

Landowners as professional providers of ecosystem services

Motives and barriers for wetland creation



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Swedish catchment area “Smedjeån”

- Representing a typical catchment facing both water quantity and quality issues.
- Droughts and floods are affecting landowners.
- Eutrophication is a serious and challenging problem in the sea.
- There are 300 farms in the catchment.

Wetlands

- Multi-functional wetlands offers win-win solutions.
- The total wetland area should reach 12 000 hectares by 2015.
- Subsidies act as incentives for wetland construction today.
- The subsidies cover the cost of construction and maintenance.

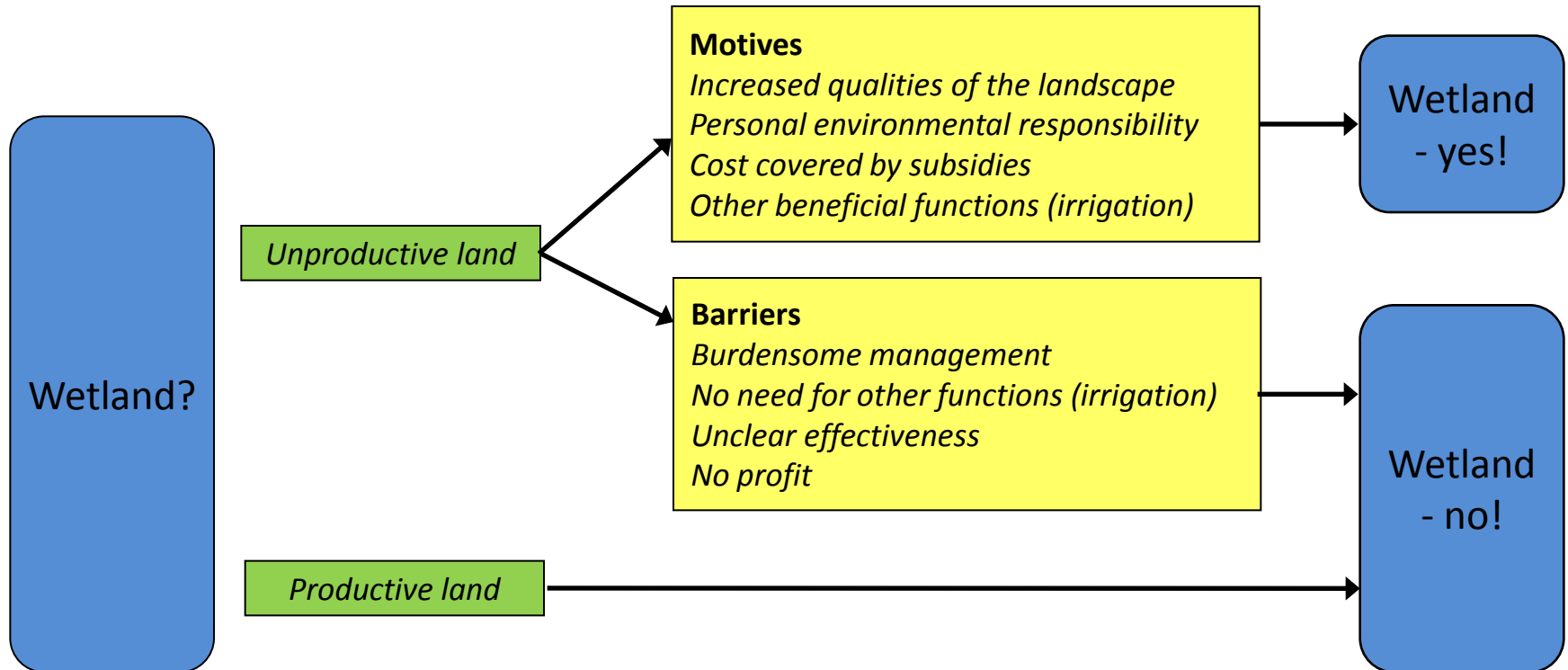
Decreasing construction pace

- The wetland construction pace has decreased.
 - Landowners are not interested enough.
 - Why?
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- Through interviews with landowners we aimed to bridge this knowledge gap.

