negotiations, knowledge gets produced within these landscapes (Fjellheim, 2023). Building upon the before mentioned concept of "communicative memory" (Nilssen, 2019), the attribution of values to landscape and the associated knowledge gets transmitted from a generation to the next one, meaning that landscapes accumulate knowledge with every generation, hence strengthening the Sámi identity related to their landscape (Nilssen, 2019; Fjellheim, 2023). It is further interesting that there exists the Southern Sámi language term "miehtjiesdajve", similar to the Northern Sámi language term of "meahcci", describing places of social relations without the division of culture and nature (Joks, Østmo and Law, 2020; Fjellheim, 2023). This term therefore highlights the importance and entanglement of landscapes for the Sámi culture which in turn signifies a production of knowledge.

5.1.3 Sovereignty

The space and landscape at Fosen also create a discourse of self-determination and sovereignty (Stubbe, 2024). In the case of the Sámi, the rights of a territory highly depend on their ancestors, as they consider their right of authority over their territories through their long-term use of them (Saami Council, 2017; Johansen, 2019). This means that the Sámi claim for their right for self-determination of a territory traces back to the historical belonging of those areas, providing

the next generations with the inherited right due to their ancestors' use of those territories (Beach, 2007; Normann, 2021; Fjellheim, 2023). This shows a connection between Sámi culture and their sovereignty; as the historical belonging of the herding areas is connected to its land-use, the Sámi rights thus are intimately entangled with their culture because reindeer herding and the landscape used for that is connotated with cultural values (Nilssen, 2019; Normann, 2021). With that in mind, Fosen, which has represented an important reindeer pasture (Mósesdóttir, 2024), creates a discourse that is also framed as a place of the Sámi's right for self-determination due to the (historical) importance of that landscape for practicing and negotiating the Sámi culture (Normann, 2021).

Drawing upon the significance of the Fosen territory for the Sámi sovereignty (Stubbe, 2024), it can be argued that the construction of the Fosen wind park marked an infringement on their perception of sovereignty. According to a reindeer herder, he frames the loss of the winter pasture as a new form of colonialism which is especially interesting because that reindeer herder has been fighting for his pastures already for a long time and not just since the planning of the Fosen wind park (Winzenried, 2018). This view can be linked to the statement that a former Norwegian Sámi parliament's president said, namely that this is a practice of "Green Colonialism" (Normann, 2021; Sámediggi, n.d.). This is insofar notable as the Sámi territory has already been colonised in former times (Lindmark, 2013), and with that, the emergence of a, framed as new, colonialism, adds to the complexity of the Sámi struggle for self-determination (Winzenried, 2018). And furthermore, this project which is seen as Green Colonialism, thus *„reinforce long-standing inequalities and injustice"* (Mósesdóttir, 2024, p. 2). Finally, it can be concluded that the Fosen wind park posed a violation to the sovereignty of the Sámi which led to them framing it as a new, green form of colonialism (Winzenried, 2018; Normann, 2021).

5.1.4 Green transition

The wind farm's construction also led to contestations on an epistemological level. Coming back to the before made discourse of framing the wind park as Green Colonialism (Normann, 2021), this can be seen as a power relation between Sámi and Norwegian (i.e. Western) knowledge (Fjellheim, 2023). These two differing approaches of knowledge production have encountered at Fosen leading to struggles between them as different preferences come to light regarding the usage of the space at Fosen (Fjellheim, 2023). Thus, through the extractivism of wind power

at Fosen, the Sámi local knowledge has not been sufficiently considered which led to the imposition of epistemological understanding on the behalf of the wind power advocates (Vanhanen, 2025). This has consequences as it influences the way how the Sámi are perceived in the rest of the country but it also is a threat to their identity and territory (Normann, 2021). Nilssen (2019) further adds that with the wind park the Sámi cultural and memory landscape are facing the danger of disappearing which in turn leads to an even more underrepresentation of the Sámi and eventually has an influence on knowledge production as they are less visible. To conclude, it can be said that the wind park's construction influences the Sámi also on an epistemological level due to the increasing invisibilisation of the Sámi culture (Nilssen, 2019).

The Fosen wind park's construction can furthermore be seen as a present continuation of the former Norwegian assimilation policies (Karam, 2023). It can be argued that despite several laws which should protect the Sámi cultural and indigenous rights, such as the ICCPR which was implemented into Norwegian legislation after the Alta conflict (Mósesdóttir, 2024), the Sámi right for self-determination was nevertheless undermined (Karam, 2023). The Sámi consider the exploitation of this natural resource wind by the Norwegian State as Green Colonialism which reinforces the existing inequality of the Sámi (Mósesdóttir, 2024). Going more into depth regarding the term "green", the Sámi consider their traditional land use as one of the greenest form of use that exists as they see their land use as ecologically responsible that has no long-lasting impact on the landscape (Saami Council, 2017). Having said that, the Sámi challenge the classical view of green energy by proposing their land use as already green (Saami Council, 2017). They thus do not see the need to establish projects for "green energy", but rather they point to the coloniality of these projects that endanger, or rather erase, the Sámi indigenous culture (Karam, 2023). And that's why the Sámi claim their right for self-determination in order to protect their culture and to manage the resources in Sápmi by themselves (Saami Council, 2017).

In terms of climate change and increasing temperatures, the winter grazing pastures at Fosen represented an even more important site for the Sámi herders (Fjellheim, 2023; Mósesdóttir, 2024). A herding strategy that is adapted to the seasons is important insofar as it means to sustainably use the pastures in order not to deteriorate them (Fjellheim, 2023). To do so, flexible access to these sites is required, but this is made difficult by the different land-uses (Fjellheim, 2023). By looking at the wind park from that point, where its construction destroys nature, the Sámi frame the wind farm as unsustainable (Nilssen, 2019). Framing it that way further creates

a different picture of the narrative of "sustainability". Because from the Sámi perspective, "sustainability" is reflected in their land use practices, including, for example, also the production of meat (Stubbe, 2024). Fjellheim (2023: 142) further elaborates on that, saying that *„Paradoxically, Saami reindeer herding thus faces a double colonial burden; from climate change itself and its mitigation measures."* This shows that the Fosen space is also a place where the climate change and its mitigation measures encounter which represents a challenge to the Sámi reindeer herders. And the continued transformation of landscapes into infrastructure makes the situation even more complex (Nilssen, 2019). However, the Sámi herders received an alternative winter pasture after the ruling of the Supreme Court (Mósesdóttir, 2024).

5.1.5 Concluding remarks

Finally, the space at Fosen leads to the emergence of different discourses. The high cultural importance of landscape for the Sámi (personal and social) identity has been highlighted several times (Fjellheim, 2023). However, the construction of the wind park can be seen as a threat to their culture which is why a South Sámi has stated that *„Knowing that it is being taken away from us is so painful"* (Nilssen, 2019, p. 180). Due to the reduced winter pastures, this has as consequence that the reindeers might have to be fed artificially which in turn may lead to an increase of diseases and thus an increase of reindeer deaths (Fjellheim, 2023). And that fact also needs to be considered because, as a Sámi herder said: *„It is difficult for a reindeer herder to see reindeer die […] It is a trauma"* (Fjellheim, 2023, p. 156). And this statement eventually leads back to the colonial trauma which the Sámi have already experienced during the colonial era of the Nordic states (Hansen, 2022). For that reason, the Sámi Council has stated in its Váhtjer declaration from 2022 that it is important to strengthen the Sámi identity (Saami Council, 2022). It is further argued that with an intensified and strengthened Sámi identity, Sápmi will be strengthened as well (Saami Council, 2022). Additionally, they claim that it is important to rely on ancestral and inherited knowledge to respectfully manage natural resources in Sápmi (Saami Council, 2022). This statement finally brings some of the before elaborated discourses together. On the one hand, it shows the intimate entanglement of identity and land and on the other hand, it highlights the sense of responsibility for the natural resources in their lands. And this relationship gets connected with the inherited ancestral

knowledge from their ancestors. And that finally emphasises the importance of the space at Fosen for the (South) Sámi people.

