

FreshWater Insights 2013

Public Opinion in British Columbia



Summary Overview
Released February 2014



MCALLISTER
opinion research

*Nobody started it, nobody is going to stop
it. It will talk as long as it wants, this rain.
As long as it talks I am going to listen.*

--Thomas Merton



Research Methodology

- Online poll with a sample of **n=1,017** BC residents.
- Margin of error is **±3.1%** nineteen times out of twenty.
- Survey sample was recruited from web panels and email invitation May 25-29, 2013.
- Weights were computed according to 2013 census estimates on region, gender and age.
- A rich media online research platform “ReckonApp” was used to manage respondent fatigue and encourage a high level of engagement during the survey.

1. How much do you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements?

Adopting
STRICTER rules
for protecting
our fresh water
will HARM our
economy.

Fresh water is a
public resource
and nobody
should be able
to own it.

A company that
pays for its
water should be
able to do
whatever it
wants with that
water.

Fresh water is
our most
precious
resource.

Strongly agree



Somewhat agree



Neutral



Somewhat disagree



Strongly disagree



Next >>

100%



Big Picture

What matters to British Columbians?

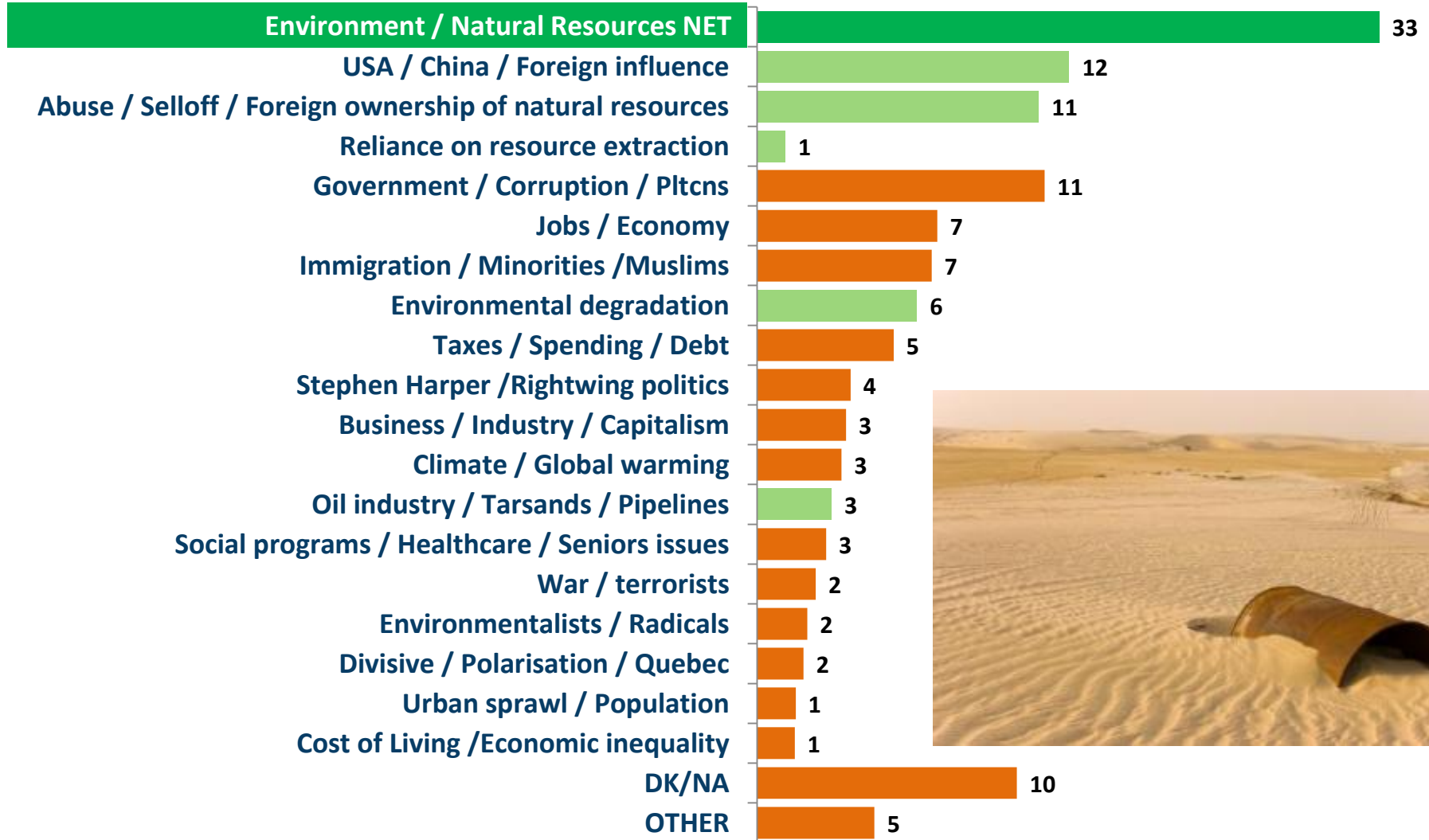
Pride in British Columbia

I'd like to start by asking you about British Columbia's strengths. When you think about all the things that make you **PROUD** to live in BC, what comes to mind first? **UNAIDED.**



Biggest threat to prosperity?

