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a revealed approach using register, spatial and contract data**

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## **Landowner participation in forest conservation programs: A revealed approach using register, spatial and contract data**

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Incentive based voluntary conservation programs have gained prominence as a regulation mechanism to protect ecosystem services on private land either through the set-aside of land for reserves or by altering land management practices. A crucial challenge for voluntary approaches is however to ensure private landowner involvement and get the ecosystem services delivered where they are most demanded. To promote participation and ensure an instrumental design of voluntary initiatives that is coherent with this, there is a need to understand the motivations of the landowners and determinants of their participation choice. We investigate landowners' willingness to participate in protecting historical oak scrub sites in Denmark. Combining contract data of the landowners' actual choices, GIS information on area specific characteristics and detailed individual level register data, we develop and implement a framework for analyzing revealed choice of private landowners' in voluntary conservation programs. We find that both the physical characteristics of the property and the sociodemographic characteristics of landowner in question matter, along with the information flow provided from the regulator. Results provide impetus into the design of future conservation policies, in terms of how, to whom and where to target efforts.