5.2 Fosen Vind DA perspective

5.2.1 Meaning about landscape and space

First off, it can be said that the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA needs a place, and thus space, to build its wind turbines. This signifies that the choice of the place has a direct impact on the chosen location. In the case of wind energy production, the place is furthermore important as the strength of the wind varies between different places which therefore means that Fosen Vind DA is interested in a place where there are good and strong wind conditions (Statkraft, n.d.c). Eventually, this space where the wind turbines are built, is a place where Fosen Vind DA is economically active as its economic activity depends on the energy production which subsequently is dependent on good wind conditions (Statkraft, n.d.c). This means that the wind park operator turns the nature (i.e. the resource wind and the space itself) into a commodity, even if nature would not have been intended to be a commodity, and with that nature commodification, Fosen Vind DA becomes economically active (Liverman, 2004; Wissen, 2018). Finally, it can be concluded that the space on the Fosen peninsula at the first place serves for the wind park operator simply as a place to build its wind turbines in order to be economically active and to operate in the energy market by making use of fictitious commodities (Wissen, 2018; Statkraft, n.d.a, n.d.b, n.d.c).

Drawing upon the before made argument that the wind conditions are important for the choice of the place for a wind farm (Statkraft, n.d.c), the peninsula Fosen seems to provide very good conditions (Statkraft, n.d.b). According to the energy company Statkraft, Fosen's geographical location in a coastal zone in Central Norway leads to good wind conditions, among the best in total of Europe (Statkraft, n.d.b). This highlights Fosen Vind DA's main focus: the extraction of the resource wind with the aim to produce high amounts of energy. Given the fact that wind power production in Norway has gained an increased significance for its total electrical energy production, the favourable wind conditions in Fosen therefore seem to be an incentive to exploit these resources (Mósesdóttir, 2024). That's why the Fosen wind park is associated with a territory being an economic resource space (Nilssen, 2019) which is also reflected in the company's emphasis on the wind farm's potential annual energy production of about 2.6 TWh

(Fosen Vind, n.d.). Hence, it can be said that the space at Fosen is framed by the wind park operator as a location where favourable wind conditions can lead to a large energy production which eventually is associated with economic gains and that's why the resource wind gets extracted at Fosen (Nilssen, 2019; Fosen Vind, n.d.; Statkraft, n.d.b).

5.2.2 Narratives of development of the space at Fosen

Fosen gets also framed as a place of (technological) development (Fjellheim, 2023). In terms of the goal of achieving a green transition, which will be touched upon more in detail later on, Fosen is seen as a place where technological development happens and to which the Sámi population should adapt *„for the greater good"* (Fjellheim, 2023, p. 155). The emphasis on Fosen as a place where development happens, further gets highlighted by a Fosen Vind's lawyer statement saying that *„All parts of society develop, and we must work together to make it work. Technological development affects reindeer herding. It is not a question of maintaining a culture from 100 years ago"* (Fjellheim, 2023, p. 155). From this quote it can be elaborated that the wind park at Fosen is framed as a means to develop the entire society, considering development as a way forward. And on the other hand, it is highlighted that the Sámi population also needs to adapt to that development while not considering it important to maintain their traditional cultural roots (Fjellheim, 2023; Stubbe, 2024). Finally, it can be said that a discourse gets created by reflecting Fosen as a place of (technological) development.

The Fosen wind park project can be seen also as a project which fostered the self-promotion of Fosen Vind DA. The park operator for example has argued that the construction of the wind park will lead to the creation of new jobs which eventually will support the local economy (Løsnes, 2016). Furthermore, it is claimed that the wind park also contributes to the local municipalities' budget by generating more taxes (Løsnes, 2016). This line of argumentation can be considered as a way of self-promotion of Fosen Vind DA by highlighting the economic benefits of the project (Stubbe, 2024). That can further be expanded by arguing that the energy company Statkraft, with its business model of building renewable energy projects, tries to position itself as a promoter of green and sustainable energy (Statkraft, n.d.a). In one of their company videos on YouTube, they for example point to the good conditions of weather and geographical circumstances and they state that *„Naturally, we must make the very most out of this opportunity"* (Statkraft, 2016a, 2:27-2:31) and adding that *„[…] el aire es vida […]"* (Statkraft,

2016a, 5:34-5:37)[1]. These statements thus emphasise that the wind park operator also points to the relationship between their business model and the natural values, showing the importance of it. Finally, this can also be adapted to Fosen which is claimed to be a place where sustainable energy gets produced (Mósesdóttir, 2024).

When analysing Fosen Vind DA's discourses regarding the wind park, it is striking that they often use superlatives to describe the project. In an interview, Statkraft's former CEO framed the Fosen wind park project as *„[…] det største vindkraftprosjektet på land i Europa"* (Statkraft, 2016b, 0:20-0:24)[2]. With that, Statkraft highlights that the wind park's construction led to the potential of producing high amounts of annual energy in Europe (Statkraft, n.d.b). This gets complemented by adding that the wind park's contract was *„[…] the largest contract in Europe"* (Statkraft, 2016c, 6:15-6:17). This adds another layer to the wind park project because it not only considers the potential for the production of renewable energy, but it also emphasises the political economic influence by pointing to the dimension of the contract. To conclude, it can be stated that the wind park operator frames the wind park as a historic act that contributes to the energy production in Europe and with that, they also highlight the project's magnitude by constructing a narrative of a large scale energy project (Statkraft, 2016c).

Drawing upon the economic benefits of the Fosen wind farm, the wind park developers construct a narrative of "growth" that will happen due to the project's impacts (Nilssen, 2019). As already claimed in one of their press conferences, Fosen Vind DA mentions the large dimensionality of the project('s contract) and also points to the positive impacts on the local municipalities (Løsnes, 2016; Statkraft, 2016c). On the one hand it is argued that the Fosen project will lead to the creation of new job opportunities and higher incomes, an issue that is insofar interesting as the Fosen area has been experiencing a decrease in its population (Løsnes, 2016; Nilssen, 2019; Toivanen, 2026). On the other hand, the investment in the wind farm will also increase the municipalities' revenues due to the increased generation of taxes (Løsnes, 2016). And additionally, the wind company pointed out that the wind power project leads to the development and improvement of new infrastructure as well, because for instance, new roads or power lines are built for the construction of the park, but which will persist also after (Stubbe, 2024; Toivanen, 2026). The construction of the wind park at Fosen therefore gets

[1] *„[…] the air is life […]" (own translation).*
[2] *„[…] the largest onshore wind power project in Europe" (translated with DeepL.com and subsequently edited).*

framed as and constitutes a narrative of local development at the place of Fosen. By pointing to the local economic benefits, such as the creation of new jobs, this discourse shifts the focus to the local dimensionality of the Fosen project.

5.2.3 Green transition

Due to rising energy consumption from the electrification of sectors such as electric vehicles, there is a greater demand for electricity and, in turn, an increased demand for renewable energy like wind power (Ellingsen, 2024). The Norwegian energy company Statkraft explains that the production of energy through wind leads to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (Statkraft, n.d.c). Furthermore, the energy company frames wind power as a clean technology that plays an important role for the future, namely pointing to the relatively fast construction of wind turbines which therefore significantly contributes to the energy production (Statkraft, n.d.c). The wind park operator highlights Fosen Vind park's contribution to the Norwegian energy budget, citing its strong potential and the project's annual renewable power production capacity of about 2.6 TWh, thereby focusing on the project's numbers (Statkraft, n.d.b). Hence, this creates a discourse on the Fosen wind park which has significant potential for renewable energy production. As the wind park operator highlights the wind farm's numbers of the energy production, they demonstrate on an abstract level the wind park's significancy of the contribution to satisfy the increased energy consumption.