What is the biggest THREAT to Canada's long-term prosperity as a nation? *UNAIDED.*



The Power of Water

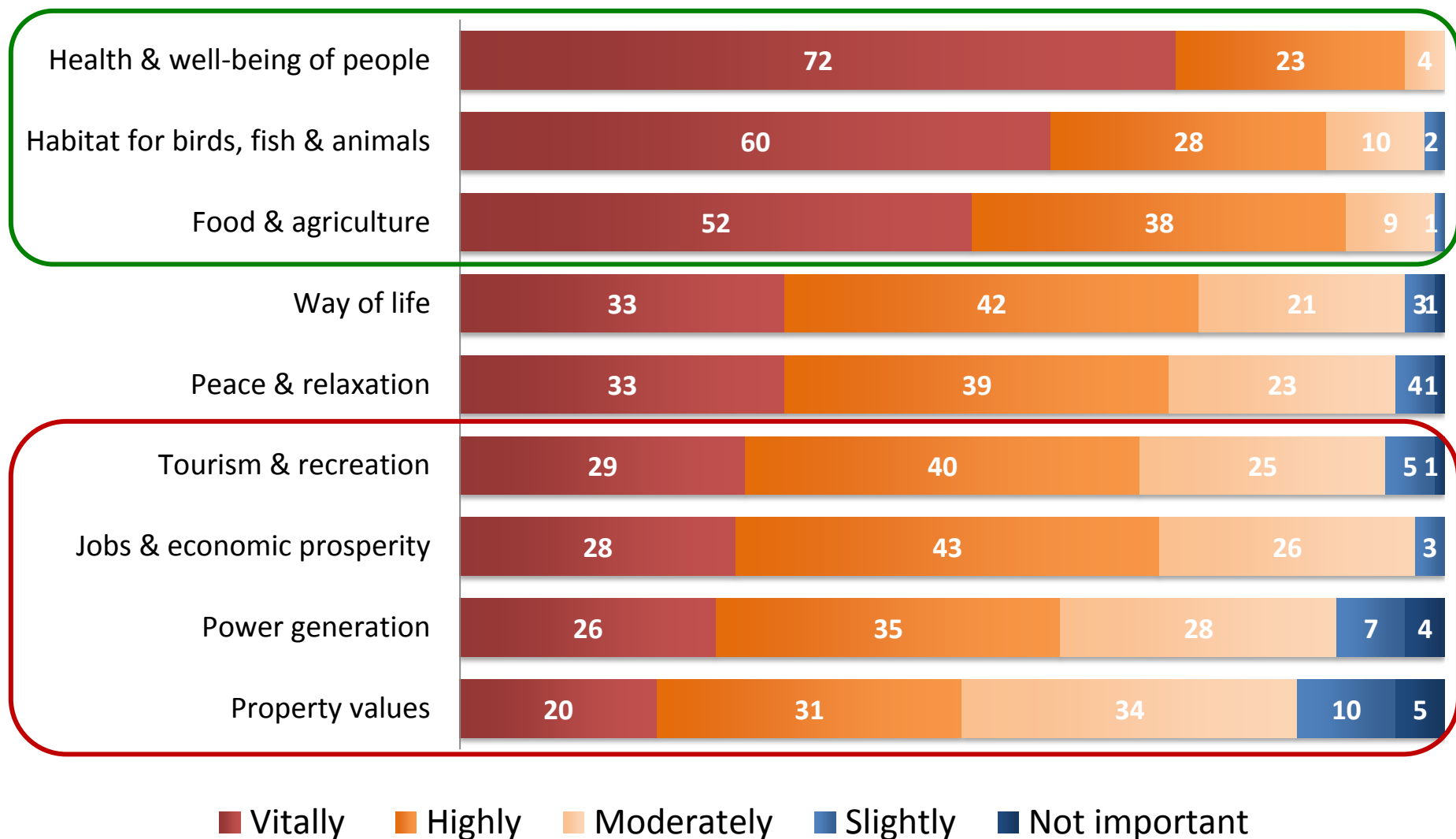
Canada's Most Precious "Natural Resource"

What do you consider to be your Canada's most precious NATURAL RESOURCE? **UNAIDED.**



Water is life, growth & prosperity

In your view, how IMPORTANT is the quality and abundance of fresh water in your region to...



