

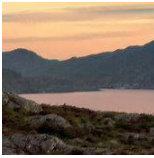


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A living landscape: the Fjord Coast Regional- and Geopark

Municipalities of Solund, Fjaler, Askvoll and Hyllestad

The Fjord Coast Regional- and Geopark brings together the inhabitants of four municipalities who are acting together to preserve, enhance and promote the nature and culture of their region. The work carried out is part of a long-term sustainable development perspective, from an environmental, cultural, social and economic point of view. With a sheep society's practical knowledge of the Old Norwegian sheep husbandry, people can learn to produce their own food while protecting the threatened coastal moor.



The inhabitants work together to maintain one of Europe's oldest cultural landscapes with its diversity of species. They pass on to new generations a traditional method of farming. Sheep roam the moors all year round and the burning technique is used. The park is pursuing a project to preserve the buildings associated with the local coastal cultural heritage. In addition to the initial results – food production, preservation of a threatened landscape and health benefits – the co-operation has created a sense of cohesion, belonging and integration among the inhabitants, which has given meaning to the word 'we'.

The project is part of a wider process of preserving a landscape that has been shaped by man for over 5,000 years. By re-establishing the traditional breeding of the Old Norwegian Sheep, the Hardbakke Old Norwegian Sheep Society, a cooperative run by the inhabitants of the Fjord Coast region, has made it possible to rediscover the richness of this ancient breed. Jobs based on traditional, environmentally friendly forms of production have been created and the work carried out has enhanced ancestral practices that current generations are rediscovering. Based on a bottom-up approach, the project is the result of a strong commitment from the local population. By preserving the richness of a unique landscape, it has created a dynamic that is based on a lasting alliance between man and nature.

Recognised for its great value, the Project is part of the Landscape Award Alliance of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, as a source of inspiration.