

The river Dalälven flows through the biosphere reserve. The transition zone from the open water of the river to the forest has historically been characterized by regularly flooded meadows used for haying and grazing. The river together with the meadows made them an invaluable resource for the local dwellers and created conditions for high biodiversity. Today, the traditional use of the floodplain meadows has halted and the formerly open landscape is either overgrown or about to become overgrown, which ultimately has led to a loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services, such as water regulation, the production of fodder and recreational values.

Activities aiming to restore the meadows' ecosystem services had already been initiated in the biosphere reserve but a "uniting power" that could bring projects and actors together and coordinate them was missing. The County Administrative Board had carried out ecological inventories identifying which land areas could be suitable for restoration and major land-owners were searching for farmers with animals that could graze the meadows. With this in mind, the biosphere organization applied for, and was granted, LEADER project funding for a three- year project and hired a project leader. The purpose of the project was to coordinate and establish contacts between the different activities and actors to realize the potential synergies of ecosystem services gained from restoring the meadows. In other words, the project aimed to integrate several of the SDGs.

The project managed to establish collaborations between the County Administrative Board, landowners and young entrepreneurs with grazing animals. It also made visible the economic, social and ecological values that are connected to actively managed floodplain meadows, such as an increase in biological diversity, an open landscape attractive for tourists and local dwellers, cultural history, a decrease in mosquitoes, local entrepreneurship and so forth. Moreover, the project helped to increase the general awareness of the multiple benefits of the floodplain meadows. As a direct result 170 ha land has been restored and is again actively grazed and long-term management agreements have been secured. Although the project was finished in 2015, the network established during the project lives on. For example, the largest landowner in the area works together with entrepreneurs that hold grazing animals. They have continued collaboration and have prepared and fenced more land for grazing.