Freshwater priorities

Which of these statements about the managing of the USE OF WATER during shortages do you most AGREE with?

Protecting the health of natural ecosystems and the food chain should be given priority, even at the risk of slowing down economic growth

84

ECONOMIC development should be given priority, even if plants, fish and wildlife suffer to some extent

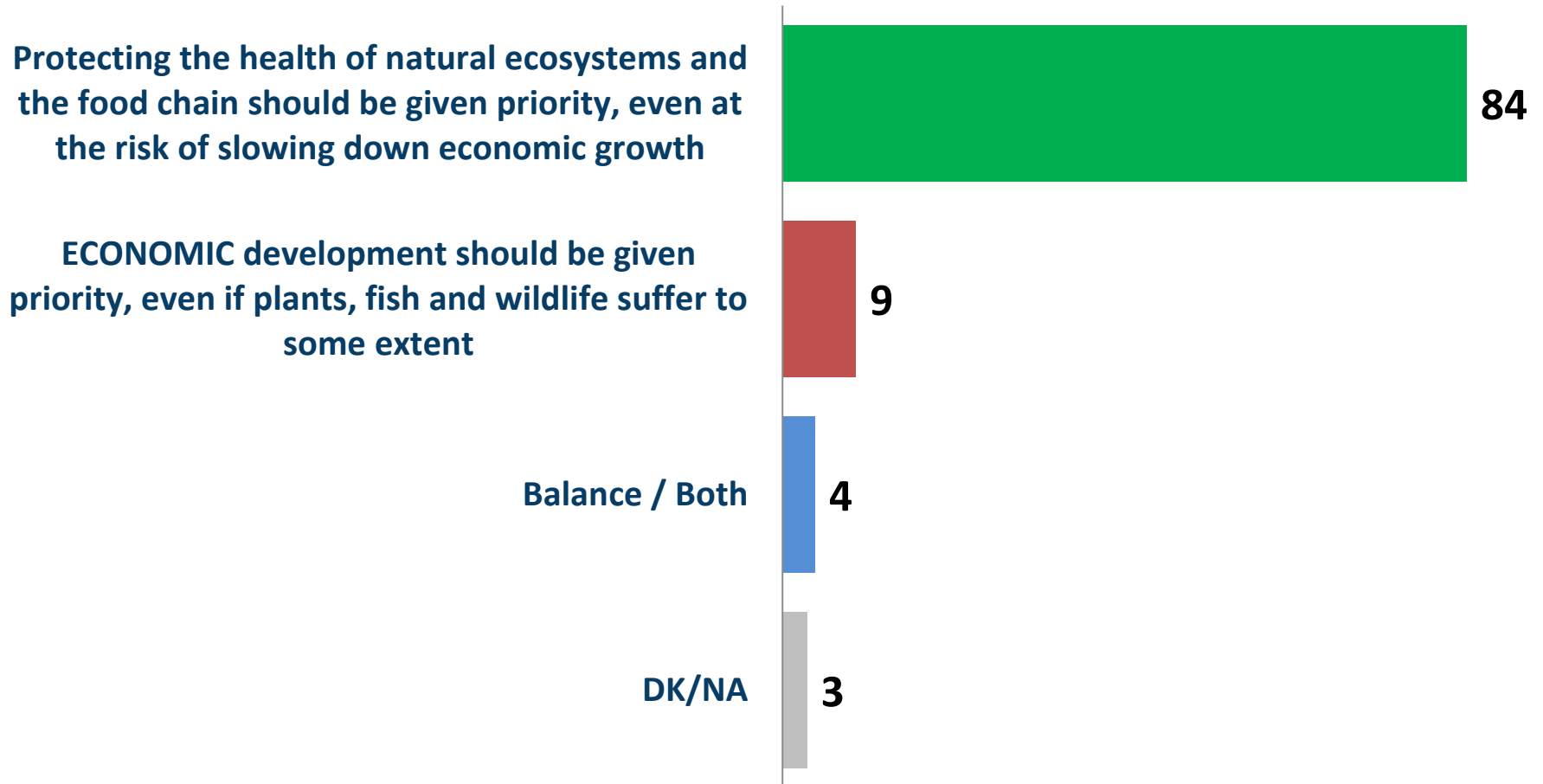
9

Balance / Both

4

DK/NA

3



Water Is Shared Values

Please say if you AGREE or DISAGREE with the statements below.