In terms of green transition, the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA positions itself as an important actor to tackle the increased need for green energy (Stubbe, 2024). Analysing the "transition" part of the term "green transition", a Statkraft's spokesperson, pointed out the entanglement of wind and fossil energy: *„Renewable production of energy will be increasingly important in the future when fossil fuels are gradually replaced"* (Løsnes, 2016). The framing of the Fosen wind park as a means to tackle green transition therefore emphasises the project's benefits and contribution to shift Norway's energy sector (Stubbe, 2024). Vanhanen (2025) further argues that the necessity of green transition for a sustainable energy production also serves as a legitimisation of constructing the wind park which is why the Fosen project gets presented as a means of green transition. Wind energy is framed as *„[…] green, good and necessary […]"* (Fjellheim, 2023, p. 142) and thus, is seen as unproblematic. Additionally, according to Mósesdóttir (2024), wind power projects often get considered as a technological

development to produce renewable energy *„[…] which is important for the society"* (Fjellheim, 2023, p. 155). Finally, the wind power project Fosen Vind is framed as a technological development which should contribute to the green transition of Norway. And to do so, it relies on the space at Fosen, thus attributing to it a value of importance for green transition.

5.2.4 Responsibility for future generations

With regard to increasing global temperatures, a transition towards renewable energy production is important to mitigate global warming (Dietz, Shwom and Whitley, 2020). Apart from the negative ecological impacts of global warming, Dietz, Shwom and Whitley (2020) state that climate change affects social structures, too, which is why climate change needs to be seen as a challenge with different facets. With that in mind, this is where the Fosen project comes in. In a Statkraft's YouTube video it is mentioned that *„Dal punto di vista dello sviluppo sostenibile non ci può essere un paese che […] possa fare tutto questo da solo perché è un problema globale"* (Statkraft, 2016a, 11:47-11:57)[3]. In that quote it can be analysed that Statkraft frames sustainable development as a global problem which means that, as the Fosen wind park should foster green transition, it can be argued that the wind park serves as a means to tackle the global problem of climate change. This global aspect gets further another layer of complexity as it gets entangled with global economy: *„Energy is the lifeblood of the global economy and this energy must come from sources that cause the lowest possible carbon emissions"* (Statkraft, 2016a, 11:59-12:08). By applying that to the Fosen wind park, it can be stated that the wind turbines not only stand for green transition, but they also contribute with their energy production to a functioning global economy. Hence, it can be argued that the wind park operator tries to frame the space at Fosen as a place where the global challenge of climate change can and should be tackled. But furthermore, they also pinpoint to the wind park's significant role regarding global economy because it produces renewable energy which is important for the economy according to Statkraft (2016a).

This line of argumentation can be further expanded. Given the fact that the earth's climate is rapidly changing (Dietz, Shwom and Whitley, 2020), this creates a certain urgency to increase the renewable energy production as it reduces carbon dioxide emissions (Stubbe, 2024). The

[3] *„From the point of view of sustainable development there cannot be one country that […] can do all that alone because it is a global problem" (own translation).*

promotion of fossil-free and clean energy therefore includes the development of renewable energy projects such as wind power (Toivanen, 2026). This relates to what Statkraft (2016a, 12:10-12:20) claims in a YouTube video: *„Technological development in the field of renewable energy is progressing faster than ever before. It is becoming more efficient and financially profitable."* Hence, it can be argued that Statkraft creates a narrative of renewable energy that on the one hand is economic (by highlighting its efficiency and financial profitability). And on the other hand, it also picks up the narrative of urgency. By considering the technological development in the realm of renewable energy production as a fast progress, it addresses the climate change's urgency while relating it to a narrative of progress and development, thus framing renewable energies as well-advanced. This also applies to the Fosen case. While the wind power project gets framed as an act of development (Stubbe, 2024), it thus contributes to tackle the urgent challenge of global warming.

5.2.5 Concluding remarks

It can be concluded that the space at Fosen, as well as the Fosen wind park itself, create multifaceted threads of discourse, but which can be grouped into mainly two ideas, namely a discourse of growth and a discourse of green transition. Different actors of the wind park operator framed the wind park as one of the biggest wind parks which has the potential to increase the production of renewably produced electricity (Statkraft, 2016b; Statkraft, n.d.b). This narrative of growth further also got applied to its socioeconomic impacts. The wind park operator has argued that thanks to the Fosen project, job opportunities, as well as higher incomes, will be the result of it, and the municipalities will also profit with the generation of more taxes (Løsnes, 2016; Toivanen, 2026). Nevertheless, it also needs to be stated that the Fosen peninsula provides good wind conditions and therefore is an interesting space for the wind park operator to carry out such an energy project, especially because the amount of electricity to produce is dependent on these good conditions (Statkraft, n.d.b, n.d.c). It therefore was striking that the wind park operator created a discourse of growth which happens at Fosen and thanks to the Fosen wind park.

Regarding the prominent second discourses created by Fosen Vind DA, it is the framing of the wind farm as a means for green transition. Drawing upon the urgency that global warming due to climate change induces, this serves as a legitimisation for the construction of the wind farm.

In one of their YouTube videos, Statkraft has emphasised the role of renewable energy: They highlighted their contribution to a reduction of the carbon dioxide emissions and they also argued that this clean energy is crucial for a functioning economy (Statkraft, 2016a). By pointing to the interconnectedness of a sustainable development, the wind park operator not only shows the entanglement of energy production in Norway with the global economy (Statkraft, 2016a), but they also create a narrative of development and progress. They frame the wind power project as a (technological) development and consider wind energy as *„[…] green, good and necessary […]"* (Fjellheim, 2023, p. 142), which in turn builds a bridge to the above mentioned first discourse of growth. To conclude, it can be said that Fosen Vind DA frames the space at Fosen and the wind park itself as a way to support the green transition and also as a symbol for growth.

5.3 State of Norway perspective

5.3.1 Green transition

When analysing the State of Norway's perspective on the Fosen wind project, it is important to note that this perspective may not always be consistent due to changes in Norway's government and leading. Nevertheless, the project's first consultations took place already in 2009 and since then, different governments from the political spectrum have had the lead (regjeringen.no, n.d.). However, it is striking that in 2016, the Norwegian government with its former minister president Erna Solberg, as well as several political parties, have stated that this wind farm at Fosen is a great and positive project (Kringstad, 2016). Furthermore, the wind park is framed as a contribution to Europe's green transition and thus the importance of the construction of the wind park is highlighted (Stubbe, 2024). To further emphasise the Fosen Vind's significance, Norway's former minister president Erna Solberg said that: *„Dette er et stort europeisk prosjekt. Norge er en del av løsningen på energiutfordringen i Europa"* (Kringstad, 2016)[4]. Hence, this quote highlights that the Fosen wind park gets considered and framed as an important part of the green transition, not only of Norway, but also of entire Europe, on which will be discussed more in detail later.

[4] *„This is a large European project. Norway is a part of the solution to Europe's energy challenge" (translated with DeepL.com and subsequently edited).*

As Mósesdóttir (2024) explains, renewable energy technologies can be seen as tools to foster the green energy transition. This transition is for Norway insofar interesting and important as the expansion of renewable energies is a step towards the independence from Norway's currently important oil sector (Höök and Aleklett, 2008; Kringstad, 2016). Interestingly, some Norwegian politicians also highlight the Fosen wind park's energetical potential by pointing to the potential large energy production with which they again emphasise the importance for the goal of green transition (Kringstad, 2016). Hence, it can be argued that the Norwegian State tries to frame the Fosen wind park in a way that the space at Fosen turns into a place of green transition. With that in mind, not only the way how electricity is produced gets transitioned, but the space at Fosen is in transition, too, namely from a reindeer pasture towards a place where renewable energy gets produced. In this debate, the need to address the global warming due to the climate change plays a crucial role regarding the significance of the transition of the energy sector (Ellingsen, 2024). Due to the fact that wind power is a way to cut down on the greenhouse gas emissions (Toivanen, 2026), the Fosen wind park is seen as a way to achieve the climate goals (Kringstad, 2016). However, the former minister president was aware of the possible negative impacts on the nature at Fosen (Kringstad, 2016). Finally, it can be stated that Fosen Vind has a high significance for the State of Norway to achieve the climate goals and to foster the green transition, happening therefore at Fosen.

