Implementing integrated nature conservation: A street-level-bureaucracy perspective on the German public forest sector

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CHAIR OF FOREST AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Introduction

- Growing body of nature conservation programs
- In Germany: integrated nature conservation approach
- Diversity of societal demands
- Controversial debates about concepts and implementation of integrated nature conservation

Research questions

1 How is integrated nature conservation perceived by local forest managers?

2 What factors are influencing its local level implementation?

Theoretical background

Street-Level Bureaucracy

- Street-level bureaucrats central figures in policy implementation (Lipsky 1980)
- Influences:
  - political factors
  - organizational factors
  - individual characteristics
  - external actors
  - contextual factors

Methods

Transdisciplinary approach

- „Nature conservation in state-owned forests“
- Uni Freiburg, NW Forest Research Station, Forest Service leadership, state ministries

Empirical data

- **30 qualitative, semi-structured interviews with forest rangers** (6 in each state, min. 50% state-owned forest, min. 5 years work experience)
- **Quantitative online survey** – response rate 29% / 354 participants

Results

1 individual characteristics

2 organizational factors

3 contextual factors

4 political factors

5 external actors

Results

1 individual characteristics

2 organizational factors

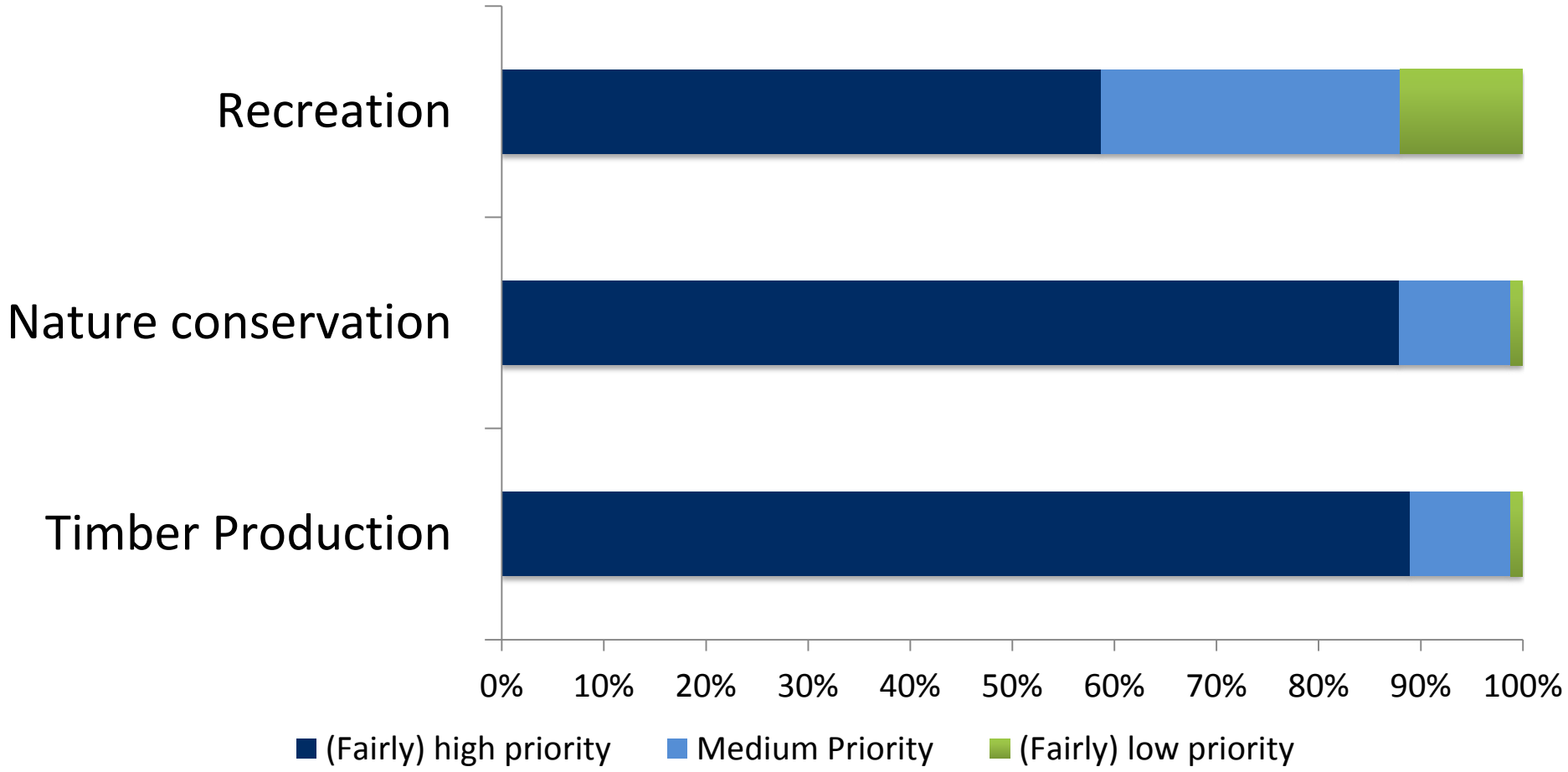
3 contextual factors

~~4 political factors~~

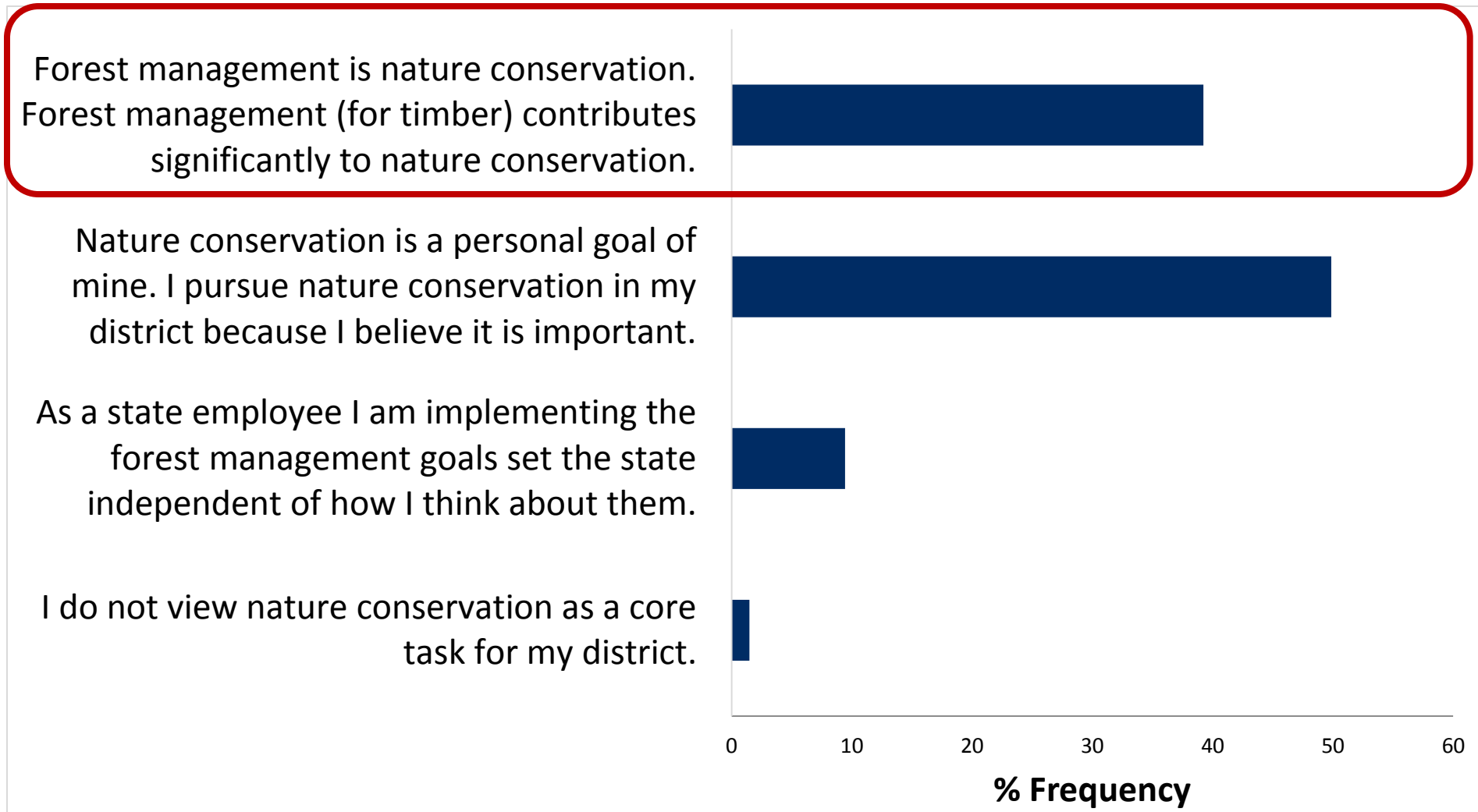
~~5 external actors~~

Results 1 - individual characteristics

Please indicate which priority you assign to the following forest functions



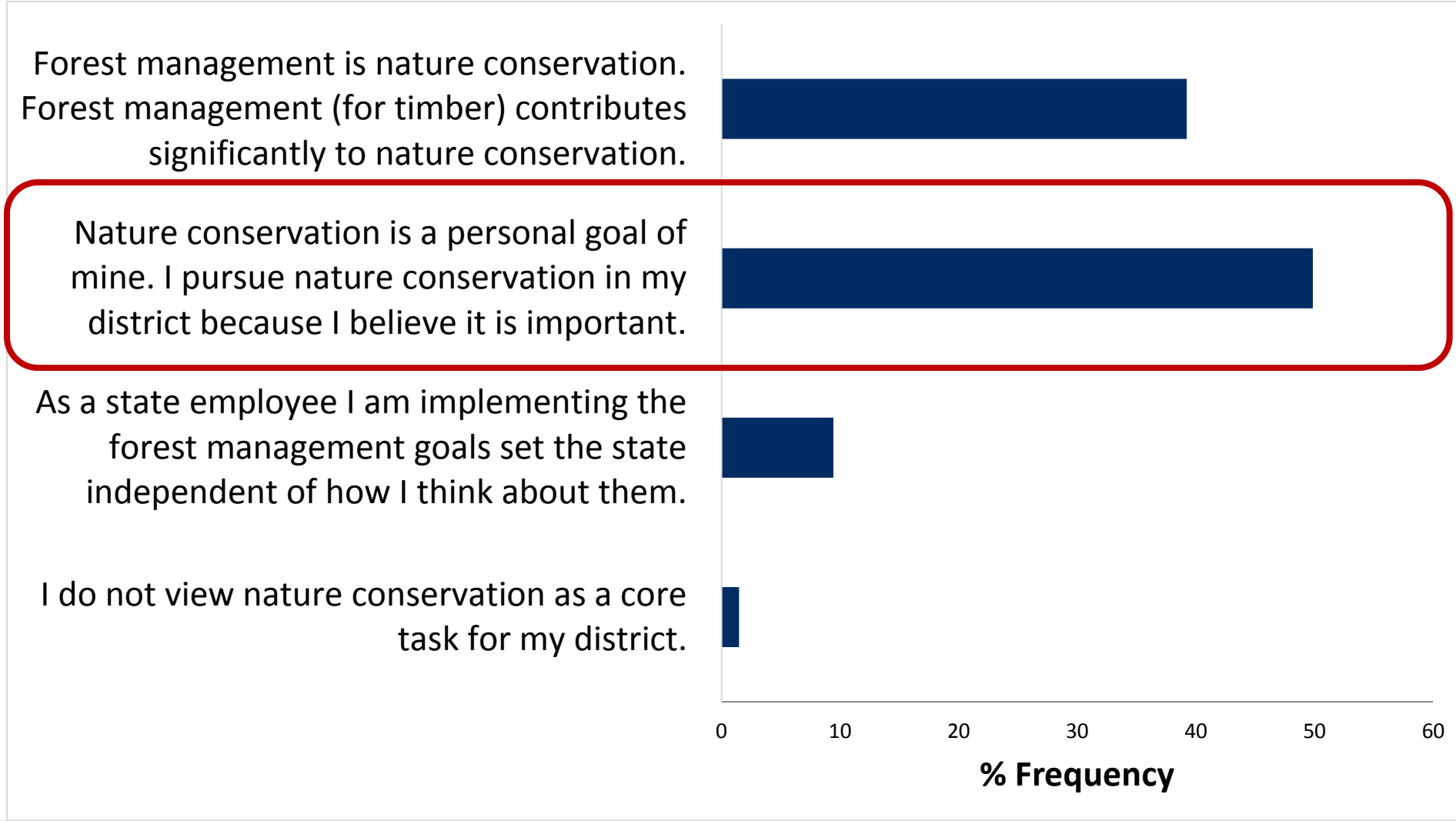
Which of the following statements best reflects your motivation to pursue nature conservation measures? (select one)



„To me it is simply part of my work! Nature conservation and forestry go together, it is part of forest management! “