No matter the ideology of government, the state of the economy, or the laws of the day, we will always need water.



Fresh water is a public resource and nobody should be able to own it.



Fresh water is our most precious resource.



Fresh clean water is a legacy to pass on to our children

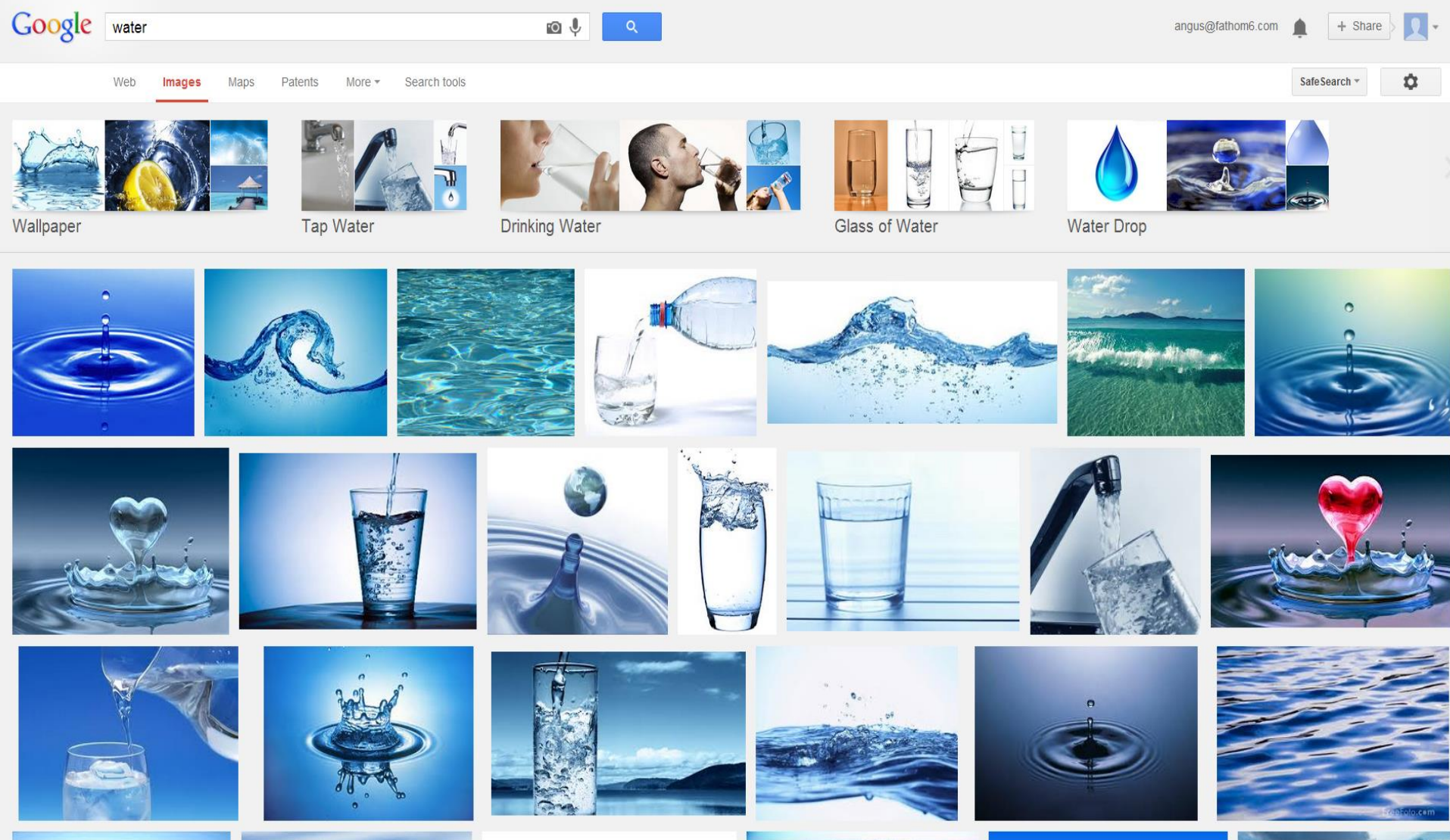


■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree



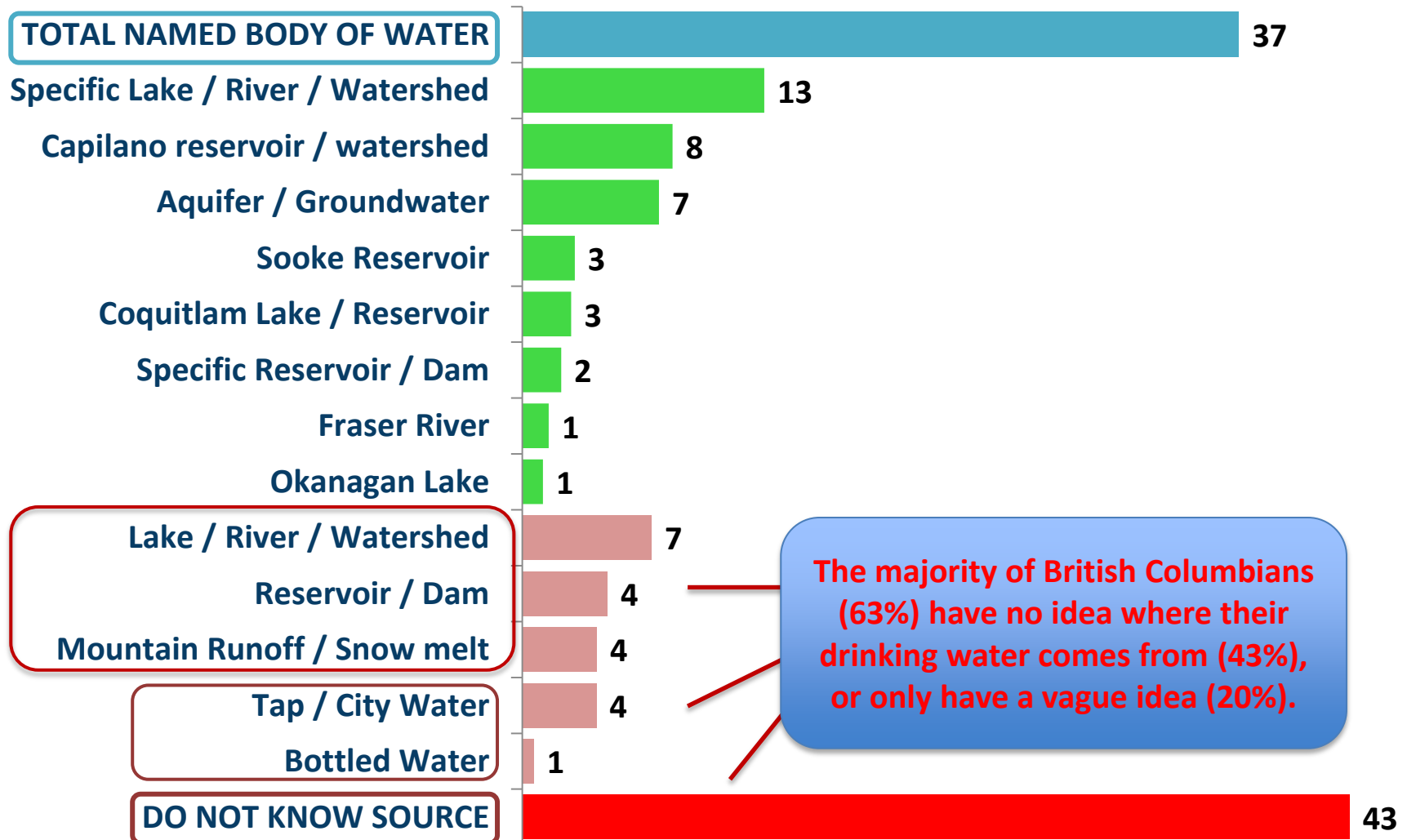
But water “as place” is poorly communicated

