

PRESS RELEASE

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International industrial partnership for Skagerak Energi on renewable energy for transport

With Air Liquide as the new majority owner of Skagerak Naturgass AS, Skagerak Energi is strengthening its commitment on renewable energy, such as biogas, for the transport sector. Air Liquide's extensive experience in this field shall enable to take an even clearer position in shift to a renewable future.

The new partnership takes place in subsidiary company Skagerak Naturgass AS, a company that until now has been fully owned by Skagerak Energi. On the 31st July, Air Liquide took over as the new majority owner, with a 51 percent share of the company. Skagerak Energi continues with a 49 percent ownership share. The new partners have extensive plans for further investments in new infrastructure related to first and foremost production, storage and distribution of biogas as well as hydrogen to the transport sector in Norway. Biogas is also readily applicable as a renewable alternative to natural gas to the industry sector.

Biogas is a prominent example of a perfect circular bio economy, and can be exemplified by animal manure and food waste being utilized as fuel for vehicles, ships and trains as well as biological fertilizer for farming. When renewable biogas replaces diesel and other fossil energy sources, there is a large gain for both the climate and the environment due to less emissions and cleaner air. Within the hydrogen sector, Air Liquide is a pioneer and amongst the world's leading companies – where they are also represented in the whole chain – production, storage and distribution.

"Air Liquide is pleased to extend its position in the clean mobility market on this new geography thanks to this partnership with a company that in few years has managed to secure an attractive biogas market position in Norway. Biogas is an alternative to fossil fuels which, like hydrogen, offers a response to energy and environmental challenges of our society. With nearly 50 biogas sites worldwide and nearly 60 bio-NGV filling stations in Europe, this new partnership constitutes a new step for Air Liquide in the clean mobility sector and an opportunity to still contribute to draw the contours of the energies of tomorrow." says Philippe Merino, Vice-President Air Liquide Global Markets & Technologies.

"We are proud of what our people have achieved on biogas. In a short time, we have become a large distributor of biogas for the transport sector. Now it is time step up the game even further. We are therefore very pleased to have found a partner that have what is needed to make such a lift upwards. We have been successful in finding a partner with a global lead on technological and commercial competence. Adding their global portfolio on aligned business on biogas and hydrogen, everything is ready for high ambitions to be set, but also to be reached" is the message from the CEO of Skagerak Energi, Knut Barland.

Frode Halvorsen, the CEO of the company that now has a heavyweight international industrial partner joined as owner, highlights that the new partnership is recognition of the work that has been done in the company by their employees over many years:

"Already today, we distribute biogas to several public and private transport companies in several counties in Norway, but we have other clear national ambitions. For new and former customers, this alliance will allow us to deliver even more competitive products and services- in addition; it will bring us a strengthened technological and commercial capacity. The future is bright and green", says Halvorsen.

The world leader in gases, technologies and services for Industry and Health, Air Liquide is present in 80 countries with approximately 65,000 employees and serves more than 3 million customers and patients. Oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen are essential small molecules for life, matter and energy. They embody Air Liquide's scientific territory and have been at the core of the company's activities since its creation in 1902.

Air Liquide's ambition is to lead its industry, deliver long term performance and contribute to sustainability. The company's customer-centric transformation strategy aims at profitable growth over the long term. It relies on operational excellence, selective investments, open innovation and a network organization implemented by the Group worldwide. Through the commitment and inventiveness of its people, Air Liquide leverages energy and environment transition, changes in healthcare and digitization, and delivers greater value to all its stakeholders.

Air Liquide's revenue amounted to €18.1 billion in 2016 and its solutions that protect life and the environment represented more than 40% of sales. Air Liquide is listed on the Euronext Paris stock exchange (compartment A) and belongs to the CAC 40, EURO STOXX 50 and FTSE4Good indexes.

Skagerak Energi is a major actor within renewable energy in Norway, and is owned by Statkraft and the three largest municipalities in the industrial region of Grenland in Telemark County. The core business is Power grids and hydropower. Biogas and district heating is main businesses outside the core. In numbers of employees, the new partner for Skagerak Energi is a hundred times larger.

For questions and further information, please contact:

Knut Barland, CEO, Skagerak Energi

Tlf. 0047 911 13 048, E-mail: knut.barland@skagerakenergi.no

Frode Halvorsen, CEO, Skagerak Naturgass

Tlf. 0047 934 01 544. E-mail: Frode.Halvorsen@skageraknaturgass.no

Media contact:

Kristian Norheim, EVP for Communications and Public Affairs, Skagerak Energi:

Tlf. 0047 997 24 170, E-mail: kristian.norheim@skagerakenergi.no