5.3.2 Responsibility for future generations

When analysing the State of Norway's perspective on the Fosen project, it is also important to consider Norway's international role. First, as Kringstad (2016) in her article mentions, it is striking that some Norwegian politicians highlight the entanglement with Europe, stating for example that:

> *„Etter hvert som vi knytter nærmere til nettet i Europa har denne utbyggingen er betydning langt utenfor landets grenser. Dette er en stor investering inn i det grønne skiftet som Norge og resten av Europa må ha" (Kringstad, 2016)*[5].

With that quote it can be seen, that to the wind park it is attributed another layer of complexity by pointing to its entanglement and implications on Europe. Stubbe (2024) adds to this the

[5] *„As we become more closely connected to the European grid, this expansion has implications that extend far beyond national borders. This is a large investment in the green transition that Norway and the rest of Europe need to make" (translated with DeepL.com and subsequently edited).*

argument that the Norwegian government has put an emphasis on the expansion of renewable energy in order to contribute to the green transition across Europe. This argumentation further gets strengthened regarding the fact that the European Union wants to increase its independency of other Non-European countries in terms of rare earth elements which are relevant for the green transition (Balomenos *et al.*, 2017). And as Norway possesses large deposits of these minerals (Rare Earths Norway, n.d.), Norway plays a crucial role in the process of the green transition. This furthermore is especially interesting also due to the fact that Norway wants to become carbon neutral by 2050 and additionally has signed a treaty for a Green Alliance with the European Union (Vanhanen, 2025; Climate Policy Database, n.d.) which emphasises again the intertwined character of the green transition. It thus can be stated that the space at Fosen not only serves as a place where the green transition shall happen, but also as a place where Norway's entanglement with Europe shall be expanded to foster renewable energies and to promote the Green Alliance.

5.3.3 Sovereignty

Another component of Norway's perspective is its sovereignty. Drawing upon the concept of the Westphalian sovereignty (see chapter 2.3), which is the basis for today's international law and claims that a state has the authority over its territory (Bauder and Mueller, 2023), this can also be seen at Fosen. The Norwegian state considers Fosen as part of its territory and hence wants to use that space for its own means and goals, such as the production of green energy (Mósesdóttir, 2024). The Norwegian state frames a discourse of legitimisation which emphasises Fosen's significance for the green transition which is argued with the Westphalian concept of sovereignty that allows Norway to extract the resources within its borders (Buchan and Heath, 2006; Lawrence, 2014; Bauder and Mueller, 2023). To conclude, it can therefore be said that in terms of the Westphalian sovereignty, Norway makes use of the resources lying within its territorial borders and with that legitimises their extraction.

5.3.4 Narratives of development of the space at Fosen

Apart from the importance of Fosen Vind for the green transition, the wind park gets attributed with other benefits, too. Norway's Ministry of Petroleum and Energy has for instance argued

that the construction of onshore wind projects increases job opportunities (Nilssen, 2019; Stubbe, 2024). This gets emphasised by two politicians arguing that *„Utbyggingen vil gi 600 arbeidsplasser, mens driften vil gi 40-50 nye arbeidsplasser"* (Kringstad, 2016)[6]. And adding further that *„Nye arbeidsplasser er sårt tiltrengt i tiden vi er inne i. Fornybarnæringen er fremtidens næring"* (Kringstad, 2016)[7]. These quotes highlight the focus the politicians have; they have a detailed look at the local creation of jobs and frame the wind park as a project that creates jobs. With that, they create a discourse which points to the economic growth and benefits at Fosen due to new job opportunities and tax benefits and with that, wind power is framed in a way that it is seen as economically positive (Stubbe, 2024; Vanhanen, 2025).

From a wider perspective it can be argued that the Norwegian government tries to present incentives to the local municipalities to gain more support for the construction of wind projects (Stubbe, 2024). This also fits with the general perspective that the wind park offers more than just the creation of new jobs, as a politician said that *„Dette betyr veldig mye for Fosenhalvøya, men også for miljøet som leverer vindkraftteknologi i Trøndelag. De skal produsere automasjon og standardsystemet for vindkraftbransjen"* (Kringstad, 2016)[8]. With that it is shown that Fosen Vind has a huge significance for the Fosen region while also pointing to its economic significant character as it is argued that the Fosen wind park might also affect the wind power industry. This therefore shows that the wind park not only has regional impacts, but it is assumed to have an influence within a broader realm of the wind industry, too. And additionally, it can be said that this quote points to the benefits of wind power projects which include for instance the local development of infrastructure like new roads of power lines (Toivanen, 2026). With that in mind, a narrative gets constructed that points to the benefits of Fosen Vind even beyond its direct impacts, showing the relevance of the wind project.

Having the benefits in mind which have been highlighted by the Norwegian state, it can be argued from a broader perspective that Fosen gets presented as a place of development and progress. In order to promote green transition, the Norwegian government considers the wind

[6] *„The construction phase will create 600 jobs, while the operational phase will create 40-50 new jobs" (translated with DeepL.com and subsequently edited).*
[7] *„New jobs are sorely needed in the current times. Renewable energies are the industry of the future" (translated with DeepL.com and subsequently edited).*
[8] *„This is of great significance for the Fosen Peninsula, but also for the wind power technology sector in Trøndelag. They will be producing automation and standard systems for the wind power industry" (translated with DeepL.com and subsequently edited).*

farm at Fosen as a technological solution (Stubbe, 2024). This framing further contributes to the narrative of "development" which takes place in Fosen with the construction of the wind park. This is emphasised even more because the Norwegian state puts emphasis on the perceived benefits such as the creation of new workplaces or the increase of tax revenues, highlighting with that the local economic development and hence creating a narrative of development (Kringstad, 2016; Toivanen, 2026). These huge investments into a local project, but with a large impact beyond the region at Fosen, are thus used to emphasise the need for renewable energy, framing it as a sustainable development project (Nilssen, 2019; Toivanen, 2026). It can be stated that Fosen Vind is seen by the Norwegian state as a means to promote development at the space of Fosen, but also in general, due to the project's large impact.

Another point that is remarkable when analysing the State of Norway's perspective, is its management with the temporal aspects of the project. At the beginning of the project, the Norwegian government framed the temporal dimension of the wind park as urgent (Ellingsen, 2024). Given the fact that global temperatures are rising due to the increase of greenhouse gases (Reader, 2022), this is considered as urgent and for that reason, the politics to construct the wind park framed its necessity as urgent, too (Ellingsen, 2024). It can therefore be said that the urgency served as a push factor to promote the wind park project with the overarching goal of pushing and fostering the green transition, which thus can be considered as a legitimisation of the wind park (Vanhanen, 2025). This was seen for instance in a press release of the Norwegian Energy Commission saying that: *„If we are to achieve the climate goals and bring about a green transition, energy consumption will increase significantly, […] The Energy Commission believes that a change of pace is urgent"* (Ellingsen, 2024, p. 9). While this push for speeding up the time often is associated with modernisation, this also applies to the wind park at Fosen (Ellingsen, 2024). Many Norwegian politicians have pointed out the beneficial effects of the wind park such as economic development or the influence of Fosen Vind on the entire wind power industry (Kringstad, 2016). It can be argued that the discourse that is made of the Fosen wind park seems to highlight its numbers by pointing for example to how many jobs can be created which is additionally emphasised with the temporal dimension that considers a rapid transition as favourable (Ellingsen, 2024). With that in mind, it can be concluded that the Norwegian government shifted the temporal dimension of Fosen Vind towards an urgent situation to accelerate the green transition on order to combat the climate change which eventually served as a justification for the wind farm's construction.