Please name the primary source of your community drinking water. **UNAIDED.**



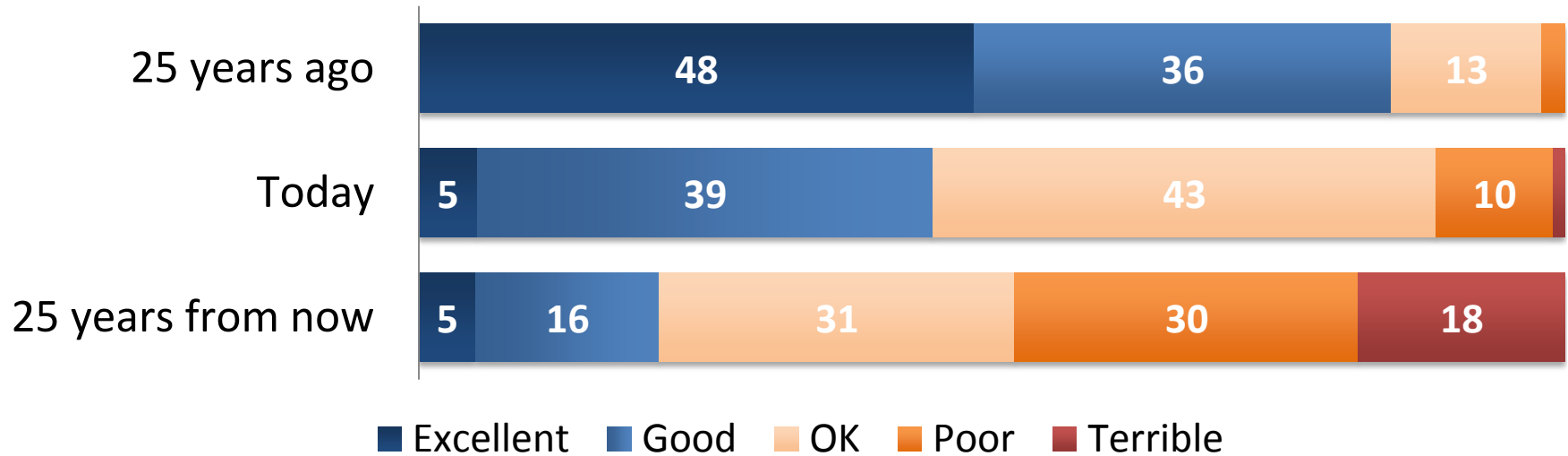
Knowledge of source of drinking water

Please name the primary source of your community's drinking water. **UNAIDED.**



Perceptions of freshwater

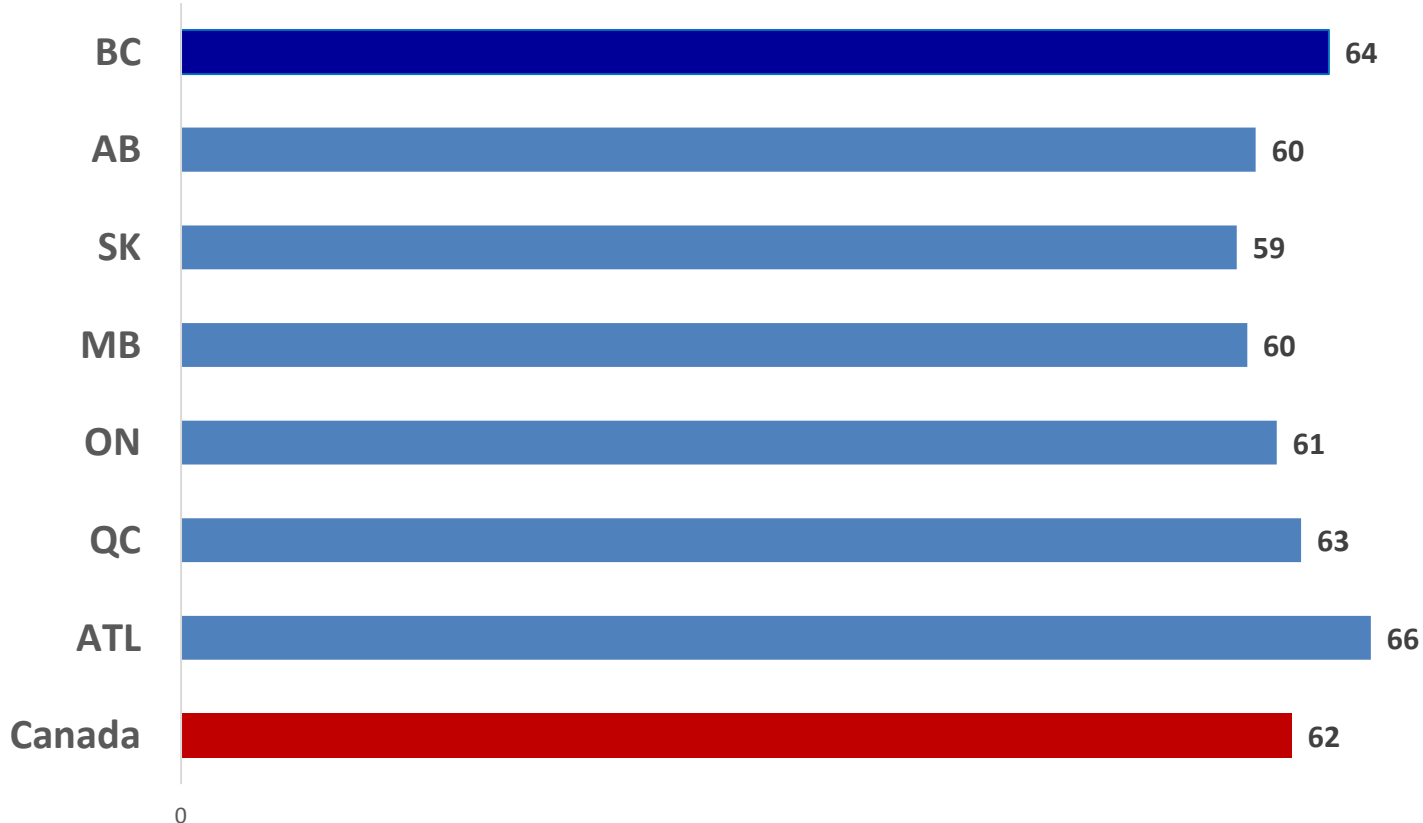
How would you rate the overall condition of lakes, rivers and streams in your community?



