

Time grabbing as a chronopolitical mechanism in wind power development.

Insights from Fosen and Frøya, Norway

Fosen and Frøya show that wind power conflicts are also struggles over time. Juxtaposing a Saami Indigenous context with a non-colonial rural one, this article introduces the concept of time grabbing to show how acceleration, protraction, and epistemic exclusion displace local temporal agency and weaken democratic legitimacy at the two places.

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Abstract

Onshore wind power development in Norway has intensified disputes over land use, Indigenous rights, and democratic legitimacy. Through a qualitative case study, this article examines how two such conflicts unfold over time: first, Fosen, where the 2021 Supreme Court ruling found that wind turbines in key winter pastures violated the human rights of Indigenous South Saami reindeer herders, and second, Frøya, where wind power development faced intense pushback from the rural community. Drawing on chronopolitics, I develop the concept of time grabbing, the governmental reconfiguration of temporal horizons, rhythms, and deadlines, as a complement to land grabbing. Empirically, I draw on field observations and semi-structured interviews with South Saami herders, residents at Frøya, and public officials to identify three chronopolitical mechanisms, acceleration, protraction, and epistemic exclusion, and trace how they shape participation and rights across the two cases. By juxtaposing Fosen's colonial context with Frøya's non-colonial rural setting, the article demonstrates how local temporalities, rhythms, and decision-making practices become subordinated to national energy agendas across the cases. I conclude that these temporal dynamics displace local temporal agency and weaken democratic legitimacy in the energy transition.

Keywords

chronopolitics, energy justice, energy transition, Indigenous rights, land grabbing, land-use conflicts, Norway, time grabbing, wind power development

The expansion of onshore wind power has become increasingly contentious worldwide, as capital-intensive development strategies often involve large-scale land acquisitions and resource grabs in areas where people live (Borras et al. 2012, Otte et al. 2018, Össbo 2023). While these debates on the conflicts have largely emphasized spatial forms of dispossession, emerging research shows that chronopolitical mechanisms, delay, acceleration, promises of future fixes, and stretched implementation timelines also function as mechanisms of governance (Zoomers and Otsuki 2025, Low and Boettcher 2020). However, the temporal mechanisms through which such strategies shape local experiences of wind power development remain undertheorized.

Thus, this article aims to conceptualize time grabbing as a specific chronopolitical mechanism by juxtaposing two contexts of onshore wind power development in Norway, the South Saami¹ Indigenous² region of Fosen and the non-Indigenous rural island of Frøya. More specifically, I explore how acceleration, the protraction of timelines, and epistemic exclusion operate as mechanisms of time grabbing that can contribute to the recalibration of colonial and capitalist logics in climate policies (Zoomers and Otsuki 2025). In doing so, the article contributes to political ecology by foregrounding temporality as a central mechanism through which land-use conflicts unfold and by highlighting how chronopolitical governance produces divergent local outcomes. The discussion that follows traces these mechanisms across the two cases, examines their implications for participation and rights, and reflects on what time grabbing can say about the temporal politics of the energy transition.

Wind power development at Fosen and Frøya

Frøya, a small island in the county of Trøndelag with around 5,000 residents, is known for fish farming and scenic coastal landscapes, and is home to endangered species (Miljødirektoratet n.d.) (figure 1). Wind power development has divided the community since 2002, when the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (Norges vassdrags- og energidirektorat, NVE)

