

PRESS RELEASE

## **The Fjords names revolutionary vessel set to transform nature tourism in Norway**

May 12, 2016, Sandane, Norway: The Fjords DA, operator of seven tourist ships in the Western Norwegian fjords, has revealed the name of the latest addition to its fleet – a vessel that aims to be as breath taking as the natural beauty it will sail through. To be christened Vision of The Fjords, the 40m long hybrid craft pushes the possibilities of both green technology and passenger experience, delivering a solution that safeguards the pristine environment it gives access to.

Vision of The Fjords, to be launched in June, is unique. Built from carbon fibre, with a 400-passenger capacity, the vessel has been designed with lines that resemble a twisting mountain path, complementing the scenery of the UNESCO World Heritage Listed Nærøysfjord it will voyage along. Passengers can literally climb the vessel as they watch the 1800m mountains rise from the water, or enjoy the outside from inside thanks to sweeping panoramic lounges and windows.

Its dual fuel solution allows it to run diesel engines up to the entrance of the protected Nærøysfjord, where it then switches to silent running, emission free electric power. In addition, the vessel features a special hull designed to minimise wake and thus reduce impact erosion on the area's vulnerable shoreline.

With these factors in mind, The Fjords CEO Rolf Sandvik explains, Vision of The Fjords was the perfect name: "Vision of The Fjords supersedes everything else on these iconic Norwegian waterways," he says.

"The name obviously relates to the unique passenger experience, as they become 'at one' with the nature that surrounds them, but it also encapsulates our own vision for the future of tourism here. We are accessing and showcasing some of the world's most beautiful, yet vulnerable, natural areas. It's our objective to do this in a responsible, sustainable and respectful manner."

He continues: "Many of the tourist boats in this area, including some of our own, are 50 to 60 years old. As operators, we are drawn here by the pristine environment and then proceed to poison it. It's our vision to demonstrate that there is another way – by building a fleet that utilises the very latest clean technology to preserve this ancient, natural treasure that surrounds us."

Vision of The Fjords is currently being constructed by shipbuilder Brødrene Aa, which will complete the 90+ million NOK project in less than a year from its original order date. It will then transport tourists from all over the world along the spectacular fjord between Flåm and Gudvangen, using its battery power to silently cruise between the precipitous mountainsides at the leisurely pace of 8 knots. The vessel will complete around 700 voyages a year, running in all seasons, including winter, when the area is at its quietest yet arguably most spellbinding.

"This really is a one of a kind experience," Sandvik stresses, "but one that we'll be looking to emulate in the future. We're fortunate to be owned by Fjord1 and Flåm AS, two progressive organisations

who are committed to world-class transport and tourism offers. They share our ambitions for responsible, environmentally friendly vessels that put passengers at the heart of the voyage experience.

“With their backing we’ll be looking to expand our fleet with more vessels like the Vision of The Fjords. We take the environment we operate in very seriously and will work to safeguard it with ships that utilise the latest technology to deliver the optimum in green performance. These newbuilds will eventually replace our existing vessels, allowing us to minimise our emissions while maximising the experience of a growing number of visitors to this incredible natural landscape.”

Brødrene Aa AS, a world leader in the construction of carbon fibre fast ferries, won the contract for the vessel in 2015 after presenting its strikingly innovative design to The Fjords, Fjord1 and Flåm AS.

Vision of The Fjords features ABB’s acclaimed Onboard DC Grid system, managing and controlling the power between its diesel engine, propeller and charging station. Jorulf Nergard, Head of Short Sea Shipping at ABB says “ABB is at the forefront of electric and hybrid power in the maritime industry with a number of key contracts across the passenger and offshore sectors. We are delighted that ABB technology is at the heart of the magnificent Vision of the Fjords”

Vision of The Fjords -

Length: 40 m

Width: 15 m

Materials: Carbon fibre sandwich

Seats: 400

Class: DNV light craft

Main engine: 2x 749kW

El-motor: 2 x150kW

Propeller - CPP propeller

Battery pack: 600 kWh

The Fjords:

The Fjords is dedicated to moving its passengers. Operating a fleet of seven tourism and transport vessels on the Western Norwegian fjords of Nærøyfjord, Geirangerfjord and Lysefjord, the company aims to connect customers not just to their destinations, but also to the unique natural beauty that surrounds them. The Fjords is co-owned by Fjord1, Norway’s largest ferry company, and Flåm AS, which works to promote Flåm’s world-class tourism opportunities.

[www.thefjords.no](http://www.thefjords.no)

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