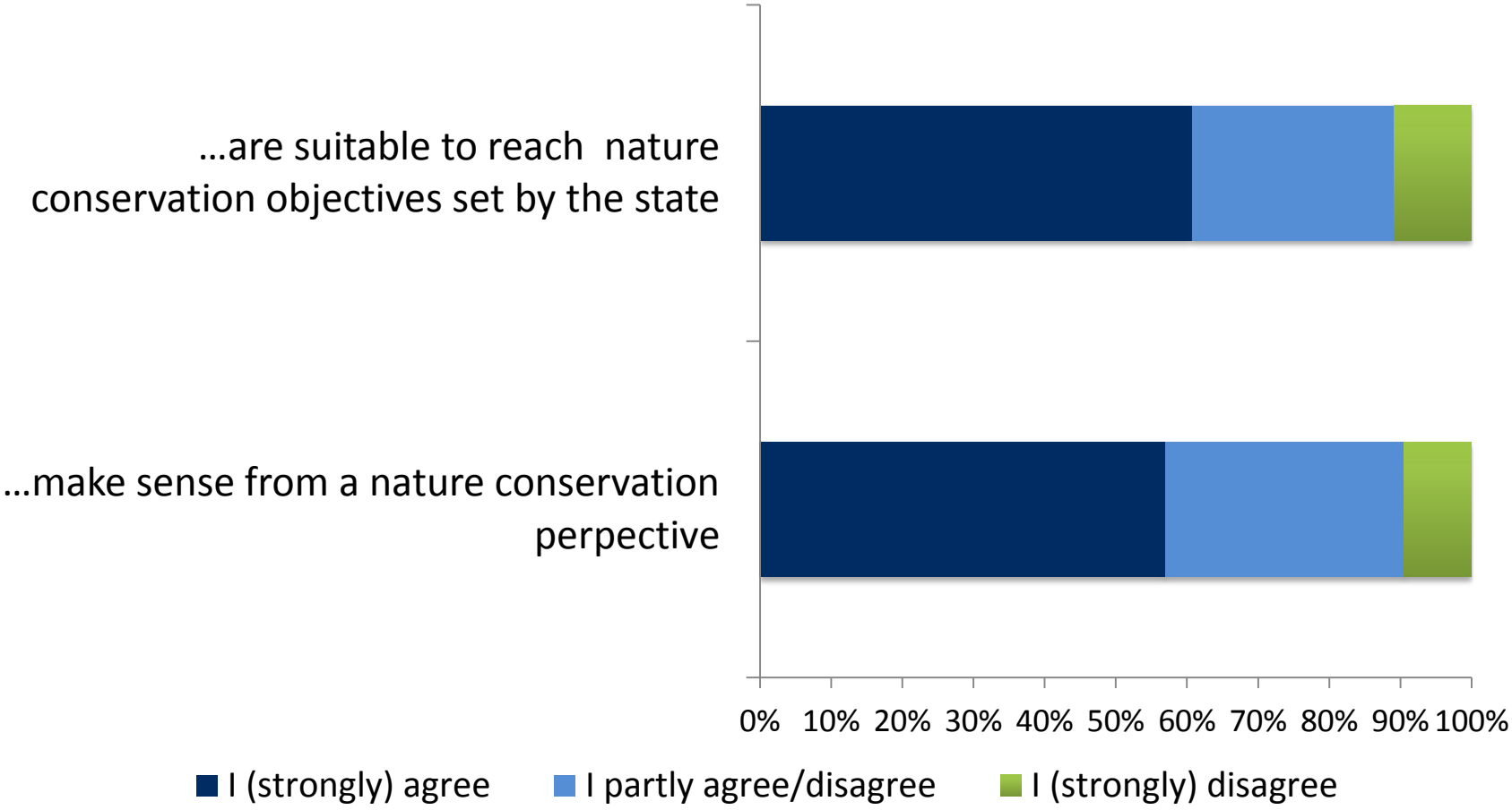
“We harvest selectively, following the principles of close-to-nature forestry […] management, including harvest […] according to our rules is rather beneficial to the forest”

Which of the following statements best reflects your motivation to pursue nature conservation measures? (select one)



„My heart beats for nature. I became a forester because of my interest in nature! “

Existing nature conservation related rules and implemented measures (large non-use areas excluded)....

