



Ditch coal, except ours

Norway may rid oil fund of coal holdings while still supporting mining, power plant in Svalbard

By **MARK SABBATINI**
Editor

Coal is bad and Norway needs to rid itself of investments in companies producing it worldwide. Except, of course, for the one it owns in the country's most pristine area.

That contradictory philosophy appears to have a good chance of becoming reality as Nor-

way's Labour Party is proposing a ban on coal producer investments by the country's 4.7-trillion-kroner oil wealth fund. Labor became the opposition party following this year's election, but the proposal may have enough support from other parties for a majority since the Conservative Party rules with a minority coalition.

"We have long known that coal is by far the most dangerous fuel in terms of emissions causing global warming," said Jonas Gahr Støre, deputy chairman of the Parliamentary Finance Committee for Labor, in an interview Monday with NRK. "We believe that Norway

should determine that our pension funds do not invest their money in coal companies."

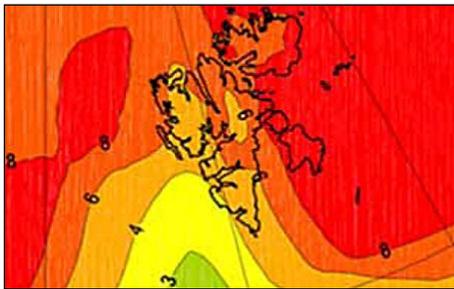
Prime Minister Erna Solberg told reporters at a press conference Tuesday that "this is a new question which we have not considered and taken a position on."

The fund has about 55 billion kroner in coal mining investments, according to NRK. The fund is banned from investing in companies involved with things such as nuclear weapons, land mines, tobacco, severe environmental damage and human rights violations.

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CHRIS WARE / UNIVERSITY OF TROMSØ



NORWEGIAN POLAR INSTITUTE

A ship navigates through the broken ice sheet in Isfjorden, above, with vessels expected to pass through Svalbard's waters with increasing frequency as temperatures increase due to climate change. The increase may result in a sixfold increase in the number of invasive species brought to Svalbard by foreign ships, according to a new study. At left, a map shows projected average winter temperature increases in degrees Celsius for Svalbard for the years 2071-2100 compared to 1961-90.

Warmer, wetter and weirder

Temperatures seven degrees higher, more rain, sixfold rise in new species possible by 2100

By **MARK SABBATINI**
Editor

To climate skeptics gloating because Svalbard's ice sheet increased during the past year: a damper has just been thrown on the party.

Quite a bit of dampness, in fact, along with heated feelings and lots of uninvited guests. They're part of a sobering long-term reality that will drastically alter Svalbard by the

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Darkness? Break out the night life

KunstPause rings in the polar night with concerts, theater, fire socials and a dozen art exhibits

By **MARK SABBATINI**
Editor

If some familiar sites looks rather unfamiliar this weekend it's not due to the arrival of darkness. Or rather, the darkness is just the excuse to put an artful flourish on things.

About a dozen new art exhibits and two shows by nationally acclaimed visiting performance groups will join an array of traditional

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KNUT BRY / JO STRØMGREN KOMPANI

"The Border," a dance/theater performance by the Jo Strømgren Kompani is scheduled at 8 p.m. Thursday at Kulturhuset.

Who's to blame and how to express your wrath

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Corrections policy

When we screw up you'll know about it – on the front page. One of the big complaints about newspapers is they tend to bury corrections and clarifications deep inside where few people who read the original article see them. If we need to fix something, an alert box on the front page will state what story is in error and where the full correction is printed.

Submitting material

Letters, columns, photos and other material are welcome, but we can't offer pay for published items since nobody here is getting paid at the moment. Submissions in electronic form (text, Word documents, JPEGs, etc.) are highly preferred, although typing and/or scanning of items will be considered on a per-case basis. We reserve the right to edit submissions for length, clarity, accuracy, libel and other reasons, but we will also make every reasonable effort to contact the author about any changes prior to publication.