On the other hand, it needs to be said that the time management and use shifted after the Supreme Court's ruling. While at the beginning the temporal dimensions were framed as urgent, afterwards it changed towards time lag (Ellingsen, 2024). This was for instance shown when, after the court decision, the Norwegian Ministry of Oil and Energy wanted to find long-lasting solutions which needed time to be elaborated, thus switching from an urgent time management to a different, slower management (Ellingsen, 2024). With this shift, the temporal-political strategy was used insofar as the expansion of the time has influenced all the actors and has put pressure on the Sámi to consent to the mediation process after the court's ruling (Ellingsen, 2024). To summarise, it can be stated that Fosen can be seen as a space which intersected with the Norwegian state's time management which has shifted from an urgent framing towards a time lag framing after the ruling of the Supreme Court in 2021 (Mósesdóttir, 2024). Hence, it signified a replacement of the narrative in order to gain time to find long-lasting solutions for the conflict.

5.3.5 Concluding remarks

Finally, to conclude, it can be argued that Fosen Vind as well as the space at Fosen led to the creation of different discourses of the Norwegian state. It was striking that several sources repeatedly mentioned the Fosen wind park's significant contribution to a green transition in order to mitigate climate change (Mósesdóttir, 2024). This often happened by pointing at the potential electric production of the wind turbines. Norway's former minister president Erna Solberg strengthened for example the narrative of Fosen as a part of the solution for green transition by emphasising the park's magnitude (Kringstad, 2016). This line of argumentation was furthermore expanded by some politicians who highlighted Norway's entanglement with the rest of Europe which is why they considered Norway as an important actor within the decarbonisation process in Europe (Kringstad, 2016). This additionally ties into the discourse of sovereignty. The Norwegian state, which relies on the concept of Westphalian sovereignty, wants to use the resources lying within its territory which is why they claim the sovereignty over those resources (Buchan and Heath, 2006; Lawrence, 2014; Bauder and Mueller, 2023).

Furthermore, it was striking that the Norwegian state put an emphasis on the economic benefits of Fosen Vind. By framing the wind park as a means of development, it was highlighted by politicians that the project will create new jobs as well as lead to increased tax revenues, hence

the wind park was framed as economically positive (Stubbe, 2024; Vanhanen, 2025). It was argued that the wind project had a high significance for the region, but the influence on the entire wind power industry was claimed as well (Kringstad, 2016). Finally, the discourses framed by the Norwegian state combined approaches that put an emphasis on the beneficial impacts of the wind power project, not only regionally, but internationally as well. The space at Fosen thus was framed in a very positive manner.

5.4 Overview of the core discourses

Table 1: Synoptic table of the core discourses of my thesis' analysis (own graphic representation)

	Sámi	Fosen Vind DA	State of Norway
Meaning about landscape and space	• Grazing land for winter pastures for reindeers • Part of the South Sámi cultural identity and knowledge production	• Fosen as a place to build wind turbines • Good and strong wind conditions • Using the space at Fosen to be economically active	
Sovereignty	• Wind park threatened their pastoral way of life • Fosen as a place of self-determination • Wind park framed as Green Colonialism and infringement on their Indigenous sovereignty		• Fosen as part of Norway's territory served as legitimisation to build the wind park and extract the resources lying within its territory
Green transition	• Green and sustainable use of the pastures • Wind park destroys the nature	• Extracting the resource wind • Producing electrical energy with low carbon dioxide emissions • Framing wind energy as sustainable and crucial to mitigate global warming	• Wind park as part of the green transition in Norway and Europe • Norway as an important actor in the decarbonisation process • Pointing to the large energetical potential
Responsibility for future generations	• Respectful management of the natural resources • The land needs to be maintained also for future generations	• Constructing a narrative of urgency to solve the common global problem of the climate change	• Significance for promotion of renewable energy across Europe to reduce climate emissions
Narratives of development of the space at Fosen		• Technological development • Developing the entire society • Creation of new jobs and supporting the local economy • Highlighting the wind park's magnitude and constructing a narrative of growth	• Creation of new jobs and supporting the local economy • Pointing to the potential economic growth • Development of new infrastructure such as roads • Impact on the entire wind power industry

6 Discussion

After having critically analysed the three actors' interpretations of space and of the wind park project at Fosen, this chapter is going to compare those discourses and will be related to the topics raised before in the state of the art. This chapter will therefore not only discuss the actors' discourses, but rather it will also unveil similarities and differences among the standpoints in order to bring to light also hidden topics and intertwinings.

The analysis has dug into the realm of the different interpretations, framings and significances of space for the Sámi, the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA and the State of Norway. First, it needs to be said that the significance of space is deeply woven into the South Sámi identity, which have been the focus of this analysis, acknowledging that there exist several Sámi groups (in Norway) (Hämäläinen *et al.*, 2018). This interrelation between space and the South Sámi identity is furthermore highly related with the importance of reindeer herding for the Sámi. As has been shown, reindeer herding is not only spatially important as about 40% of the Norwegian territory is covered by reindeer herding areas (Vanhanen, 2025), but their herding is also culturally and economically important for the South Sámi (Berg-Nordlie, 2022). Reindeer herding is even described as the core of South Sámi culture (Fjellheim, 2023). This therefore shows that reindeer herding, which per se needs space to provide food and a place to be for the animals, has a direct influence on the perception of cultural identity of the Sámi. Thus, an interrelationship between space, reindeer herding and identity is constructed which can be brought into relation with Mazúr and Urbánek (1983) who describe in their definition of "geographical space" the relations between the attributed values of elements composing space. In the case of the Sámi, it is the values of reindeer herding which are attributed to space, thus demonstrating that for the Sámi the space at Fosen is not empty, but rather filled with meaning through the interaction between the spatial elements, such as pastures and the Sámi people themselves, which again ties into the definition of geographical space by Mazúr and Urbánek (1983).

Another factor that comes into play regarding the significance of reindeer herding and space for the Sámi is also an intimate familiar and ancestral component. Due to the fact that many reindeer owners have already had ancestors whose task was to care for and hold reindeers (Fjellheim, 2023), the spatiality at Fosen obtains an additional temporal facet. This gets also reflected in the concept of "communicative memory", mentioned by Nilssen (2019), which links

space with time. It describes how discourses transcend time as they get passed on from one generation to the next (Nilssen, 2019). Hence, space can be also seen as a means to pass on knowledge and memories between generations, for which space is needed. This temporality, which highlights the long-lasting, traditional importance of reindeer herding, can furthermore also be intertwined with the notion of sustainability. Because for the Sámi people, it is important to take care also of the future generation, which is exactly reflected in the concept of "communicative memory" that serves to pass on knowledge to the next generation, too (Nilssen, 2019). Finally, it can be stated that from the Sámi perspective, the space and landscape at Fosen is not neutral, but rather it is filled with values and thus is perceived as a crucial part of the South Sámi cultural identity.

This perception of space stands in contrast to the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA's and the State of Norway's framing and interpretation of the locality at Fosen. First of all, it can be said that the analysis has shown that Fosen Vind DA, as well as the State of Norway, have similar perceptions and interpretations of the space at Fosen which eventually also led to similar discourses. Fosen Vind DA considers the landscape on the Fosen peninsula firstly as a place where there are good and strong wind conditions (Statkraft, n.d.c); thus, a place which is full of the resource wind that can be exploited to produce energy. Space in this case therefore simply signifies a place to be economically active. Nevertheless, also from the energy company's perspective, this space is attributed with values. As wind energy is considered as a renewable energy that has a low carbon footprint (Korsnes *et al.*, 2023), the Fosen peninsula gets framed as a place where, due to the construction of one of the largest wind parks in Europe (Statkraft, 2016b), the green transition of the electricity production can happen in order to lower the carbon dioxide emissions (Mósesdóttir, 2024). That therefore shows how Fosen turns to embody the role of an important international key place for the "greater goal" of mitigating global warming.