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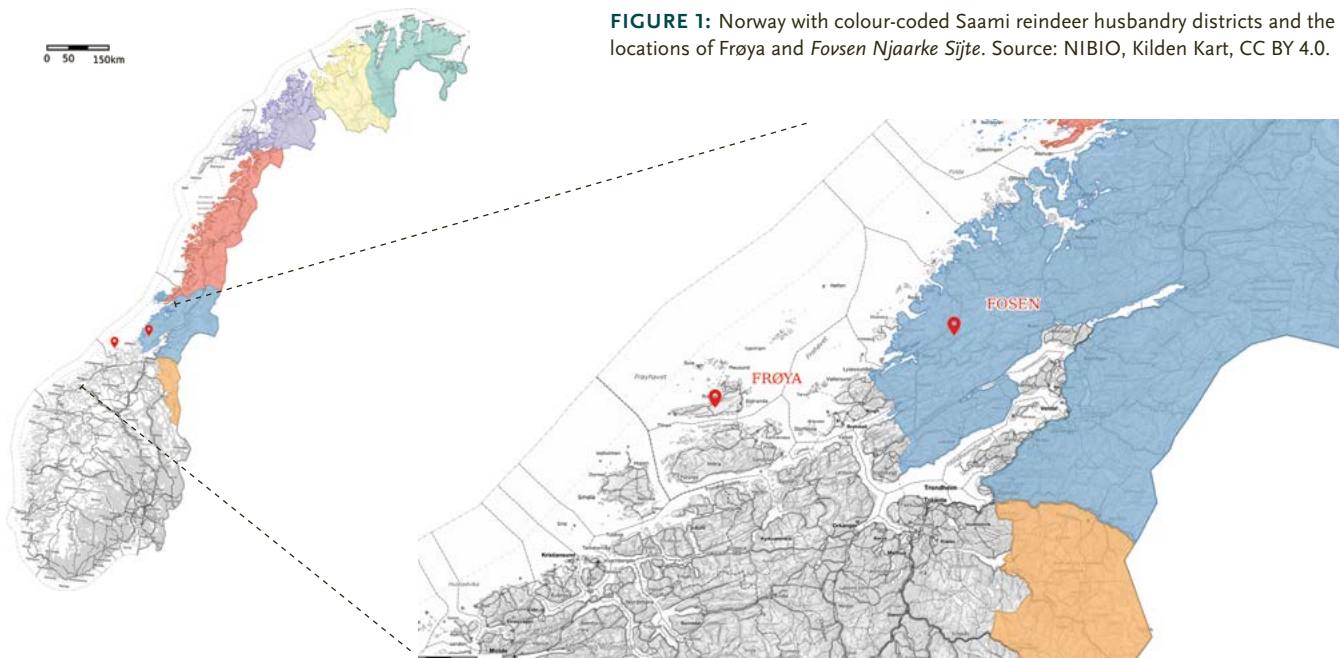


FIGURE 1: Norway with colour-coded Saami reindeer husbandry districts and the locations of Frøya and Fosen Njaarke Sijte. Source: NIBIO, Kilden Kart, CC BY 4.0.

issued the first license. The development was led by the energy companies TrønderEnergi and Statkraft. Despite a 2019 local advisory referendum, which was not legally binding and in which 78.7% voted against the project, the wind farm entered operation in 2020 (Aneo n. d.). The local activists opposed the project for over 14 years. Initially, the plan included 100-meter turbines, which were later replaced by taller 200-meter turbines. Opposition grew because activists argued that the community had not been given a fair chance to agree or disagree before the changes were proposed. The resistance grew further after TrønderEnergi sold 70 % of the project to StadtWerke München in 2018 (Ellingsen 2020), following a pattern identified by Kårtveit (2021), where local energy companies apply for the license and later sell their majority shares to foreign direct investments.

On the Fosen peninsula, also situated in the county of Trøndelag (figure 1), plans for wind power development were publicly announced in 2008. Two licenses were granted in 2010: one for 71 turbines at Roan Mountain and another for 80 turbines at Storheia Mountain. The turbines were installed in key South Saami reindeer-herding pastures, prompting a court case initiated in 2017 (Normann 2021, Fjellheim 2023 a). In 2021, the Norwegian Supreme Court ruled that the development violated the Saami cultural rights, constituting a human rights violation against *Fovsen Njaarke Sijte*³. After 500 days of government inaction, Saami and environmental activists began protesting in early 2023 (Senel 2023). The actions became known as the Fosen actions and lasted throughout the year 2023. By March 2024, two separate agreements had been concluded. First, in December 2023, between *Åarjel-Fovsen sijte*⁴ and Fosen Vind DA. Second, on 6 March 2024, between Nord-Fosen siida and Roan Vind DA. According to the parties and Norway's Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (Olje- og energidepartementet, OED), these settlements remedy the

human-rights violation identified by the Supreme Court in 2021 and allow the wind farms to continue operating through their current license periods. Still, the Saami herders have described the prolonged dispute as exhausting and have stressed the need to focus their time on reindeer husbandry.

Chronopolitics in energy transitions: Dispossession through time grabbing

To explore how spatial and temporal dispossession intersect and sustain inequalities in green energy projects, I situate them within debates on land grabbing and sacrifice zones (Reinert 2018, Borras et al. 2012). Sacrifice zones are expendable areas exploited for industry (Reinert 2018), extended to green sacrifice zones (GSZ), where energy transitions may intensify extractivism through state-corporate land acquisitions justified as environmental needs (Össbo 2023). Green sacrifice zone formation requires large tracts of land, often at the expense of local land uses, which can lead to dispossession and loss of livelihoods (Össbo 2023). These land acquisitions, often by states or corporations via leases, concessions, and public-private partnerships, are a renewed form of land grabbing (Borras et al. 2012).

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1 Per the current orthography, Saami terms are given in singular form in the south Saami dialect and written in italics.