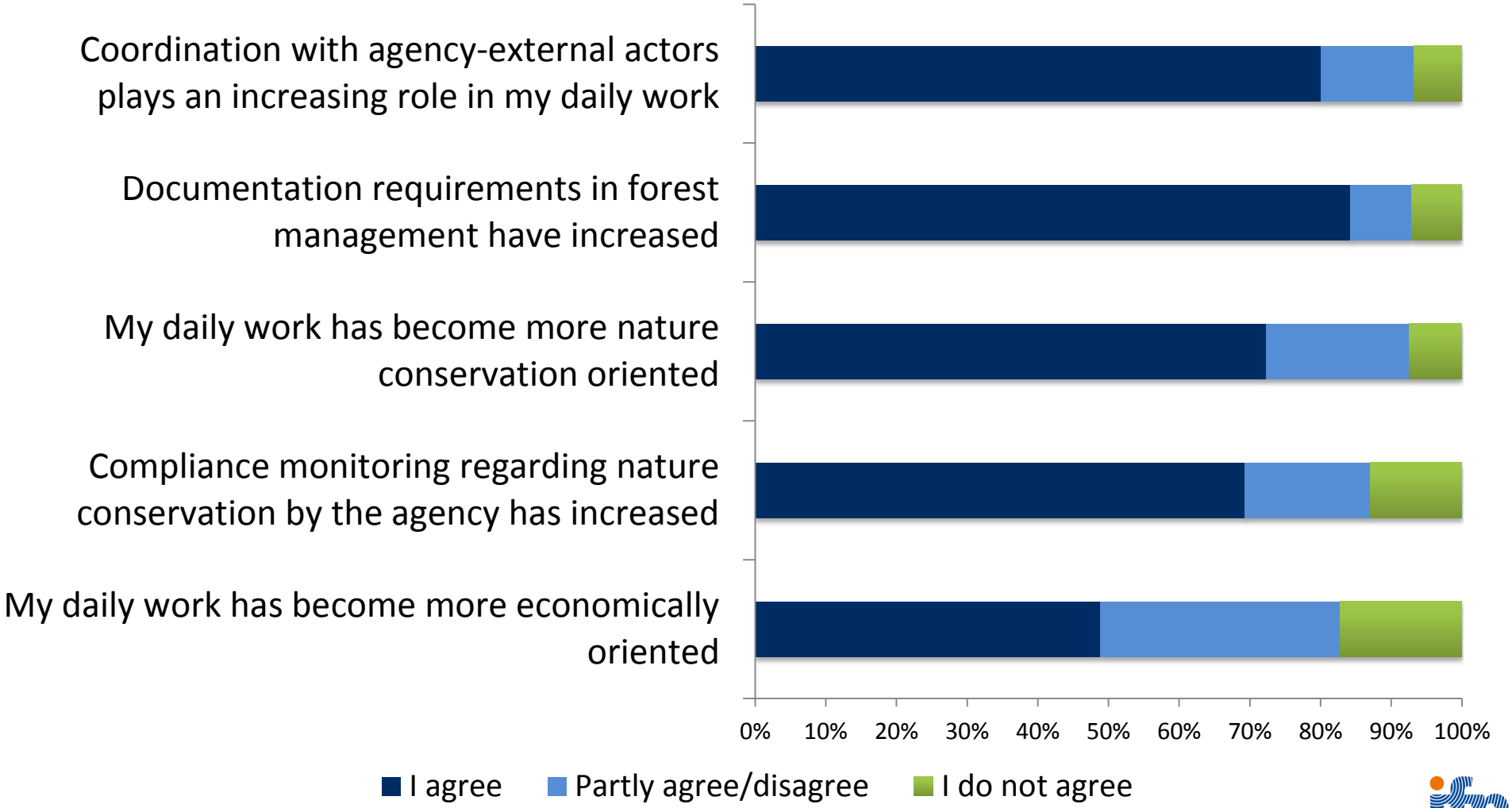


Results 2 – organizational factors

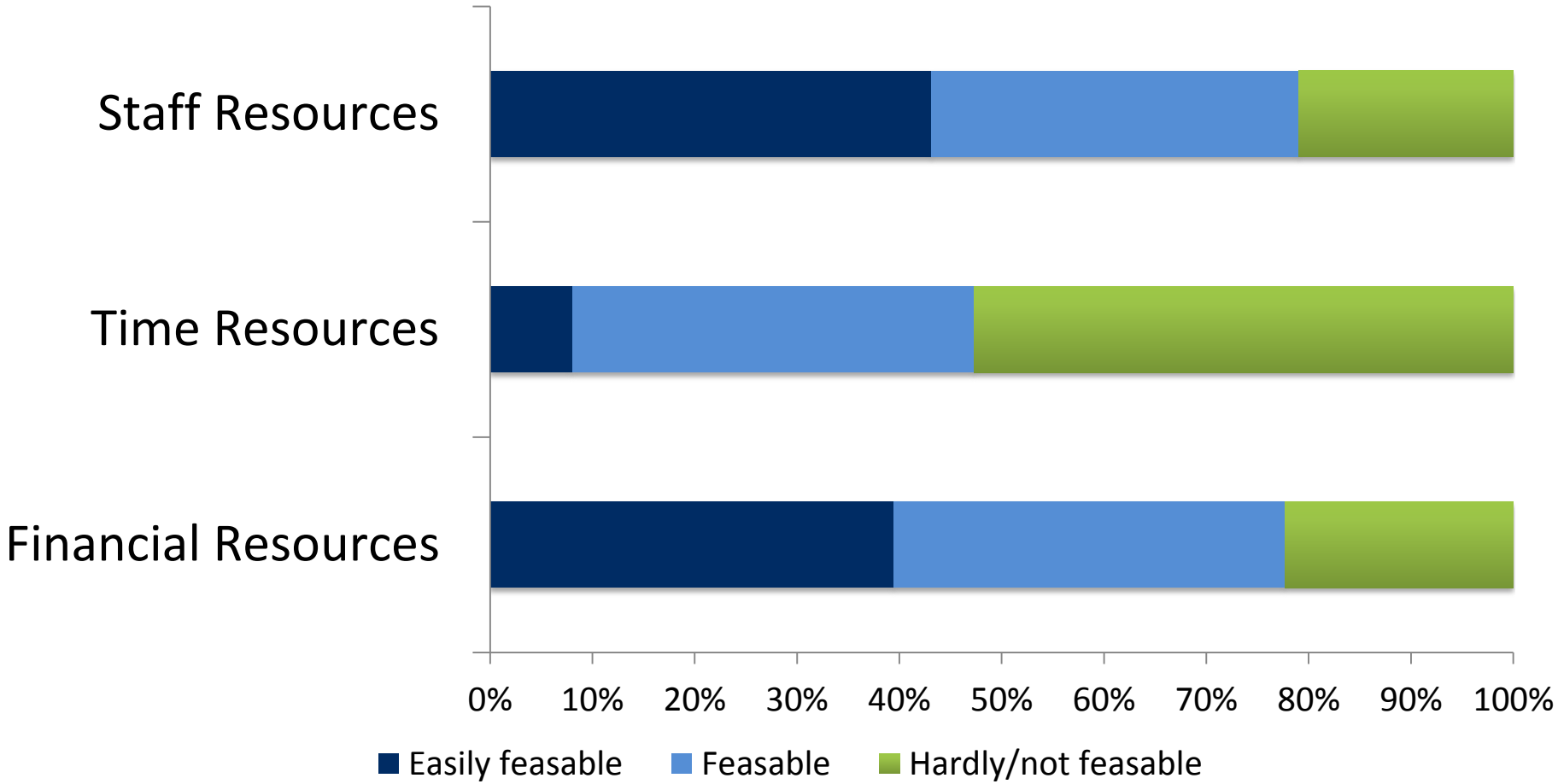
Results – organizational factors

- Changes to bureaucratic and societal conditions
  - Documentation requirements
  - Formal institutionalization
  - Communication with agency external actors
- Resource constraints
  - Time, financial, personnel

To what extent do you agree with the following statements [regarding the development of nature conservation management over the past 10-15 years]?



Please indicate to what extent the implementation of nature conservation policies is feasible with the resources available?



Results 2 - organizational factors

„I no longer invest my time outside, but I invest my time in paper work, to meet some documentation requirement […]. So it is no longer about trust and visual perception, what ‘s important is that it is institutionalized and verifyable “

Results 2 - organizational factors

„I would like to complete these nature conservation tasks, but the problem is, that I still have to meet my timber targets. And als long as I mark habitat trees, that ‘s time that I can‘t mark trees for harvest. So time is really the problem. “

Results 3 - contextual factors

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- Interaction with the public
  - Rural vs urban setting
- Reduced opportunities for personal contact
- Priorities of different forest functions - public‘s perceived demands vs. rangers‘ priorities

Please indicate the priority <u>you personally</u> place on individual forest functions.

