

“My research interests were formed through growing up right by a fjord surrounded by fishers and farmers, and upon attending university where I discovered that there was much more than Sami history that had remained unknown about the environment I had grown up in.”

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“Arctic governmentalities: Indigenous peoples and knowledge production in environmental governance” is the title of my current post-doctoral project under the umbrella of research on Arctic Governance and Indigenous Innovation at the Centre for Sami Studies, UiT – The Arctic University of Norway. The project builds on my PhD research project “Making Sami Seascapes Matter” where I delved into traditional and scientific knowledge production on coastal Sami use of the northern Norwegian seascape, both historically, and in contemporary marine resource and spatial governance. My background is perhaps typical for many Sami of my generation – from knowing



next to nothing about the Sami history of my rural, fisher-farmer dominated, northern Norwegian home community Kåfjord, to witnessing its transformation during the 1990s into a Sami “place”, with the Riddu Riddu festival as a centre of resistance among Sami youth, in what became Gáivuotna-Kåfjord. My research interests were formed through growing up right by a fjord surrounded by fishers and farmers, and upon attending university where I discovered that there was much more than Sami history



that had remained unknown about the environment I had grown up in. As part of the first batch of Indigenous Studies master students at the University of Tromsø, I graduated in 2005 with a master thesis in indigenous studies on coastal Sami fishing rights discourses. I spent a few years working in Gáivuotna-Kåfjord at the Riddu Riddu festival and as an advisor at the Norwegian Sami Parliament before I decided to pursue my research interests further.

My PhD research focused on making coastal Sami traditional knowledge and use of seascape visible, and on investigating the scientific knowledge production already going on in the fields of marine science, fisheries research, and marine policy and governance at the University of Tromsø and elsewhere. The project was connected to the “Fávllis” Sami fisheries network for local ecological knowledge (LEK) research, funded by the Norwegian Research Council and led by Dr. Else Grete Broderstad at the Centre for Sami Studies (UiT) in collaboration with Einar Eythórsson at NIKU (the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research). During the course of the work with the thesis and the Fávllis project, I had the opportunity to work together with Svanhild Andersen and Sigvald Persen at the Coastal Sami Resource Centre in Porsanger, Finnmark, which broadened my perspective on coastal Sami history and culture, which resulted in important publications directed at local audiences (Andersen and Persen 2011). One of the results was a paper with a comparative study of Sami and Norwegian marine toponyms in Porsanger fjord, which I did together with Sami linguist Steinar Nilsen (Brattland and Nilsen 2011). The “Fávllis” project also had a promising collaboration with the Institute of Marine Research, but with varying results, which I and Einar Eythórsson have reflected upon in a book chapter called “New challenges to LEK research” (Eythórsson and Brattland 2012). My supervisor Dr. Svein Jentoft put me into contact with an international network of LEK and fisheries researchers, which led me to spend time with Dr. Barbara Neis at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I also became familiar with the controversies surrounding First Nations and Norwegian fish farms in Canada and British Columbia during a research stay funded by the Centre for Sami Studies in 2010. Upon realizing that there was still a lot to learn about interactions between salmon farming, wild salmon fisheries and the environment, I put that research interest off until a later stage. The year after, I however organized a workshop together with Dr. Dorothee Schreiber at the Rachel Carson Centre in Munich which gathered both First Nations and Sami salmon fishers along with representatives from the aquaculture industry, which further broadened my understanding of the complexities of indigenous fishing rights, traditional knowledge production and sustainable seascape use in interaction with the aquaculture industry.

During the course of my PhD project, I started employing GIS (geographical information systems) and critical cartography for my research, which I found immensely useful as a framework and tool for investigating both traditional and scientific knowledge production on indigenous land and seascape use in both Canada and Norway. The methods developed by Terry Tobias and others on mapping of traditional land and seascape use in Canada shaped my approach to the study of coastal

Sami seascape use, and has always been a source of inspiration and assistance in formulating research questions and solutions for my research on traditional and also commercial and contemporary seascape use by Sami communities. Turning to mapping of contemporary governance and spatial conflicts between indigenous small-scale fisheries and the aquaculture industry, I followed a case from my own home area in the Lyngen fjord where LEK became central in controversy on cod farming. The resulting PhD thesis (Brattland 2012) focused on methods for mapping and do research on LEK and traditional and contemporary seascape use, thus making a contribution to identification of coastal Sami seascape use, as well as identifying contemporary legal and governance processes whereby coastal Sami seascapes have the potential to be made increasingly visible in contemporary spatial and marine resource management.

For my current post-doctoral project, the focus is on the role of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in Arctic environmental governance, this time focusing on the area of wild Atlantic salmon governance as well as interactions with aquaculture, including other environmental management contexts where lay knowledge is mobilized, such as goose management, in both Arctic and non-Arctic contexts. The hypothesis for this project is that the rise of TEK and formation of ecological identities in the Arctic are supported by larger social processes that are not limited to the influence of an “indigenous co-management governmentality” only. It must rather be based on a rationality where the association of indigenous and ecological identities with the environment is seen as useful and wanted by larger groups of people, because it holds the power to influence the conduct of environmental governance. The project draws on results from two NINA/Fram Centre projects for Atlantic salmon (by Dr. Martin Svenning) and pink-footed goose (by Dr. Ingunn Tombre) research, and is currently connected to the TriArc project on indigenous-industry governance interactions in the Arctic, led by Dr. Else Grete Broderstad, where I lead a subtheme on indigenous-aquaculture interactions. Part of the work is to compare indigenous-industry relations and best practices for TEK inclusion in governance between First Nations in British Columbia, coastal Sami communities in Norway, and the global aquaculture industry. This allows me to pick up on some loose threads and to uncover what is still unknown about the complexities of traditional and scientific knowledge production in the area of contemporary water and seascape usage in the Arctic context in general.