2 The term Indigenous is used following the definition provided by the ILO Convention 169 (ILO 1989).

3 *Sijte/Siida* is a Saami Indigenous way of organizing life and reindeer herding (Hansen and Olsen 2022).

4 *Fovsen Njaarke Sijte* comprises two groups: *Åarjel-Fovsen Sijte*, the south group, and *Nord-Fosen Siida*, the north group.

Prior work on temporal mechanisms has traced frontier-making and cyclical territorialization (Peluso and Lund 2013) and has shown how anticipatory promises, shifting timelines, and purposeful delays operate as instruments of governance in climate-induced and evolving land grabs (Zoomers and Otsuki 2025), underscoring time as a resource of control. Consistent with chronopolitical scholarship, which already treats time as a political resource, time is not treated as neutral but unevenly distributed and politically produced, as it varies across social contexts (Jackson 2023), and temporalities, how societies order and value time, are historically and politically shaped (May and Thrift 2011). Attending to time, therefore, highlights how temporalities can organize social life and enable or constrain pasts, presents, and futures (Massey 1992).

Extending these arguments, I understand time grabbing as the temporal extension of land grabbing: while land grabbing appropriates space, time grabbing reconfigures local temporalities. It involves the management of deadlines, licensing, and policy timelines by states and corporations to govern through time (Low and Boettcher 2020). Empirically, I identify three recurrent temporal mechanisms: acceleration, which compresses decision-making and implementation, limiting deliberation; protraction, which delays scrutiny and can weaken resistance; and epistemic exclusion, which sidelines local knowledge and ecological concerns, reducing the influence of the time communities invest in making them visible. In Indigenous contexts, acceleration can take a specific form that I call colonial urgency, where repeated invocations of emergency and inevitability authorize intervention while undermining the temporal agency needed to align land use with seasonal lifeways. Understanding how these time grabbing mechanisms operate across the two cases provides the foundation for the analysis that follows.

Methods and ethics

Data

This article juxtaposes two cases, Fosen, in Indigenous and colonial contexts, and Frøya, a non-colonial rural setting, to examine how time operates across different wind power development projects. Placing colonial and non-colonial sites side by side, without privileging one over the other, helps identify shared temporal logics and context-specific power dynamics (Fjellheim 2024). The empirical data includes 14 semi-structured interviews from 2019 to 2025. Eight interviews from my master's project (2018 to 2020) involved participants from both Fosen and Frøya, lasted about 60 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed. During my PhD (2022 to 2025), I conducted six more interviews: three with Saami community members, one with investor Storbrand, and two with officials from the Trøndelag County Governor's Office. I purposively selected interviewees, Saami herders affected in Fosen, Frøya residents and activists, officials responsible for follow-up, and an institutional investor, to capture diverse roles, impacts, and institutional logics. Requests were sent to Statkraft

and Fosen Vind DA, but after follow-ups and referrals, they went unanswered, so I considered their non-response a decline.

All interviews conducted were recorded and transcribed with consent and translated from Norwegian to English. In line with ethical practice involving Indigenous knowledge (Chilisa 2012), some interlocutors were not anonymized if they gave informed consent or if their statements were publicly accessible. In Indigenous research, naming knowledge holders recognizes their ownership and avoids erasure. Full names are used when requested; otherwise, only first names are used.

I re-deploy interviews first conducted for my master's thesis (2018 to 2020) solely to enable the comparative analysis, that is, to test whether the mechanisms of time grabbing travel from a colonial/Indigenous setting to a non-colonial one. In this article, I shift the theoretical focus away from the master's frame and re-analyze earlier material through a new, explicitly temporal lens. In line with the research data and access management procedures of the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (Sikt), I no longer have access to the original transcripts from the master's project; thus, I reuse only the quotes from my master's thesis (Ellingsen 2020) and reanalyze my field notes.

The small number of semi-structured interviews reflects a deliberate methodological shift in my PhD away from interview-led designs. I increasingly find semi-structured interviews too constraining for the forms of relationality and trust that are developed through long-term presence (Chilisa 2012), as my ethical practice was an ongoing relationship rather than merely a procedural strategy for gaining access. Moreover, the aim of the study is process tracing rather than representativeness, and the analytic weight rests on longitudinal engagement, relational ethics, the production of thick description, and the tracking of temporal mechanisms as they unfold. Still, my choice has consequences, as a small number of recorded interviews narrows the pool of verbatim excerpts that can be quoted in full, and makes it inappropriate to claim "saturation" in a positivist sense.