This is why an open border is way cool



Several hundred people, above, line up at a Thai food buffet Saturday during a Loi Krathong celebration at The University Centre in Svalbard. At right, women with Longyearbyen's Thai community, which hosts the annual event, perform a traditional dance as part of the holiday, a "festival of light" celebrated on the full moon night of the 12th lunar month. This year's celebration featured a '70s theme. Photos by Mark Sabbatini / Icepeople.



Icesheet

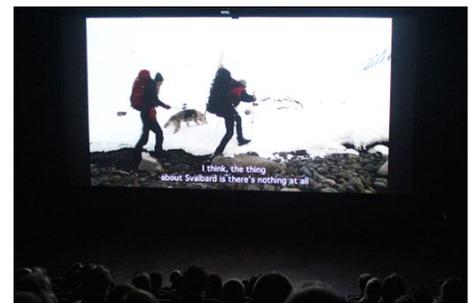
Random bits of the week's weirdness:

There's a couple of new movies featuring Svalbard, but they apparently won't be playing here anytime in the near future. **Locals did get a one-time chance last Thursday to see the "The Living Longyearbyen,"** a 53-minute documentary profiling five long- and short-time residents (Brennan Purtzer, Christin Kristoffersen, Eva Grøndal, Samuel Duc and Torgeir Mørk, for those keeping score). Marie Geiser's film spends a lot of time covering familiar turf about the general weirdness of Svalbard and how that keeps a lot of people here longer than they planned, but the locals may have learned a few amusing and new tidbits about their neighbors. Kristoffersen realized there weren't a lot of other people in high heels



FIELD PRODUCTIONS

Maybe we can't see this movie: But the joke's on you outsiders because we live it.



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Call of the beguiled: They don't know why they stay in this frozen wasteland. They just do.

when she first arrived and it wasn't until she let people know several weeks later she'd bought a snowscooters that the welcomes became warmer. Grøndal, one of the few very people born here, notes one of the town's many polar bear skins is on a friend's wall, "so don't tell anyone." Geiser said a DVD may happen eventually ... **Getting far more attention is "Supervention,"** a feature-length skiing/snowboarding film being hailed as one of the year's best in the genre. But while there's numerous Svalbard scenes, so far we're absent from the roster of international screenings, including those happening now "all over Norway." Fortunately, there's a "making of" video available at <http://tinyurl.com/o5m2jws>.

This 15-year-old can really hold its liquor



Steve Daldorff Torgersen, above center, owner of Karls-Berger Pub, talks with Liv Mari Schei during the pub's 15th birthday celebration Saturday. He said the wood beam above his head is the only unchanged feature during that time. At right, journalist Arne O. Holm, second from right, and lifetime Svalbard resident Frank Jakobsen share bar tales with those gathered for the celebration at the pub, known for offering more than 1,000 types of liquor dating back to the early 1800s. Photos by Mark Sabbatini / Icepeople.



HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

First coal from Lunckefjellet removed; next mine targeted

Eight years after the first surveys, Store Norske extracted the first coal from its new mine at Lunckefjellet last Saturday. Harry Higrav, the mine's development leader, said a shuttle car was used since the processing belt is not yet operational. The extraction from 200 meters inside the mine was ceremonial, with full-scale production scheduled to begin in 2015 and continue until 2019. Store Norske has invested 1.2 billion kroner in the mine's development, but its profitability is now uncertain due to market conditions that have lowered coal prices. But the company is already eyeing its next potential site, with officials saying they will submit a notification of intent for a site at Ispallen by Dec. 1. The company estimates it may be able to remove 10 million tons of coal from the site east of Svea and that it would be a natural successor to the Lunckefjellet project.

Thon Group in preliminary talks to buy Lompensenteret

Olav Thon, whose company is the full or partial owner of about 50 shopping malls in Norway, said he is in discussions to buy Lompensenteret, which has been for sale for the past year. Thon, 90, said he considers the shopping center a sound investment even though Longyearbyen is going through a long-term decline in its largest economic base of coal mining "I can hardly imagine that this society will be depopulated, even if it were to go bad with Store Norske," he said. "There are huge untapped opportunities in tourism and there is already a large research environment here." Lompensenteret, now owned by Eiendomsinvestor AS, has a valuation of about 52 million kroner.