However, the wind park was also promoted by Fosen Vind DA by highlighting its local transformative potential on the regional development. By framing the project as a technological development (Fjellheim, 2023), the wind park operator puts an emphasis on the changes and on the radiance that the wind park has. They state that the wind park will have a positive local effect. According to Fosen Vind DA, this can be seen in the claim that the construction of the wind park leads to the emergence of new jobs as well as the generation of more taxes (Løsnes,

2016). Additionally, the infrastructure gets improved by building new roads and power lines (Toivanen, 2026). This can be considered as a very economic interpretation of the impact of the wind park which tries to frame the park as a process of development that advances the region at Fosen. This economic focus gets also emphasised as the wind park often gets described with superlatives, such as the contract's magnitude (Statkraft, 2016c). To conclude, it stands out that Fosen Vind DA propagates a development of the Fosen region with the construction of the wind park. The current state does not get considered enough, but rather Fosen Vind DA presents itself and the wind project as a bringer of development and progress.

The State of Norway's perspective is insofar similar to the one from Fosen Vind DA, because the green transition of the country plays an important role as well. The analysis has revealed the symbolic significance that the wind park project at Fosen embodies. Considering the renewability of the resource wind and therefore its low carbon dioxide emissions (Korsnes *et al.*, 2023), the Norwegian State frames the project as a way to contribute to Norway's way towards carbon neutrality, interpreting it as a great and positive project (Kringstad, 2016). From that point of view, the State of Norway's, as well as Fosen Vind DA's perspective, are almost identical as both of the actors see in Fosen the opportunity to extract a resource in order to produce renewable "green" energy. But where it slightly differs, is in the scale of the impact of the project. Because the state has framed several times the green transition as a pan-European challenge where Norway can contribute to with the Fosen wind park (Kringstad, 2016). This gets further emphasised with the contractual agreements between Norway and the European Union, thus adding an international facet to the wind project (Vanhanen, 2025). Hence, it can be said that the State of Norway considers the space at Fosen, as well as the wind park itself, as a possibility to nationally and internationally contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and thus frames it as an important part of the solution of this shift (Kringstad, 2016). This therefore means that the Norwegian government considers the threat of global warming as urgent and thus wants to tackle it. But at the same time this view contrasts with the Sámi perspective stating that the wind park itself is a threat to them. Thus, it can be argued that Norway is doing a balancing of interests, which for instance is also reflected in a statement of the former minister president who acknowledged possible negative impacts on the nature at Fosen (Kringstad, 2016).

Furthermore, the analysis has also revealed a narrative of development that happens with the construction of the Fosen wind park. Similarly to Fosen Vind DA, the Norwegian State emphasised the economic benefits of the wind park. Stating that the wind park will contribute to new local jobs, an increase of the tax revenues, as well as more local infrastructure, this framing has focused especially on the economic aspects of the project (Kringstad, 2016; Toivanen, 2026). It therefore can be said that the focus was, apart from the before mentioned significance for the green transition, strongly on the local impacts, framing them as development which stands in contrast to the Sámi perspective which does not consider the wind park as progress.

Another important aspect that the analysis has shown is the different comprehension of "sovereignty". As already touched upon in the state of the art chapter, it has been shown that sovereignty is a relational concept which therefore can be interpreted differently according to the point of view (Bauder and Mueller, 2023). And this is what can be seen in the case of Fosen, too. On the one hand, the State of Norway wants to extract the resources which lie within its territory because it has the authority over them (Mósesdóttir, 2024). And that is exactly where the Westphalian concept of sovereignty comes into play. This conceptualisation of sovereignty argues that the state has the authority over the space within its territorial boundaries which is why it can independently rule over it (Bauder and Mueller, 2023). And due to the fact that this Eurocentric Westphalian view on sovereignty is the basis for today's international law (Bauder and Mueller, 2023), for that reason, the Norwegian State made the claim of the resources in Fosen.

But on the other hand, the indigenous conceptualisation of sovereignty signifies a contrast to the Westphalian view. Stating that the indigenous perspective on sovereignty especially includes social and cultural aspects to define a community, sovereignty in this context therefore acknowledges the relational character of territories and thus may also vary according to different conditions (Thorner *et al.*, 2018; Bauder and Mueller, 2023). With that in mind, this also applies to the South Sámi people. The analysis has revealed that space and landscape create a discourse of self-determination. This claim for their sovereignty is intimately tied to the inherited rights due to their ancestor's use of the pastoral spaces (Beach, 2007; Normann, 2021; Fjellheim, 2023). But it is especially interesting to state that within this claim for self-determination, the social and cultural component of their ancestors' use of the territories plays

such an important role. And that is where the indigenous view on sovereignty comes in, because it also considers the sociocultural aspects as important (Bauder and Mueller, 2023).

Eventually, it is this different understanding of sovereignty which is a zone of friction, between the Sámi and the State of Norway. While the international law is highly determined by the Westphalian perspective on sovereignty, it therefore is difficult for the Sámi to bring in their view on sovereignty. This further gets emphasised with the fact that, according to John Locke, an indigenous people without a state (in accordance with the Westphalian sovereignty) cannot have the right over its sovereignty (Buchan and Heath, 2006). And for that reason, the Sámi position gets systematically neglected because their indigenous sovereignty does not get accounted for. Eventually, due to this friction, the Sámi rights and their claim for self-determination get undermined as they are in a weaker position (Willford, 2007; Lawrence, 2014).

Apart from spatial aspects, the analysis has also revealed some interesting temporal aspects within the Fosen case which not only differ between the actors, but also within the actors' opinions. Drawing upon that, the State of Norway has framed at the beginning of the wind park's planning and construction phase the importance and necessity of Fosen Vind as very urgent (Ellingsen, 2024). However, this framing was intimately interconnected with the claim for the green transition. Norwegian politicians have argued that the increase of global temperatures due to the climate gas emissions need to be urgently tackled and that is why the global warming has been used as a legitimisation to (rapidly) build the wind park (Reader, 2022; Ellingsen, 2024). The wind park operator Fosen Vind DA did not directly frame its discourses in this urgent way, however, through the analysis it became clear that with the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, this transition's shift gains importance in future which is why they consider Fosen Vind as a crucial part within that process.

Interestingly, it can be argued that the Sámi also use a certain framing of urgency within their wind park and space discourses. Given the fact that the space at Fosen is of importance for the South Sámi people (Fjellheim, 2023), they frame the wind park as an attack on their culture which they relate with the changing climatic conditions as well; while the temperatures are increasing, the Sámi winter grazing pastures at Fosen become less secure while at the same time the pastures are in danger because of the wind park's construction (Nilssen, 2019;

Fjellheim, 2023; Mósesdóttir, 2024). And considering the rising CO_2 emissions, this dilemma might intensify in the future even more (Nunes, 2023).

But regarding the temporal aspects of this analysis, it was also striking that the Norwegian government has applied a different framing of the time management. As at the beginning the urgency was mostly used, after the Supreme Court's ruling, the Norwegian state changed its framing of the discourses rather towards time lag; they argued for example that it needs enough time to find long-lasting solutions (Ellingsen, 2024). Eventually it can be argued that these (differing and different) time management strategies led to frictions as well. Not only because the time lag for instance put pressure on the Sámi to consent to the mediation process (Ellingsen, 2024), but also because all the three actors acknowledge the fact of increasing temperatures and that these have negative impacts. However, their reactions on that issue differ and that's where a zone of friction gets constructed despite the consensus of acknowledging the issue itself.

