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Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference

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Farmers' relationship with nature: how and why it matters

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Beneficial Management Practice Adoption in BC: Motivations, Challenges, and Solutions

**Adrian Semmelink
University of British Columbia
Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference
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Acknowledgements

Supervisory committee: Kai Chan, Terre Satterfield, and Deborah Henderson

Special mention: Mollie Chapman, Alejandra Echeverri



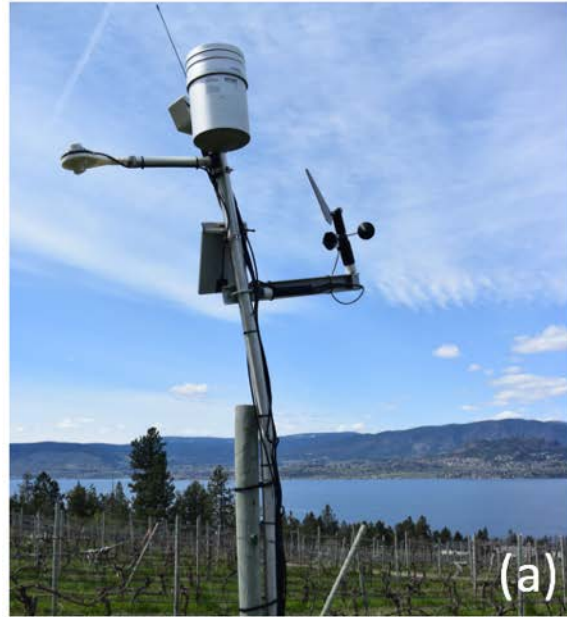
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Beneficial management practices (BMPs)



Methods

What did we do?

- Surveyed 166 farmers and ranchers across BC (mail and online)
- Follow-up interviews with 30 farmers and ranchers across B.C. (on-farm)
- Surveyed 30 relevant government staff (online)

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What did we ask participants?

- **Motivations for farming / ranching**
- **Preferences regarding different beneficial management practices**
- **Challenges to adopting beneficial management practices**
- **Solutions to increasing the adoption of beneficial management practices**

Diverse motivations



Why do you farm?:

“We want to raise our kids in this atmosphere.”
[Family]

“Play a part in protecting animals and nature..
you can learn more about natural processes
and how they work.” [Stewardship / Learning]

“To provide for our family.” [Financial]

On plants and animals as family:

“They are family to us and we respect them.”

On protecting riparian areas:

“We got them to build fences along the lake and along the
creek so that the cows couldn't get down to the water.”

Diverse motivations



Why do you farm?:

“To get rich and retire soon [laughter].”
[Financial]

“We are stewards of the land and of our animals.” [Stewardship]

“Family. It is what I do.” [Family]

On plants and animals as family:

“Plants are meant to be eaten, animals are meant to be eaten, or as companionship, they're not people.”

On protecting riparian areas:

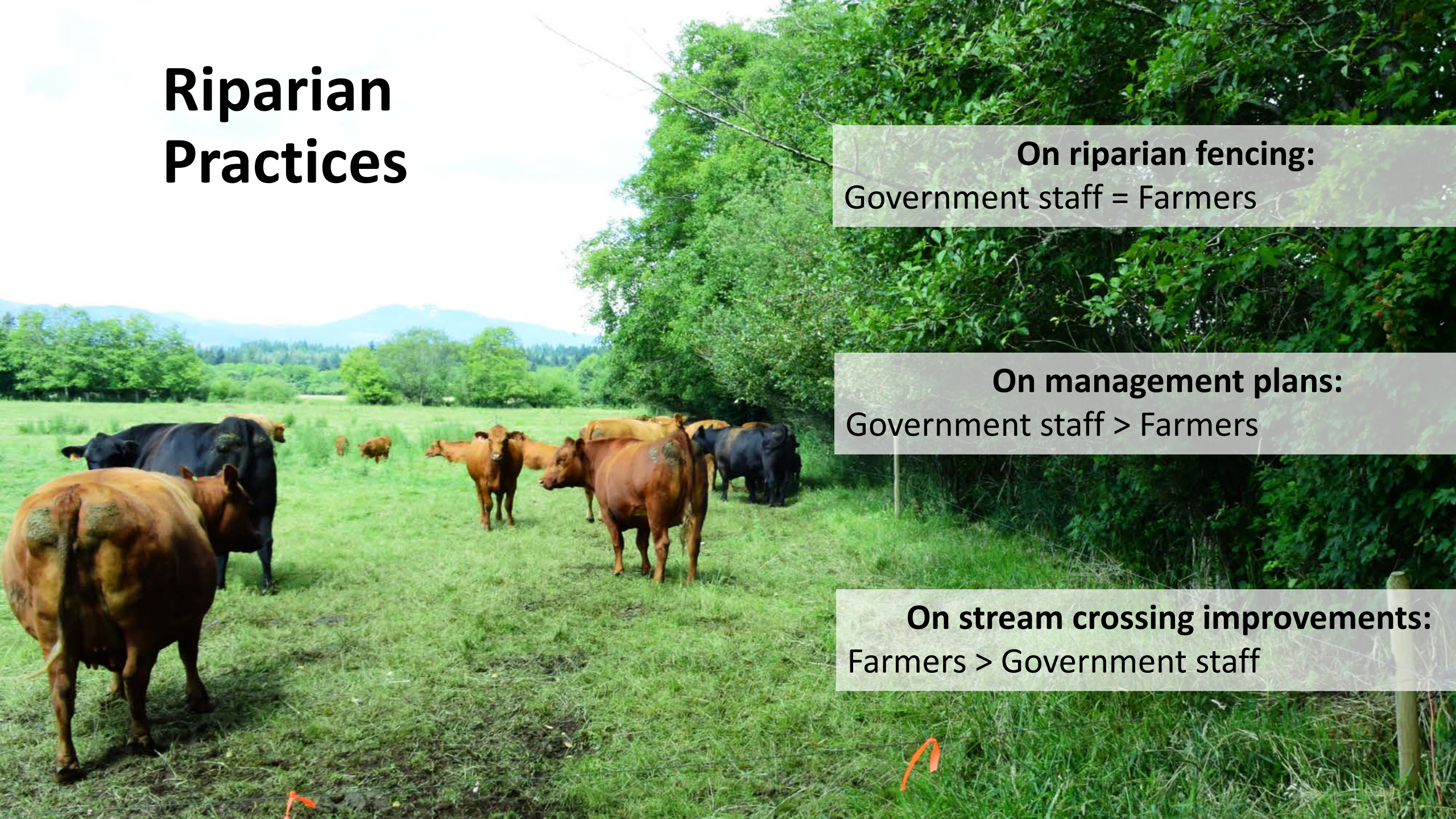
“I don't believe in them. That's a waste of land.”

