

## FUTURE PLANET | RENEWABLE ENERGY

The tiny islands leading the green transition

"This is evident in various eco-friendly island projects around the world. One of the best-known examples is Samsø in Denmark, which is home to around 4,000 people.

### **We didn't like the idea that somebody would exploit the wind that we were living with – Søren Hermansen**

"We didn't like the idea that somebody would exploit the wind that we were living with," explains Søren Hermansen, chief executive of the Samsø Energy Academy. He describes how, by the year 2000, the islanders had banded together to raise money – partly through a bank loan – to pay for 11 wind turbines that they themselves would own. Now, Samsø sells surplus energy back to the Danish grid and the loan has been paid back "a long time ago".

Waste straw from farms on the island, another renewable resource, is also burned to provide heating for multiple villages. Hermansen has considered heat pumps as an alternative that might be even greener, though this would likely require more electricity purchased from the mainland, thus threatening the island's status as energy self-sufficient. Plus, leaving the straw to decompose rather than burning it could potentially lead to slightly higher greenhouse gas emissions."

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