Furthermore, it can be argued that the notion "sustainability" is a zone of friction as well, even, or rather because, the three actors touch upon that issue in their discourses. The State of Norway and Fosen Vind DA see in the Fosen wind park the possibility to make an important step towards a more sustainable energy production and expand their argumentation line by highlighting the wind park's importance for the entire country and even Europe as well (Kringstad, 2016; Statkraft, 2016a; Fjellheim, 2023). When analysing these actors' discourses it is striking that they put renewable energy production (and therefore the Fosen wind park) on the same level as sustainability. By framing wind energy as green (Fjellheim, 2023), this attribution of a colour to a way of producing energy seems to be a means to hide its potentially unsustainable disadvantages. And this is the point where the friction gets created between the State of Norway & Fosen Vind DA's perspective and the Sámi perspective on sustainability. Because for the Sámi "sustainability" means to care for the land in order to maintain it for future generations which includes a sustainable use of their pastoral land that on the other hand is intimately tied with the grazing of their reindeers (Nilssen, 2019; Stubbe, 2024). And given that the construction of the wind park would deteriorate the grazing pastures, that would interfere with the Sámi reindeer herding practices which would signify an attack on their cultural identity as reindeer herding is a crucial part of the South Sámi identity, which is why the Sámi eventually do not consider the Fosen wind park as sustainable (Nilssen, 2019; Fjellheim, 2023). But on the

other hand, Fosen Vind DA once mentioned that the Sámi should also adapt to the development at Fosen (Fjellheim, 2023). Eventually it can be concluded that sustainability is a notion that does not get used by the three actors in a consistent way. And that finally leads to a friction between them as sustainability is considered in different ways which is also reflected in the way how they judge the other actors' interpretation of sustainability.

Eventually it is important to make the connection between the Fosen wind park and the conceptual framework of "Frontier". As in the theoretical approaches chapter has been explained, there are two understandings of frontiers. This analysis has carved out that both approaches partially relate to Fosen. On the one hand, the State of Norway and Fosen Vind DA have argued that the wind park will be an act of development in the Fosen region because it will bring new infrastructure. Having framed the wind park in that way, thus means that the Fosen area before was assumed as a space which is not so far developed. That shift of the level of development has also been mentioned by Rasmussen and Lund (2018) who stated that within the classical understanding of frontiers, this rise in development is a crucial part of it which is also related to a racist presumption. And given that Sámi still nowadays face challenges regarding everyday discrimination (Yasar *et al.*, 2024), that underlying racist presumption might still play a role in nowadays consideration of the state of development in the Fosen region.

Regarding the second approach to frontiers, this one even more applies to the Fosen case. Rasmussen and Lund (2018) describe how frontier-making processes "discover" new spaces which are imagined as "empty", but "full" of resources (Regassa and Korf, 2018). In the Fosen case, it can be argued that the wind park operator mainly frames the resource wind as being good and abundant at Fosen (Statkraft, n.d.b). And the State of Norway, too, has argued that the wind park has high potential to produce energy, thus focusing again on the resources that are located at Fosen (Kringstad, 2016). Nevertheless, this perspective of these two actors does not sufficiently acknowledge the (previous) existence of the Sámi at Fosen. Because by mostly setting the focus on the existence of the resource wind at Fosen neglects other ways of sustainable management of land and of the resources at Fosen. And in that case, it can be argued that it can be observed that the extraction of the resource wind serves as a legitimisation in order to achieve the greater goal of a green transition. Hence, what is observed at Fosen, is the spatial and temporal relational entanglement of frontiers with space (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018).

Additionally, the dynamics at Fosen can also be related to the second theoretical approach of this thesis: Green Colonialism. This theoretical perspective is insofar very interesting because firstly, the expansion of renewable energy production can be considered as a form of colonialism in contrast to its classical notion (Dunlap, 2025). And secondly it is interesting, because of Norway's historical entanglement with colonialism. As has already been stated before, the State of Norway's and Fosen Vind DA's discourses are shaped by framing the wind park as "green" and "sustainable". By doing so, it serves as a legitimisation for the resource extraction at Fosen. And this can be brought in relation with Green Colonialism because on the one hand it is this green and sustainable narrative which is used for the framing of a project. And on the other hand, also at Fosen, a colonial character of the wind project can be observed. As Osterhammel and Jansen (1995) state, colonialism is highly linked to the superiority of one actor upon another. In the Fosen case, it also can be observed that the State of Norway makes use of its Westphalian sovereignty and wants to extract the resources that are located on their territory according to international legislation (Bauder and Mueller, 2023; Mósesdóttir, 2024). Additionally it is interesting to see that also the Sámi Council describes the renewable energy industry as Green Colonialism especially because the Sámi consider their traditional livelihoods as very green and sustainable (Saami Council, 2017). Hence, it is argued that the resources located at Fosen serve as a legitimisation for the Norwegian State to make use of its Westphalian sovereignty. This eventually leads to the imposition of its sovereignty upon the Sámi and their indigenous understanding of sovereignty (Bauder and Mueller, 2023), finally leading to a marginalisation of them.

Finally, the dynamics at Fosen and the two theoretical approaches "Frontier" and "Green Colonialism" can be brought together by bringing the concept of the "decarbonization frontier" (Dietz and Dorn, 2026). In consideration of the rising global temperatures, it is important to decarbonise the energy sector (Nunes, 2023; Mósesdóttir, 2024). And at this point, it is Fosen that comes into play. To meet the need for renewable energy production, Fosen is imagined as "Terra Nullius" which eventually gets transformed into a decarbonization frontier. This colonial image of an empty territory thus is the legitimisation to exploit the local resources to achieve the decarbonisation. But at the same time, the local culture does not get considered enough. This therefore shows how Fosen is a space of the entanglement of colonial imaginations with the goal of a more sustainable energy production but that also leads to friction with the Sámi. That is insofar even more striking as firstly, Norway has already had historical colonial

entanglements with Sápmi that culminated in the assimilation politics (Aamotsbakken, 2008; Hansen, 2022). And secondly, because in the recent past there has also already been a dispute over territorial sovereignty of resources when the Alta dam was built (Mósesdóttir, 2024; Vanhanen, 2025). To conclude, it can be said that the resource wind led to the creation of a decarbonization frontier at Fosen.

Furthermore, it is interesting, too, to have a look at a potential topic which was not mentioned even though it might have been probable to appear; the geopolitical facet of the Fosen wind park. Because according to this thesis' discourse analysis methodology, it is also important to consider the context of the analysed discourses. And in today's world which is shaped by crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic or increased tension between world powers such as the United States and China (Rogers, Sun and Sun, 2024), it would have been expectable that a discourse would have been created that would propose Fosen Vind as a way towards more (Norwegian or European) geopolitical independence. However, this has not been the case. Nevertheless, a Norwegian politician pointed out the project's Intereuropean significance not only regarding energy transition, but also in terms of technical development (Kringstad, 2016).

And lastly, it is important to state that with the application of a critical discourse analysis, it was possible to reveal the power structures that lie within discourses. It has shown that the social world (in this thesis' case for instance the space at Fosen) is highly influenced by the narratives that are built on it. This could be observed for example that already only by attributing the colour "green" to an energy project, that project gains a totally different value and significance. But on the other hand, it has also been shown that, in the concrete case of the attribution of the colour "green", the subsequent change of significance is also dependent on the actor's power. Because the Sámi for example also frame their herding practices as green, i.e. the same way as the Norwegian State and Fosen Vind DA frame the wind park. But this did not necessarily lead to a change of their position within the debate of the space at Fosen. For that reason, it was highly insightful to apply a critical discourse analysis as it revealed hidden patterns of power structures and relations.

7 Conclusion

This thesis has investigated the different interpretations of space in the Fosen region in Norway by the three actors of the local indigenous South Sámi people, the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA and the State of Norway. For this reason, it is necessary to sum up the findings of this discourse analysis in order to be able to conclude how the space and the wind park at Fosen have been interpreted differently and which frictions arose from the wind park. The first point, and thus also the core result, that can be made, is that the space at Fosen does not get interpreted in the same way. The South Sámi people have an intense and intimate interrelationship with space. This was demonstrated by the interrelationship between space, reindeer herding and their South Sámi identity. Because what comes into play at that point is the significance of reindeer herding for the South Sámi culture as they consider it not only as culturally and economically important, but especially as the core of the South Sámi culture, thus forming part of their identity (Berg-Nordlie, 2022; Fjellheim, 2023). This means that the landscape at Fosen, which constitutes an important winter pasture for their reindeers, has a high significance for the Sámi and therefore also gets framed as necessary for their cultural identity (Stubbe, 2024). Epistemically, this relationship between landscape and the Sámi can be related to Mazúr and Urbánek (1983) who use the term “geographical space” to describe the relationship between the attributed values of elements that compose space. And that could be observed at Fosen as well, because the Sámi attributed values to elements of space, hence transforming Fosen into a non-neutral space. With that having said, the wind park is negatively connotated and the Sámi discourses framed it in a way that it is considered as an attack on their culture (Nilssen, 2019). It became clear that for the Sámi the wind park signified a destruction of their landscape and nature which is why they do not consider the wind park as green or sustainable (Saami Council, 2017; Nilssen, 2019).