In addition to semi-structured interviews, I did fieldwork at Fosen from 2022 to 2024 and at Frøya in 2020, where I made field notes that consisted of brief jottings in the field, which were expanded into full notes within 24 hours. I also kept a reflexive field diary recording what I had observed over the day and how the observations might be linked to theory. I also had repeated conversations with the South Saami herders in Fosen, either by phone or in person, between 2019 and 2025, during which I took careful notes. I triangulated the conversational material and field notes with documentary sources and public meetings and conducted a document analysis (Aasdal and Reinertsen 2022) comprising the Supreme Court ruling, a letter from the Ministry of Local Government to Fosen municipalities, and closely followed Norwegian and Saami news coverage from 2021 to 2025 (table 1).

Thematic analysis

A thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006) guided the analytical process. Through iterative cycles of close reading, coding,

TABLE 1: Overview of data material.

DATA	FOSEN	FRØYA
semi-structured interviews	four in 2020 during MA six in 2022 to 2024 during PhD interviews typically about 60 minutes, recorded and transcribed with consent	four in 2020 during MA interviews typically about 60 minutes, recorded and transcribed with consent
key documents	Supreme Court ruling (Høyesterett. 2021); letter from the Ministry of Local Government to Fosen municipalities; consultation protocols from 2008 to 2018; court documents from the Frostating Court of Appeal in 2019	national framework on onshore wind power development from 2019 (NVE 2019); White Paper No. 28 (2019 to 2020): <i>Onshore Wind Power. Changes to the Licensing Process: Energy Act and the Planning and Building Act</i> (OED 2020).
field work	field notes, photographs, and meeting notes from 2022 to 2025; presence at the Fosen protest events in 2023, consisting of over 40 days of participant observations in total	field notes, site photographs
newspapers 2018 to 2025	NRK, Sárgat, NRK Sárgmi, Aftenposten, Dagsavisen, Adressa, Fosna-Folket	NRK, Bergens Tidende, Adressa, Hitra-Frøya

and comparison across the material, three main themes were constructed:

- acceleration through colonial urgency,
- protraction and delay: creating temporal exhaustion, and
- creating epistemic exclusion through time grabbing.

These themes were developed inductively from the interviews and field notes, which were iteratively refined through memo writing and engagement with relevant literature on chronopolitics, epistemic justice, and temporal justice.

To verify timelines and identify recurring discursive patterns, I supplemented the thematic analysis with document analysis (Aasdal and Reinertsen 2022). This involved examining policy documents from OED and NVE, consultation protocols from the Saami Parliament, court case field notes, and media coverage, all of which were read alongside interview and field material. The field notes also functioned as a reflexive tool, allowing me to critically assess how my position as a researcher shaped what I attended to, how participants’ accounts were interpreted, and which analytical pathways appeared most empirically grounded.

Results

Acceleration through colonial urgency

The first theme examines how development is accelerated through what I call colonial urgency. Building on prior analysis of temporal-political strategies in the Fosen conflict (Ellingsen 2024), I understand colonial urgency as a governing temporal logic in which state and corporate actors mobilize urgent transition timelines to legitimize moving ahead in Indigenous territory, within a colonial relation that privileges state/economic time over Saami governance of time and land. In the Fosen case, colonial urgency is enacted through the legal mechanism of preliminary access, which permits companies to begin construction before all legal aspects of the development have been resolved. As Leif Arne Jåma, leader of *Åarjel Fovsen Njaarke*⁵, explained in a conversation:

By granting preliminary access for the construction, the Norwegian authorities have placed themselves in a legal bind. They have obligations to the developer, Fosen Vind AS, which may refuse to dismantle the turbines. If the state then demands that the turbines be dismantled, Fosen Vind AS may sue the state. That is what now takes political precedence. The state chooses to uphold its obligations to a company. What about its obligations to human rights and to the Saami people?

Leif Arne Jåma, phone conversation 10.11.2022

Preliminary accession allows development projects to proceed before the completion of legal checks (Rønningen 2024). In the Fosen case, this led to the initiation of wind power development while litigation was ongoing, with court proceedings running from the district court in 2017 to the Norwegian Supreme Court in 2021.

The consequences of preliminary accession were not limited to legal or institutional domains. At Fosen, the initiation of wind power development during ongoing litigation had tangible effects on those using the land, as Saami herders experienced increased pressures on their winter grazing practices. For the Saami herders at Fosen, wind power development in winter pastures has increased their workload, as Sissel, from *Fovsen Njaarke*, explained during a field trip to Roan.

We have spent three years working to bring the herd back together. It has required an enormous amount of work and has cost us both time and energy. We still have a couple of solitary bucks left out there, but otherwise we have largely managed to rebuild what was destroyed.