Strict Freshwater Protection

In your opinion, what proportion of lakes, rivers, and streams in your province should be completely OFF-LIMITS to industrial, commercial, and urban development? Please provide a target percentage between 0 and 100 per cent. **UNAIDED.**

Mean % of Water Permanently Off-limits to Development

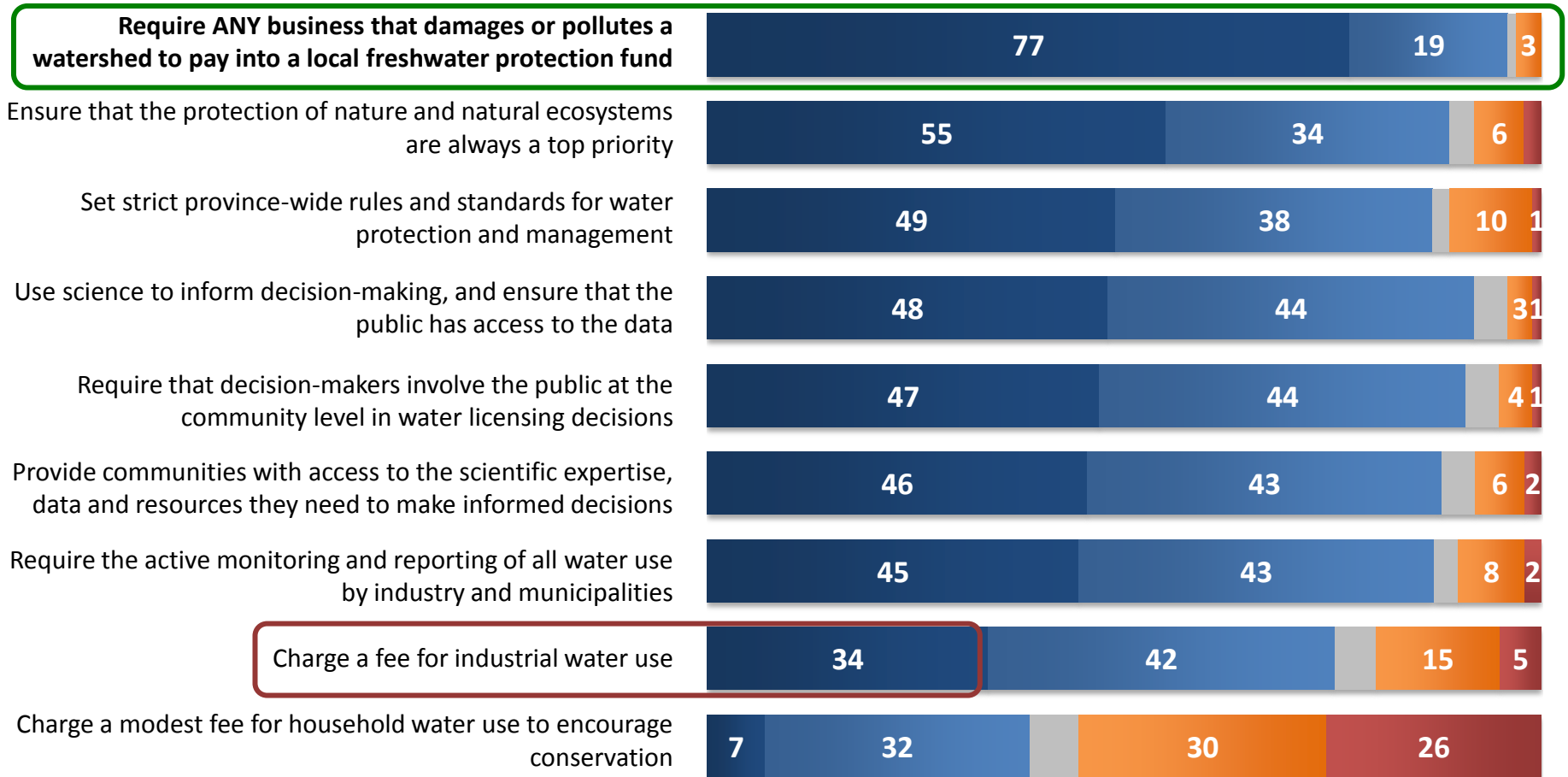


Freshwater Solutions

How British Columbians see
freshwater sustainability and policy
in the years to come

