“Engaged lobbyism and resigned acceptance”

- Norwegian ENGOs approach to Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)

Eirik Swensen, Lisbon, 04.11.13
Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)
Norwegian ENGOs and CCS

• How do Norwegian ENGOs interpret CCS?
• Are they supportive or critical?
• How do they frame CCS?
The use of framing

- Erving Goffman (1971)
- Michel Callon (1998)
- Nisbet and Mooney (2007):
  “Frames organize central ideas, defining a controversy to resonate with core values and assumptions. Frames pare down complex issues by giving some aspects greater emphasis”
Norway’s moon landing

It is our vision that within seven years we can put in place technology that makes it possible to capture and store the emissions of greenhouse gases. It is an important breakthrough for reducing emissions in Norway, and when we succeed, I think the world will follow. This is a great project for the country. It is our moon landing.

(Prime minister Jens Stoltenberg, 2007)
The political status of CCS in Norway

• CCS was and is an important compromise in the climate and energy field:
  – “The gas fired power plant struggle”
  – Allows Norway to continue as oil and gas producer
  – Technological compromise as political glue

• These factors make the status of CCS in Norway somehow unique. Does this backdrop also make it more difficult for the ENGOs to criticize CCS?
The technological status of CCS in Norway

- Tricky question, depending on who you ask
- The Mongstad facility - “The failed moon landing”
- Sleipner (1996) and Snøhvit (2003) – The international examples
- Achievement since 2007: Technology Centre Mongstad (TCM)
CCS in Energy scenarios

- International Energy Agency (IEA)
  "IEA analysis suggests that CCS will play a vital role in worldwide, least-cost efforts to limit global warming, contributing around one-fifth of required emissions reductions in 2050. For CCS to reach this potential, around 100 CCS projects would need to be implemented by 2020 and over 3000 by 2050” (IEA 2012)

- IPCC
  “Across a range of stabilization and baseline scenarios, models estimate cumulative storage of 220–2200 GtCO2 via CCS to the year 2100. This is 15–55% of the cumulative worldwide mitigation required to achieve stabilization” (IPCC 2005)
ENGOs and CCS: existing literature

• Current studies can be categorized as either:
  – Comparative international studies (Anderson and Chiavari, 2009; Corry and Riesch, 2012)
  – Isolated case studies (Simon, 2011)
  – More general studies of CCS without a specific ENGO perspective (Tjernshaugen 2011)
ENGOs and CCS: My approach

• Qualitative interviews with all the Norwegian ENGOs
• Focus on the internal dynamic between the ENGOs
• Understand why the different ENGOs take the approach they do in the Norwegian context
• Look beyond Bellona and Zero (which have been the focus in the few former studies)
Norwegian NGOs approach to CCS

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<th>Supportive</th>
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<td>Active</td>
<td>Bellona, Zero</td>
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<td>Passive</td>
<td>NU</td>
<td>WWF, Fivh, NVF</td>
<td>Greenpeace</td>
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How do the ENGOs frame CCS?

- “The necessity frame”
- “The bridge frame”
- “The research frame”
- “The carbon lock-in frame”
  - These four frames can be said to represent different narratives from positive to negative
- “The involvement frame”
  - To which extent the ENGO frames CCS as a matter of involvement or not
Active supporters

- Bellona and Zero
- Ownership to CCS since long
- Faith in CCS technologically
- Are working actively with the technology
- Lobbying, networking

“If you’re serious, or if you’re not.. you don’t recognize the role of CCS, then you have not understood climate change”.
Passive supporters

- Nature and Youth (NU)
- Sees CCS as absolutely vital, but has given up campaigning for it
- CCS has proven difficult to engage young people
- It is a never ending story without appeal

“CCS is very technical and difficult for people to understand. Therefore, I do not think NUs role should be to discuss CCS in the media anymore. Young people need a more simplified environmental debate”.
Passive indifferent

- WWF, Friends of the Earth Norway (NVF), The Future in our hands (Fivh)
- Cannot or will not engage in CCS
- CCS though framed as a possible bridging technology
- In principle positive to R&D on CCS, but not as an excuse for action in other fields

“It is difficult to create enthusiasm around CCS, because it has nothing to do with your everyday life. That’s why we work with other stuff. CCS is more like for technical magazines (...) We haven’t had an opinion on CCS since 2005”.

Passive critics

- Greenpeace
- CCS framed as unproven and oversold
- Warns against carbon lock-in
- Passive because it is difficult to work against CCS in the Norwegian context

“We don’t bother to put any effort in this. There is not very important anyway, we don’t use that much money (...) ok, we use some billions, but we hadn’t used those resources differently anyway, taken the current Norwegian discourse into account. Those who are interested know that we think this is a really bad idea. So, yes, we have given up”.
Conclusion

• Bellona and Zero appear as the biggest supporters and drivers of CCS in Norway. They frame CCS as unavoidable.
• The status as “compromise technology” makes it politically uninteresting for other actors – no active critics
• Current research often frames ENGOs CCS approach as either supportive (pushing for its expansion) or critical (openly question it)
• In Norway, though, all but the supporters in Zero and Bellona are passive, and frame CCS as a matter of non-involvement – regardless their position on the technology per se
• The situation can thus be described as one of resigned acceptance that stems from the high barrier for involvement and the general lack of debate of technology's role in the Norwegian environmental discourse
Thank you!

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