

The island of Öland

Öland is the second largest island of Sweden, situated in the Baltic Sea. It is inhabited by 25 000 people which are sparsely scattered along the island. The main business activities in Öland are tourism and farming. Öland is famous for its high natural and cultural resources, with nearly 2 million visitors coming to Öland annually. The southern part of the island is a world heritage. Öland consists of two municipalities and is part of the Swedish Smilegov cluster.

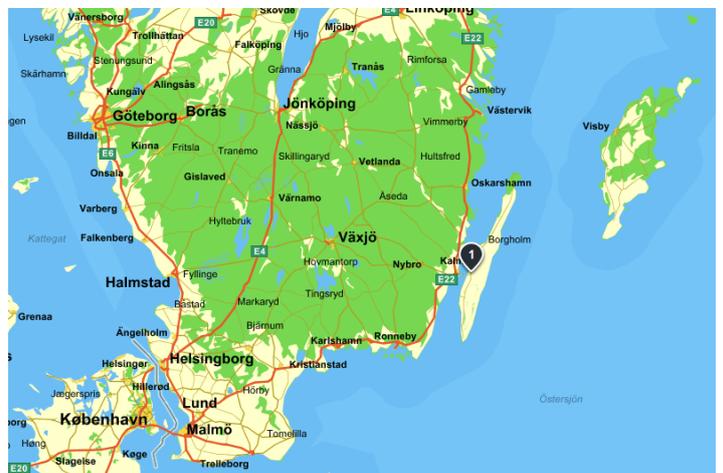


The starting point

Öland wants to become a fossil-free island in and 2030. This is defined in the strategies of the two municipalities, Borgholm and Mörbylånga. In order to achieve this many measures must be taken in order to move from theory to practice.

There is high wind energy potential in Öland, with the average annual wind speed being 7,2 m/s (26km/h). Also solar energy and biogas is becoming more popular, giving a lot of new possibilities but also challenges.

Challenges relate to people's behavior, the mentality of stakeholders and the lack of existing renewable alternatives for people to turn to.



Thanks to Smilegov

Smilegov has offered Öland a platform for sustainable energy work, i.e. methodology and concrete activities. Capacity building through local workshops represents a catalyst for action, for forming networks around the think tank and for developing priority areas and in strategic planning. A shared vision forms the base to get everybody involved and motivated. Some other relevant benefits that can be noticed are:

- An international network for energy experts
- The introduction of a think tank as a method of identifying and overcoming barriers
- Good practices from other islands
- A deeper understanding of what needs to be done to achieve Öland's sustainable development

This is what we achieved so far

- Dynamic local and regional discussions
- Biogas focus and efforts to establish biogas on the whole island
- Valuable contacts with other islands sharing the same or similar challenges
- Deepened cooperation between the advanced Islands of the Baltic Sea

Future hopes and expectations

Öland is keen on keeping the good contacts in the European island network since it is a good way of bringing to the fore the concerns of European islands. For project cooperation, concrete solutions and investments are needed. Setting up at least one filling station for renewable biogas fuel within two years and building at least one production site are two concrete goals for the near future.