Sissel, conversation 08.09.2023

Sissel’s statement indicates that Saami herders have had to spend more time locating reindeers that have separated from the herd,

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5 *Fovsen Njaarke sijte* is divided into two working groups with different pastures, *Åarjel Fovsen Njaarke* and *North Fosen Siida*. Both the *North Fosen siida* and *Åarjel Fovsen Njaarke* comprise three operational units each (Trøndelag fylkesbibliotek 2017).

and that some animals are lost because they fear passing through the area where wind power turbines are now located.

The Fosen case and the Fosen actions brought to light a long-standing breach of trust between Norwegian authorities and the Saami community. Eventually, the pressure exerted by the Fosen actions led to private mitigation efforts, in which two private settlements were brokered between the developing companies and the Saami reindeer herders in Fosen in December 2023 and March 2024 (Opsal 2024) to end the stated human rights violation. In 2024, after the deals became public, calls for an independent investigation into the Fosen case were made to ensure that a new Fosen case would not occur (Larsen 2024). Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre rejected the calls.

Following the Fosen verdict, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development asked Fosen municipalities to ensure “ro og forutsigbarhet” (peace and predictability) for reindeer herding in *Fovsen Njaarke* (Stranden 2024). In Norway, Saami regions are governed by the same municipal councils as elsewhere. However, municipalities within the Saami language administrative area have additional responsibilities toward Saami residents, including language and service obligations (Norges institusjon for menneskerettigheter 2022). Despite the minister’s request, Inderøy municipality approved Nordic Wind to survey Storknuken for wind power in 2024. Indre Fosen municipality continued screening for wind projects in *Fovsen Njaarke*, even though both projects would be in the reindeer-herding area. These post-verdict developments suggest limited institutional change and point to the persistence of time-grabbing dynamics. This is reflected in the continued need for Leif Arne Jåma and other reindeer herders in *Fovsen Njaarke* to mobilize and contact new municipalities to foreground the Fosen verdict in decision-making (Leif Arne Jåma, conversation 31.08.2024).

Protraction and delay: Creating temporal exhaustion

The second theme shows how protracted timelines and phased approvals functioned as chronopolitical instruments in Frøya and Fosen. In 2005, the Frøya municipality held a referendum on the proposed wind park, which resulted in a small majority in favor of the project. From 2005 to the start of construction in April 2019, technological advancements have led to taller, larger wind turbines. The size increase reduced the area available for development but enhanced their visibility due to their height and increased noise. Consequently, people from Frøya whom I spoke to felt that the rules had changed over time, contributing to a sense of disempowerment and resistance.

(...) There is a big difference from when these projects were planned. The municipal councils were often positive at first, but now a lot has happened with the projects, and the wind turbines have become taller and bigger. It feels like a violation when not even the municipality can say no, and that the development is governed by the Energy Act and not the Planning and Building Act, then it becomes evident for us that there is someone from the outside who intrudes locally.

Aslak, MSc interview 2020

Above, Aslak, a Saami politician, discusses wind power development under the *Energy Act* before 2023. Until July 2023, NVE issued licenses, with appeals possible to the OED. Projects could proceed even if municipalities objected, as they lacked a legal veto. Following protests, a 2020 white paper proposed tightening the licensing regime and strengthening local involvement (OED 2020). In July 2023, new rules required municipalities to have an approved zoning plan prior to licensing, aiming to increase local control. Before the changes made in 2023, municipal councils had limited veto power but gained fiscal incentives through property taxes and a production levy introduced in 2022 and paid to host municipalities. Åfjord municipality, where *Fovsen Njaarke* is located, has been a major wind revenue area, earning NOK 96 million in 2024, mostly from property tax and the production levy, which accounted for over NOK 43 million (NVE 2024).

At Frøya, after 14 years of protraction, sustained delays depleted the Frøya action group’s resources, culminating in the deployment of operational turbines and municipal acquiescence. Before leaving Frøya in February 2020, I observed profound sociopolitical fragmentation among the island inhabitants. One mother told me that her daughter was afraid to tell her grandparents what she thought of the wind power development. She had two sets of grandparents, one pair in favour and one opposed. The granddaughter feared losing contact with one pair if she voiced her opinion. Moreover, members of the Frøya action group, established to oppose wind power development, described an irreparable loss of trust in Norwegian governance, having been procedurally silenced into reluctant acceptance.

On October 9th, 2022, I observed the one-year commemoration of the Fosen verdict in Trondheim/Tråante. The event included speeches from *Fovsen Njaarke* and music by the renowned Saami artist Mari Boine. Before performing, she addressed the audience and expressed her exhaustion.