Russia, Canada join Arctic cruise ship organization

The Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO), formed 10 years ago by operators in Svalbard, is expanding its scope to include the Canadian Arctic and parts of Russia, including including Franz Josef Land and the northern part of Novaya Zemlya. It expanded to include Jan Mayen and Greenland seven years ago.

Extreme makeover for Svalbard by 2100

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year 2100, according to two new studies.

An average temperature increase of seven degrees Celsius and a significant increase in precipitation are forecast in an analysis of west Spitsbergen conducted by the Norwegian Polar Institute. The report, requested by the Svalbard governor's office as it prepares a revised management plan for the area, notes changes will differ markedly by area and season.

"The warming over land will be greater than the warming of the oceans," the report states, noting the biggest change will occur in winter. Longyearbyen will see "a significant reduction of days with temperatures below -10°C and a significant increase in days hotter than 5°C. Precipitation will increase to all areas no matter the season, with the greatest increase in spring."

The report – which also assesses the impact of such changes on wildlife, geology and other aspects of the area – is a preliminary draft subject to language editing, but the data findings will remain consistent, according to a statement by the governor's office.

A separate study published almost simultaneously finds higher sea temperatures may result in a sixfold increase in new species introduced by ships into Svalbard's waters by 2100. A vast increase in ship traffic is forecast as the ice sheet melts and the warmer waters will no longer be hostile to alien species unable to thrive here previously.

The international study, led by PhD candidate Chris Ware at the University of Tromsø, is available at <http://tinyurl.com/q2x2g3j>.

There's more! Visit www.icepeople.net for the complete story.

Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Snow. SW winds to 59 km/h. High -6C (-14C wind chill), low -8C (-17C wind chill).	Cloudy. Variable winds to 49 km/h. High -5C (-11C wind chill), low -10C (-16C wind chill).	Cloudy. NW winds to 42 km/h. High -10C (-17C wind chill), low -15C (-22C wind chill).	Cloudy. Variable winds to 32 km/h. High -9C (-16C wind chill), low -15C (-20C wind chill).
24-hour darkness	24-hour darkness	24-hour darkness	24-hour darkness

Extended forecast: Sunday, snow, -7C (-14C), -11C (-17C), light 0:00h; Monday, snow, -6C (-11C), -13C (-19C), light 0:00h; Tuesday, cloudy, -6C (-10C), -12C (-19C), light 0:00h; Wednesday, cloudy, -12C (-19C), -13C (-20C), light 0:00h

Data provided by storm.no



COURTESY OF ANNE GRETE PREUS

Longtime Norwegian rock singer Anne Grete Preus will perform at 7 p.m. Saturday at Kulturhuset.

KunstPause rings in the night life

FESTIVAL, from page 1

local activities for this year's KunstPause festival starting Thursday. The four-day event is promoted as "a break from everyday life and routines" as outsiders depart and locals settle in for the nearly four-month-long polar night.

Five of the art exhibits will debut at Kulturhuset at 9:15 p.m. Thursday, three of which were selected in February for a 645,000-kroner project that received 73 applications from interested participants. The winners include a video presentation at the entrance of live worldwide images by Svein Flygari Johansen, a lights installation along the side panels of the main stage by Jenny Alnæs and a mosaic of mirrors in the mezzanine by Stefan Törner.

Also featured at Kulturhuset at 8 p.m. that night is "The Border," a dance/theater performance focusing on a man and woman sharing a workplace where they battle territorial difference and emotional dependence. It will be performed by the Jo Strømgren Kompani, a small Oslo group that declares "a generally pessimistic view of the world is the foundation of the company."

Among the traditional local activities are a music/art/crafts showcase Thursday at Galleri Svalbard, an outdoor market Saturday in the central square and a "Psalms in the Polar Night" concert by a wide variety of individuals and groups Sunday at Svalbard Church.