	Rural rangers	**Urban rangers**
1. Priority	Timber production	Nature conservation
2. Priority	Nature conservation	Recreation
3. Priority	Recreation	Timber production

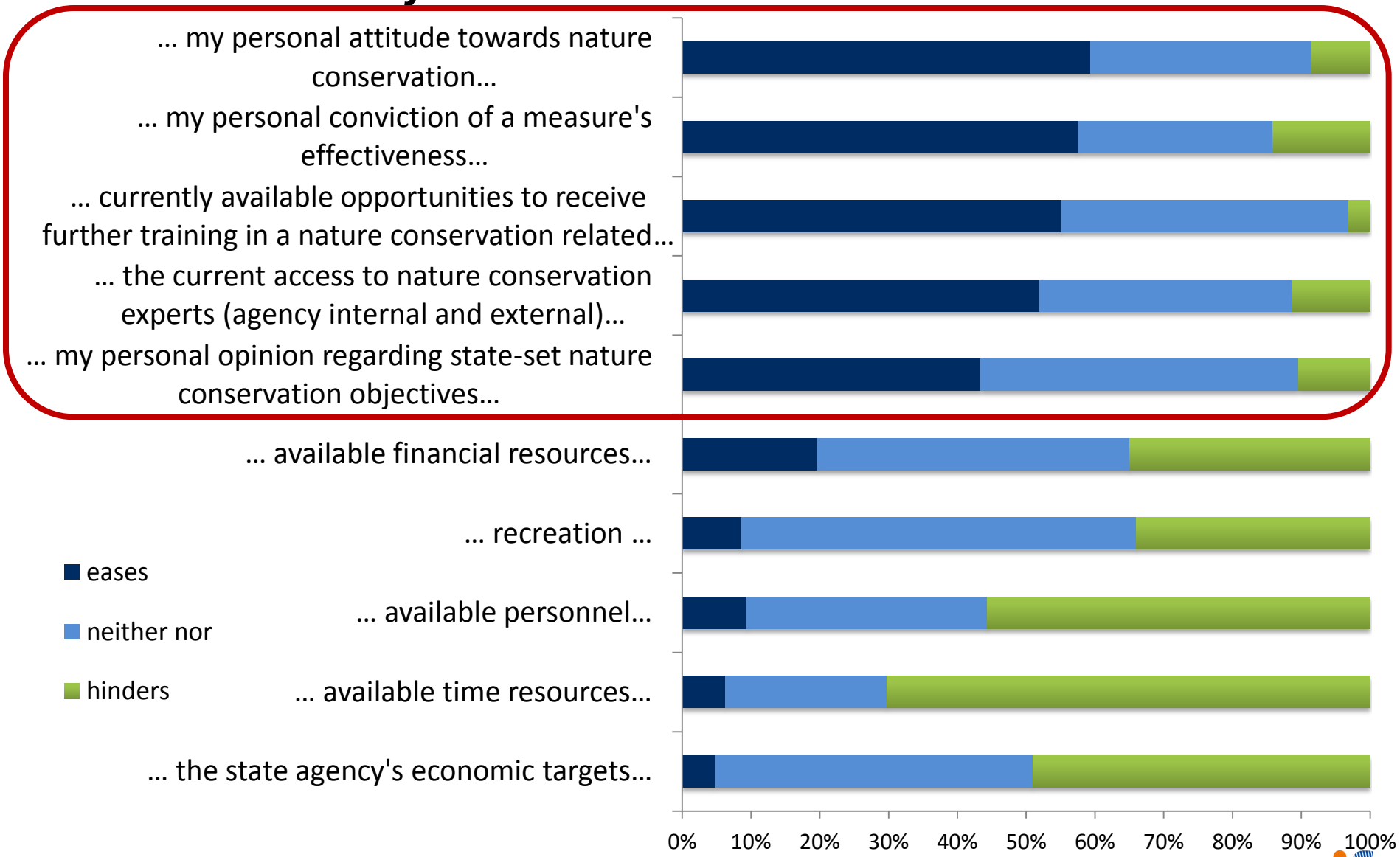
Please indicate the priority <u>you personally</u> place on individual forest functions.

	Rural rangers	**Urban rangers**
1. Priority	Timber production	Nature conservation
2. Priority	Nature conservation	Recreation
3. Priority	Recreation	Timber production

Please indicate the priority you think the <u>local public</u> places on individual forest functions.