*The ancestors are tired, the land is tired, we are tired,
I am tired.*

Mari Boine, 09.10.2022, Trondheim/Tråante

Boine’s articulation of collective fatigue resonates far beyond Fosen. The case is not singular but part of a broader pattern of extractive pressures across *Saepmie*⁶ (Sehlin MacNeil 2017, Kårtveit 2021, Össbo 2023). For Saami reindeer herders, these developments translate into a drain on time and energy. In several conversations, Leif Arne Jåma of *Fovsen Njaarke* expressed the view that the lack of follow-up on the Fosen verdict was a tactic by the Norwegian government to stall and gain time to determine how to keep the wind power turbines in operation.

We thought that once the ruling came, things would start happening. It cannot be appealed. We expected demolition, repair, and revegetation. That is what we believed. Now we experience that the state is using stalling tactics against us.

Leif Arne Jåma, conversation 2022

6 *Saepmie* refers to the Indigenous territory of the Saami people, spanning northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula in Russia.

During a field visit to the Roan mountain in September 2023, I asked Sissel, another south Saami reindeer herder at Fosen, about the consequences of the Fosen verdict for them. She replied:

We have had to spend a lot of time in multiple meetings; that is really the main consequence for us now. We have been in countless meetings trying to be heard for two years already.

Sissel, conversation 08.09.2023

New meetings, consultations, and procedural obligations divert herders from essential reindeer practices, reducing the flexibility that is fundamental to sustainable herding (Ellingsen 2024). Moreover, Leif Arne Jåma stated that uncertainty about the future is a heavy burden, particularly the lack of clarity about what it will look like or how long it will take to end the human rights violation. He also highlighted the asymmetric “rules” for the Saami herders and the government.

If it had been the other side who won, the case would have been over immediately, but different rules seem to apply when they are the ones who lost.

Leif Arne Jåma, conversation 10.11.2022

On 23 February 2023, 500 days after the Supreme Court’s unanimous ruling invalidated the Fosen wind farm licenses without ordering turbine removal, Saami and Norwegian environmental youth began the “Fosen actions” with a sit-in at the OED to protest the ongoing rights violation. Throughout 2023, they applied sustained political pressure by occupying ministries and Parliament, drawing national attention. In September, activists erected a låavtege, a traditional tent, outside the Parliament in Oslo.

I observed two earlier actions, in February and June 2023. These mobilizations included participants from the Saami community and supporters from the majority Norwegian population. Organizing required significant time, coordination, and emotional labor. Outside the låavtege, Ella Marie Hætta Isaksen, the spokesperson, expressed the strain that the prolonged struggle had placed on the activists.

We are exhausted and trying to save our energy for the 11th of October. I am trying to protect the activists. I have asked a lot of them. (...) It is important to show the breadth of who we are and that we are many.

Ella Marie Hætta Isaksen, conversation 11.09.2023

This exhaustion is not incidental but symptomatic of a broader pattern. The Fosen case is one among many – including Øyfjellet, Gallok, Repparfjorden, Melkøya, Daavi, Joma, in which Saami communities navigate prolonged legal, administrative, and political processes that span years or decades. These extended timelines generate accumulated strain that communities must continually contend with as they sustain their resistance.

Creating epistemic exclusion through time grabbing

The third theme covers how temporal and epistemic injustice are interlinked in the two cases. At Fosen, the post-verdict, new rounds of consultations were initiated by OED; however, the same

issues have resurfaced, including those central to the legal proceeding, issues that have also been central in the legal proceedings. In a phone conversation, Leif Arne Jåma told me that in these new rounds, the OED is expected to provide different answers than in previous rounds.

When we meet the government for new rounds of talks, we are facing (...) The same individuals from the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (OED) who granted the license and the preliminary accession. The question of conflict of interest has been raised by the reindeer herding districts but dismissed by OED itself.

Leif Arne Jåma, conversation 10.11.2022

On 11 October 2023, during the Fosen protests, Ella Marie Hætta Isaksen, the protest spokesperson, participated in a debate on Norwegian radio program *Dagsnytt18* with the Minister of Petroleum and Energy, Terje Aasland. Hætta Isaksen reiterated Leif Arne Jåma’s point that the case is among Norway’s most extensively assessed with “over 2,700 pages” of reindeer-herding expertise in the record, on which the Supreme Court relied when ruling the licenses invalid, drawing on the Court of Appeal’s more comprehensive findings of fact (HR-2021-1975-S, Høyesterett 2021).