Riparian Practices

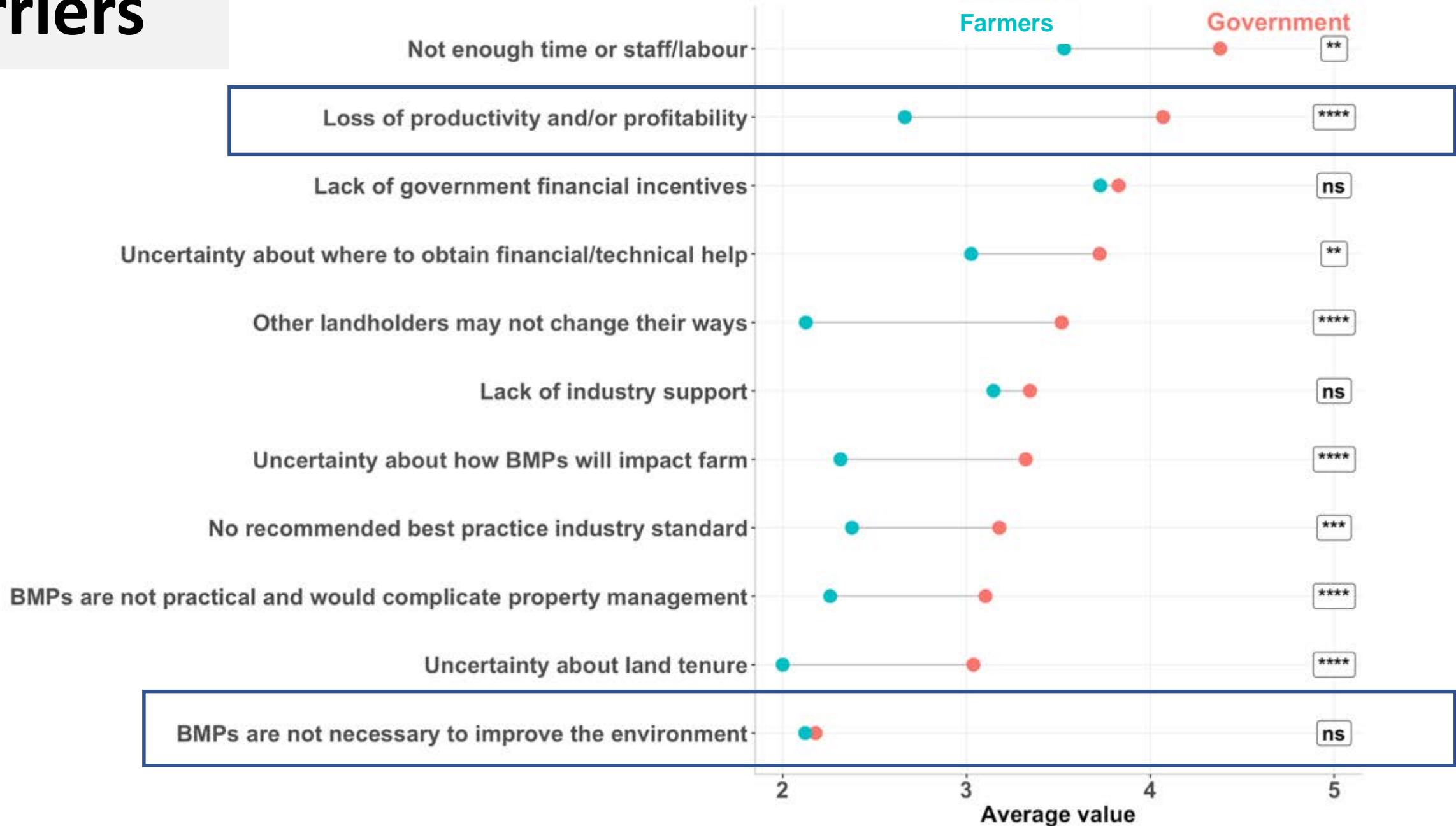
On riparian fencing:
Government staff = Farmers