	Rural public	**Urban public**
1. Priority	Recreation	Recreation
2. Priority	Timber production	Nature conservation
3. Priority	Nature conservation	Timber production

The implementation of nature conservation measures is facilitated/hindered by…



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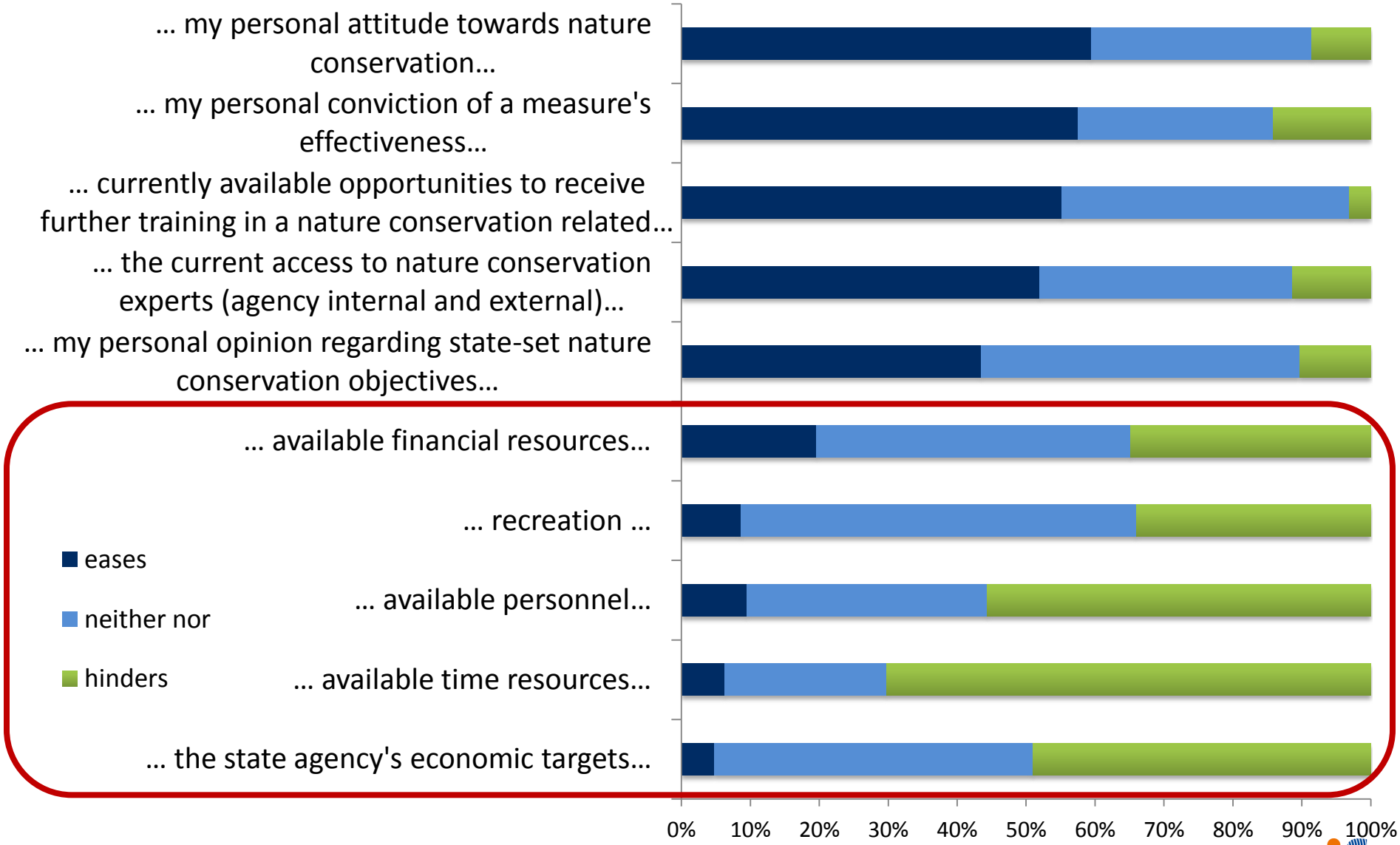

Conclusion

RQ 1: How is integrated nature conservation perceived by local forest managers?

- Integral component of forest management
- Personal and professional identification with nature conservation
- Policies and measures deemed worthwhile and effective

Conclusion (2)

RQ 2: What factors are influencing its local level implementation?

- Personal committment
- Resource constraints – time, financial, personnel
- Different challenges depending on rural or urban setting

Thank you!