Part of the action group at Frøya assessed natural values and voluntarily reported on mitigation measures to NVE, believing that the environmental impact assessment (EIA) was inadequate. In Norway, developers submit project details along with an EIA program for the development area. In the Frøya case, NVE established an EIA in 2002, required supplementary studies after 2004, and circulated these for comment in 2005. The license was approved in 2012, and the 2019 plan for development was upheld. The Frøya group questioned the quality of the EIA, as it covered only a limited period and failed to account for changes in the size of the wind turbines. Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (Norsk institutt for naturforskning, NINA) has assessed the conflict risk between wind power development and white-tailed eagles, providing key evidence on biodiversity impacts (Nygård and Dahl 2012).

During my time at Frøya, a biologist, Ola, who left his municipal job after the project was approved, studied the ecosystem and voiced concerns about the EIA. The developer hired consultants to document endangered species, as required by the EIA. However, the Frøya action group argued that three days to survey 30 square kilometers of nature were insufficient and questioned the adequacy of the EIA:

The impact assessments are poorly carried out. For example, when mapping the birds in the area, they spent three days in a 30-square-kilometer field. It was utterly impossible to do a good job at that time. Frøya municipality has better data than what the developers’ consultants produced in the impact assessments.

Ola, MSc interview 2020

The Frøya action group emphasized the importance of protecting endangered species, such as glass eels, Eurasian eagle-owls, and coastal heathlands (Miljødirektoratet n.d.), highlighting both

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their ecological significance and the inadequacy of the assessments used to justify the development. The wind-power development on Frøya is situated within a coastal heath (kystlynghei) landscape, a protected and red-listed habitat type along Norway's coast. Across Norway, peatlands store about 3.5 billion tons of CO₂, equivalent to roughly 66 years of Norway's greenhouse gas emissions (Weldon et al. 2016). At Frøya, the wind power development was located on peatland, and excavation and drainage of peat during wind-farm construction can lower water tables, disturb peat, and likely release long-stored CO₂. However, since there is no requirement to create a total carbon budget for wind power development in Norway, no one knows whether this happened or, if so, how much CO₂ was released during construction.

In September 2019, NVE conducted its only environmental inspection in the construction area. The action group was barred from entering but was allowed a prior meeting with the developers and NVE to voice concerns about natural values, microplastic pollution, and the lack of measures to protect glass eels, as the eel's migration between ponds for reproduction is hindered by landscape changes caused by blasting. TrønderEnergi initially acknowledged Ola's suggestions for protection measures for the glass eel, but Ola noted that both the developer and the authorities lacked a proper understanding of the issue, thus the mitigation efforts failed.

(...) However, it was not enough for us, as there was no practical difference. The pipes that were supposed to carry the eel over to the other side got stuck in the outlet air. So, if the glass eel reaches the pipe, it is too high on one side, and the eel will not be able to move through the pipe and onto the other side.

Ola, MSc interview 2020

The action group found NVE's ecological supervision insufficient and weak. As a result, the action group felt responsible for monitoring the ecological consequences of the development, leading to further conflicts with the developer. Furthermore, they felt that NVE ignored their knowledge of Frøya's ecology and landscape and rarely responded to their input or requests for information.

Through conversations and semi-structured interviews, the Frøya action group identified the loss of nature as a primary driver of their opposition to the development. A loss of control following the sale of 70% of the shares to the foreign company Stadtwerke München was also highlighted in the conversations and interviews. The opposition on Frøya expressed concerns about the remoteness of these owners and their distance from the effects on the local communities. They struggled to understand why their local environment should be sacrificed for the climate goals of foreign capital.

Discussion

In this article, time grabbing serves as an analytical lens to show how chronopolitics link spatial dispossession to temporal con-

trol. In both Fosen and Frøya, acceleration and protraction normalized sacrifice without consent, echoing broader mineral rushes that externalize costs onto Indigenous and rural groups (Össbo 2023, Zografos and Robbins 2020).

At Fosen, licenses issued in 2010 and construction work that continued despite ongoing challenges made turbine installation possible, even as *Fovsen Njaarke* repeatedly warned of severe impacts during consultations with the Norwegian government and the Saami Parliament. These concerns aligned with alerts from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in 2018, which requested that Norway suspend construction because the project would disturb reindeer husbandry, yet construction and commissioning still proceeded in 2019 and 2020 (OED 2018, Thobroe 2018). This produced what I call colonial urgency, where the continual reassertion of emergency to meet green-economy timelines legitimizes spatial sacrifice and deprives *Fovsen Njaarke* of the temporal agency needed to align land use with reindeer herding and seasonal needs. After the 2021 Fosen verdict, government follow-up stalled while turbines remained in operation. The state's actions show a dual temporality: an urgent drive to build, followed by delays that help normalize wind power through meetings and assessments. Minister Terje Aasland stated that the government needed additional knowledge and would initiate new consultations. The process moved into the preparatory phase for a new assessment, while the Fosen activists continued to demand the demolition of the turbines. The state rejected demolition as a legitimate and feasible option, and the new assessment was never completed, as private agreements were reached instead.