On management plans:
Government staff > Farmers

On stream crossing improvements:
Farmers > Government staff

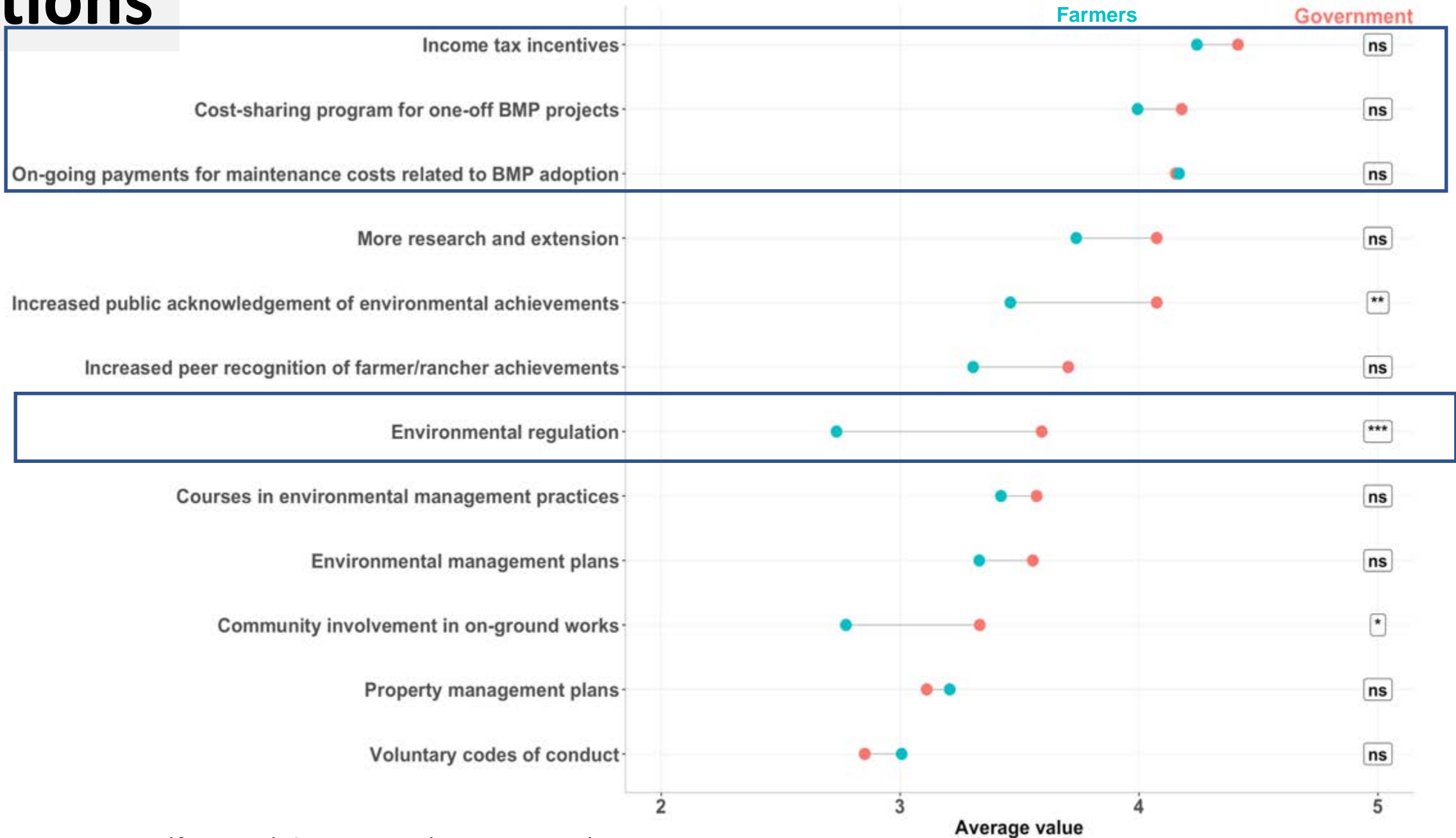


Barriers



Sample size: 154 to 160 (farmers) & 28 to 29 (government)

Solutions



Sample size: 143 to 157 (farmers) & 27 to 28 (government)

Lessons learned

- **Diverse motivations matter**

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- **Farmers prefer BMPs with tangible benefits (some exceptions)**

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- **Many perceived barriers less important to farmers compared to government staff**

Lessons learned

- Diverse motivations matter
- Farmers prefer BMPs with tangible benefits (some exceptions)
- Many perceived barriers scored lower by farmers compared to government staff
- **Financial solutions most popular**