Interviews with landowners

- Landowners with different types of farming were interviewed.
- The landowners could freely discuss a number of set topics.
- New interviews was carried out until no new information was obtained from the landowners.

Results



Quote from landowner

“Once again it is about money. What would I gain from it? If I were to build a wetland it would mean less land for me to lease.

Nobody pays me for constructing a wetland, which means no profit. Maybe I get 100% of the investment and maintenance costs, but there’s nothing extra to earn money on.

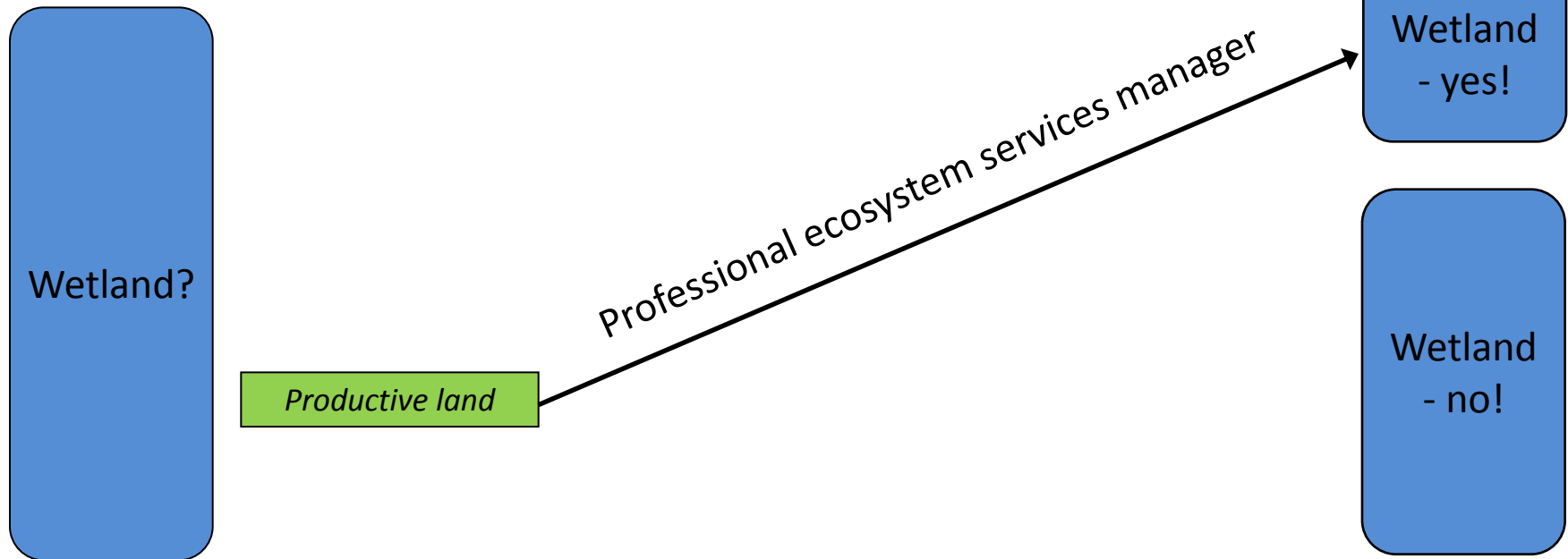
It is only if you can find a place somewhere where you cannot grow anything, poor ground or pasture-land. But, yet again, what would I gain from it?

Yes, of course, I help the environment. But this is nothing that I feel so strongly about, I mean pastures are beautiful too.”

The meaning of production

- We need to place wetlands on productive land.
- The meaning of production must change from food production to also include ecosystem services.
- However, landowners see food production as something fundamental.
- An aspect possibly not easily changed...

Landowners as businesses managers producing ecosystem services



Payment for production of ecosystem services

- Profit for the landowners.
- More cost efficient to pay for amounts of nutrients removed than the size of the wetland.
- Making landowners actively seeking knowledge from research and advisory services.
- Not counteracting food production.

A win-win solution is possible

- By developing financial systems focusing on the landowners as providers of ecosystem services.
 - Gaining more knowledge of optimal placement and design of wetlands.
 - Finding ways to estimate annual nutrient removal in constructed wetlands.

Thank you for your attention!



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