In light of this, I argue that the post-verdict timeline and the state's proposed consultations at Fosen can enact as a form of temporal violence (Bastian and Bayliss-Hawitt 2023) by placing herders in a procedural double bind, where withdrawing from the new consultations and the proposed assessment would forfeit influence over subsequent decisions, whereas continued participation risks being procedurally contained and strategically ignored by the government (Fjellheim 2023 b). In this context, strategic ignorance refers to the selective production, maintenance, or mobilization of not-knowing by powerful actors to deflect accountability and preserve preferred policy trajectories, that is, ignorance as an instrument of governance rather than a mere absence of knowledge (Kuokkanen 2022). I argue here that, taken together, strategic ignorance and chronopolitical mechanisms function as underlying interlocking instruments of temporal governance that sustain contested wind-power projects across *Saepmie*.

Scholarship on climate temporalities underscores how mismatched timescales enact violence against more-than-human rhythms, rendering ecosystems "out of sync or mistimed" (Bastian and Bayliss-Hawitt 2023, p. 414). For the Saami reindeer herders, legal acceleration and procedural protraction erode the temporal flexibility required for herding adaptation and can, in this way, exacerbate mounting social and ecological stress. These processes exemplify how time grabbing transforms temporali-

ty itself into a site of dispossession. Moreover, on Frøya, some residents now live with the wind power development, even though they feel it was imposed on their community.

Land grabbing and habitat loss threaten global biodiversity. In Norway, peatlands have declined significantly; by 2018, 19 types were endangered, and 15 % of threatened species depended on these ecosystems (Artsdatabanken 2021). Efforts to cut CO₂ emissions risk failing if natural carbon stores like peatlands are disregarded. On Frøya, the action group, demanded a carbon budget for a wind project, warning that mitigation efforts would be symbolic without it. Their proposal was rejected, leaving no carbon budget, despite the excavation of peatlands, a major carbon sink. This dismissal of concerns obscures the project's full climate impact and overlooks local ecological knowledge, reproducing epistemic exclusion by rendering community knowledge irrelevant in decision-making.

Moreover, members of the Frøya action group reported being denied access to the site. Such restrictions further demonstrate how local knowledge holders were systematically positioned outside the boundaries of legitimate expertise and participation. As the results show, time grabbing can operate through epistemic exclusion to systematically devalue local seasonal and place-based knowledge relative to national timelines, thereby legitimizing spatial sacrifice through a governmental chronopolitical dominance.

In both cases, Saami and Frøya community knowledge was not only disbelieved but denied adequate time within procedural frameworks, through short assessment windows, and bureaucratic cycles that privileged technical expertise. Thus, the results reflect a broader pattern of epistemic injustice in environmental governance, in which experiential and place-based knowledges are systematically undervalued (Fjellheim 2024, Kuokkanen 2022). The findings of this article underscore the need for epistemic work in energy transitions to ensure that multiple knowledge systems are genuinely integrated into planning processes. Recognizing temporal sovereignty requires governance reforms that grant communities authority over development timelines, thereby countering state-corporate extraction.

Conclusion

In sum, this article introduces time grabbing as the temporal instrumentation of land control and shows how acceleration, protraction, and epistemic exclusion organize the governance of wind power development at Frøya and Fosen. Building on land use scholarship, the article makes temporal governance analytically visible as a mechanism that reallocates benefits and risks in the energy transition by shaping who has the time to contest, negotiate, and align land use with lived ecological rhythms. In this way, a chronopolitical perspective challenges just transition narratives that equate sustainability with speed and inevitability.

Juxtaposing the two cases shows that time grabbing operates through some shared mechanisms, including protracted decision

making and the sidelining of place-based knowledge, while also taking a distinct form in the Indigenous context through colonial urgency. I argue that Fosen exemplifies this urgency, in which state driven acceleration fragments South Saami winter pastures and threatens cultural continuity for the reindeer herders. Frøya, by contrast, demonstrates time grabbing through protraction, where extended and protracted decision-making processes have gradually eroded community consent. Furthermore, the place-based and experience derived ecological knowledge held by the Frøya community was rendered peripheral by the government within the planning process, contributing to the resistance against the wind power development, leading to intensified local opposition and sustained contestation of the project's legitimacy. Across both sites, temporal governance through time grabbing functions as an important instrument of state-enabled land control, with its effects and justification shaped by the colonial and non-colonial conditions in which it unfolds. Thus, the experiences of Frøya and Fosen call for procedural frameworks that treat Indigenous and rural temporal autonomy as a substantive requirement of just transition policy.

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