There's more! Visit www.icepeople.net for the complete story.

Coal: Bad for thee, but not for me?

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But a coal exclusion could lead to accusations of hypocrisy since the government owns 99.9 percent of Store Norske, which is pursuing new mines as existing ones are tapped, and Longyearbyen's coal-fired power plant. Such accusations are not new, with critics saying the operations conflict with Norway's strict protection policies in Svalbard, which it promotes as the country's environmental crown jewel.

Christin Kristoffersen, Longyearbyen's

KunstPause schedule

Wednesday
8 p.m.: Crime novel discussion by author Hans Olav Lahlum. Kulturhuset.

Thursday
2-6 p.m.: Photo exhibition opening by Paul Laukli. Arctic Bay Galleri. On display until Monday.
6 p.m.: Opening ceremony w/ music, exhibit openings and crafts market. Galleri Svalbard.
8 p.m.: "The Border," dance and theater performance by the Jo Strømgren Kompani. Kulturhuset.
9:15 p.m.: Debut of five art projects commissioned for Kulturhuset, w/ music by Liv Mari Schei.

Friday
10 a.m.: Arts presentation for kindergarteners by Stefan Törner, creator of the mirror mosaic at Kulturhuset.

Saturday
11 a.m.: Procession from the seaside Titan crane to city center. Bus departs from Radisson at 10:30 a.m.
11 a.m.-3 p.m.: Art exhibit by Olaf Storø w/ music by Berit Meland and Atelier Storø. Sjøområdet.
Noon: Outdoor market, music, games and fire pit. Central square.
2 p.m.: Children's storytime w/ youth librarian Karina Halgunset. Longyearbyen Library.
7:30 p.m.: Concert by the Anne Grete Preus Band. Kulturhuset.

Sunday
11 a.m.-5 p.m.: Open day w/ free admission at Galleri Svalbard and Svalbard Museum.
1-4 p.m.: Art exhibit by Olaf Storø w/ music by Berit Meland and Atelier Storø. Sjøområdet.
7 p.m.: "Psalms in the Polar Night," performed by various local performers including the Svalbard Kirkes Trio, Tundradundrene, Blåmyra and the Store Norske Men's Choir. Svalbard Church.

What's up

Nov. 6-10

Kunstpause Svalbard. See schedule at left. Additional details available at www.kunstpause.no.

Nov. 7

10 a.m.: Bydrift Board meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newntoppen room.

Nov. 8

Noon: Board of Youth Authority meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newntoppen room.

Nov. 11

8 p.m.: Trivia Quiz. Barentz Pub.

Nov. 12

7 p.m.: Municipal Council meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newntoppen room.

7 p.m.: Presentation of pilgrimage to Rome in words, pictures and song by the Svalbard Trio. Svalbard Church.

Nov. 13

6 p.m.: Movie: "The Family," U.S./French gangster/crime, ages 15 and up. Kulturhuset.

Nov. 14

6 p.m.: Dance performance: "Dances With Polar Bears" by 55 students from various arts groups, with a theme focusing on climate change. Kulturhuset.

Nov. 15-17

Swing dance course for beginners and those with limited experience. Partner not required. Register at boyeb@lokalstyre.no or wesoeren@online.no.

Nov. 17

6 p.m.: Movie: "Detektiv Downs," Norwegian drama/comedy, age 11 and up. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "2 Guns," U.S. action/drama, ages 15 and up. Kulturhuset.

Nov. 18

8 p.m.: Trivia quiz. Barents Pub.

Nov. 19

1 p.m.: Administration Committee meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newntoppen room.

What's online

Icepeople.net provides daily updates of news about Svalbard and the world's polar regions, plus extras for articles from the print edition. Among the latest news:

- *Greenhouse gas at record high in 2012*
- *Polar bears endangered? Actually, no...*
- *...but warming means more attacks*
- *Map: All ice melts; sea level rises 216 ft.*