Drawing upon the term “green”, the wind park operator Fosen Vind DA framed the space at Fosen as a place that has good and strong wind conditions and thus is suitable for the construction of a wind park (Statkraft, n.d.c). And considering the global increase of greenhouse gas emissions (Nunes, 2023), wind energy is represented as a means to decarbonise the energy production sector and thus, the locality at Fosen is seen as a place where clean and renewable energy can be produced in order to make the green transition happen (Korsnes *et al.*, 2023; Mósesdóttir, 2024). Having said that, the space at Fosen turns into a place where according to

Fosen Vind DA the global warming can be mitigated. And that argument is also shared with the third actor; the State of Norway. The analysis of the State of Norway's discourses has revealed that it positively frames the wind park also as a way to achieve carbon neutrality, not only for Norway, but also for Europe (Kringstad, 2016). Hence, Fosen Vind DA, as well as the State of Norway, frame the wind project and the space at Fosen as crucial parts of the green transition. Nevertheless, they also point to the wind park's potential for regional development. Both of the actors highlighted the opportunity that new jobs and infrastructure will be created and that the local economy will profit (Kringstad, 2016; Toivanen, 2026).

With these different interpretations of the space and of the wind park at Fosen in mind, it can be said that the Fosen wind park eventually led to several frictions. One important zone of friction was for instance the different comprehension of sovereignty. On the one hand, the discourses revealed that the local South Sámi people claimed their right for self-determination over the lands that they have been cultivating already for a long time, pointing also at their ancestor's use of these spaces; and with that representing the indigenous perspective on sovereignty (Beach, 2007; Normann, 2021; Bauder and Mueller, 2023; Fjellheim, 2023). On the other hand, the State of Norway claimed the right to extract resources within its territory by basing it on the Westphalian concept of sovereignty (Bauder and Mueller, 2023; Mósesdóttir, 2024). And this different interpretation of sovereignty eventually led to friction which finally ended up in the construction of the wind park and thus in the neglection of the Sámi rights, even if the Supreme Court later ruled that the wind park was invalid (Mósesdóttir, 2024). And apart from this zone of friction, the different time management strategies, especially applied by the State of Norway and the Sámi, led to varying time framings and thus also to friction (Ellingsen, 2024). A third zone of friction has also been elaborated that the term "sustainability" has differently been interpreted by the actors. While the State of Norway and Fosen Vind DA mostly set the focus on the wind extraction in order to produce renewable energy, thus considering it as green and sustainable, the Sámi consider their own pastoral way of using the land at Fosen with their reindeers as sustainable (Nilssen, 2019; Fjellheim, 2023; Stubbe, 2024).

This thesis has analysed the wind park and space at Fosen with the conceptual frameworks of "Frontier" and "Green Colonialism". It then has been argued that from the Sámi perspective, the construction of the wind park signified an attack on their culture and was called Green Colonialism (Saami Council, 2017; Nilssen, 2019). And this is insofar very interesting because of

Norway's colonial past and its politics of "Norwegianization" (Aamotsbakken, 2008; Hansen, 2022). Furthermore, Fosen can be considered as a frontier because the State of Norway as well as the wind park operator have the imagination of Fosen as a place that can be exploited for its wind resources. This imagination on the other hand neglects the existing South Sámi culture and their ways of managing the land.

Nevertheless, this thesis does not consider Fosen as a classical (resource) frontier. But rather it has been argued that it symbolises a "decarbonization frontier" (Dietz and Dorn, 2026). As the State of Norway and the wind park operator want to exploit and make use of the resources at Fosen to achieve carbon neutrality and thus to decarbonise the energy sector, it seems to be more productive to consider Fosen as a "decarbonization frontier". This is further even more useful and important with regard to the increasing global temperatures (Nunes, 2023) which in turn leads to the need of the exploration of new resources and ways to produce renewable energy. Nevertheless, with that concept of the "decarbonization frontier", it is still possible to set the focus on the marginalisation of people(s) on an intimate scale while the need of resources on a broader, global scale is dominating the big picture.

To finally conclude, it can be said that the geographical space at Fosen and the eventually built wind park at Fosen not only have been interpreted differently, but these different interpretations also led to tensions and frictions between the three actors of the Sámi, Fosen Vind DA and the State of Norway. It has been shown that, with regard to the global climate change debate, Norway and the wind park operator created a decarbonization frontier with which they try to achieve a green transition of the energy sector. But on the other hand, the establishment of that decarbonization frontier signified a threat to the South Sámi cultural identity as it is tied to landscape. And within the broader picture of Norway's colonial background and marginalisation politics, the establishment of the wind park at Fosen might signify just another piece of discrimination against the indigenous Sámi people within their long history of discrimination. Hence, it is therefore important to acknowledge that (geographical) space never is just neutral, but rather its different interpretations have impacts on different scales, such as the national goal for achieving green transition in Norway, or on an intimate scale, meaning a threat to the South Sámi identity.

8 Potential fields for future research

Even though I tried with my thesis to reveal hidden power structures within the realm of contestations about space at Fosen, I am aware that I was not able to cover everything and to do research on every potential discourse that might have appeared. For that reason, it is even more important to mention in this section potential fields for future research.

One starting point would be to reframe the elaborated discourses from this thesis. Because according to the methodology of critical discourse analysis, a goal of it is to emancipate suppressed social groups. This could be done for instance by taking the discourses and replacing them by alternative ones in order to bring social change (Phillips and Jørgensen, 2002; Fairclough, 2023). In the case of the Sámi, this would mean that the State of Norway's and Fosen Vind DA's discourses would have to be reanalysed and then replaced so that the Sámi would be less (epistemically) suppressed. This eventually would signify that the critical discourse analysis would go even a step further by bringing real change.

Drawing upon that point, it would be interesting to analyse the Fosen case from a postcolonial or decolonial perspective. Considering Norway's colonial past (Aamotsbakken, 2008), such a post-/decolonial approach might be insightful. By doing so, not only the colonial impacts on the Sámi would be well elaborated, but it would be especially informative because then the Sámi perspective could be taken more into account which would mark a shift in the classic Eurocentric epistemology. This approach would be furthermore interesting for Geography as a scientific discipline because with its critical and intersectional character, it could contribute to a more pluralistic research. Stubbe (2024) also draws upon that by stating that indigenous knowledge, as well, can make useful contributions.

And finally, from a broader view regarding the future, it definitely is necessary to investigate on how a fair green transition can happen. Because it is a fact that the global temperatures are increasing and have negative effects on human and nature (Nunes, 2023). Nevertheless, the mitigation measures need to be socially fair without leading to even more discrimination of certain groups, such as the indigenous Sámi people in Fosen.

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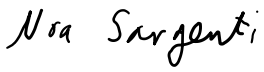
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Personal declaration

Personal declaration: I hereby declare that the submitted thesis is the result of my own, independent work. All external sources are explicitly acknowledged in the thesis.

Additionally, I declare that I have used DeepL and Linguee for the translation of quotes and words in general. And for the improvement of the writing style, I partially used Grammarly. Finally, I want to declare that I did not use any other AI tool apart from the above mentioned.



Noa Sargenti, Riedern, 24.08.2026