Strong support for strict rules & enforcement

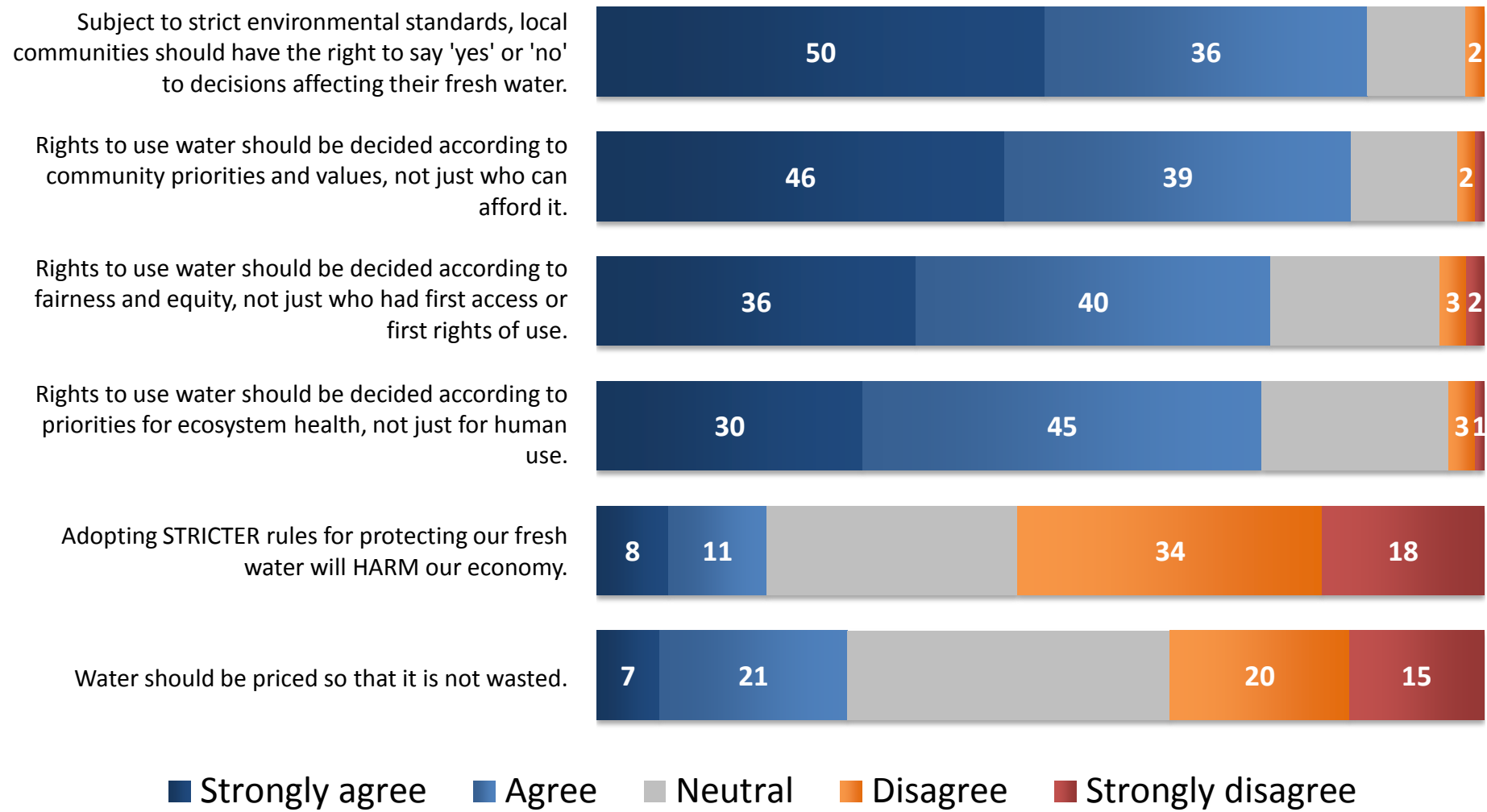
There are various ways in which governments could update the rules for protecting and managing fresh water. Please say how much you FAVOUR or OPPOSE each of the following proposals.



■ Strongly favour ■ Somewhat favour ■ Unsure ■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose

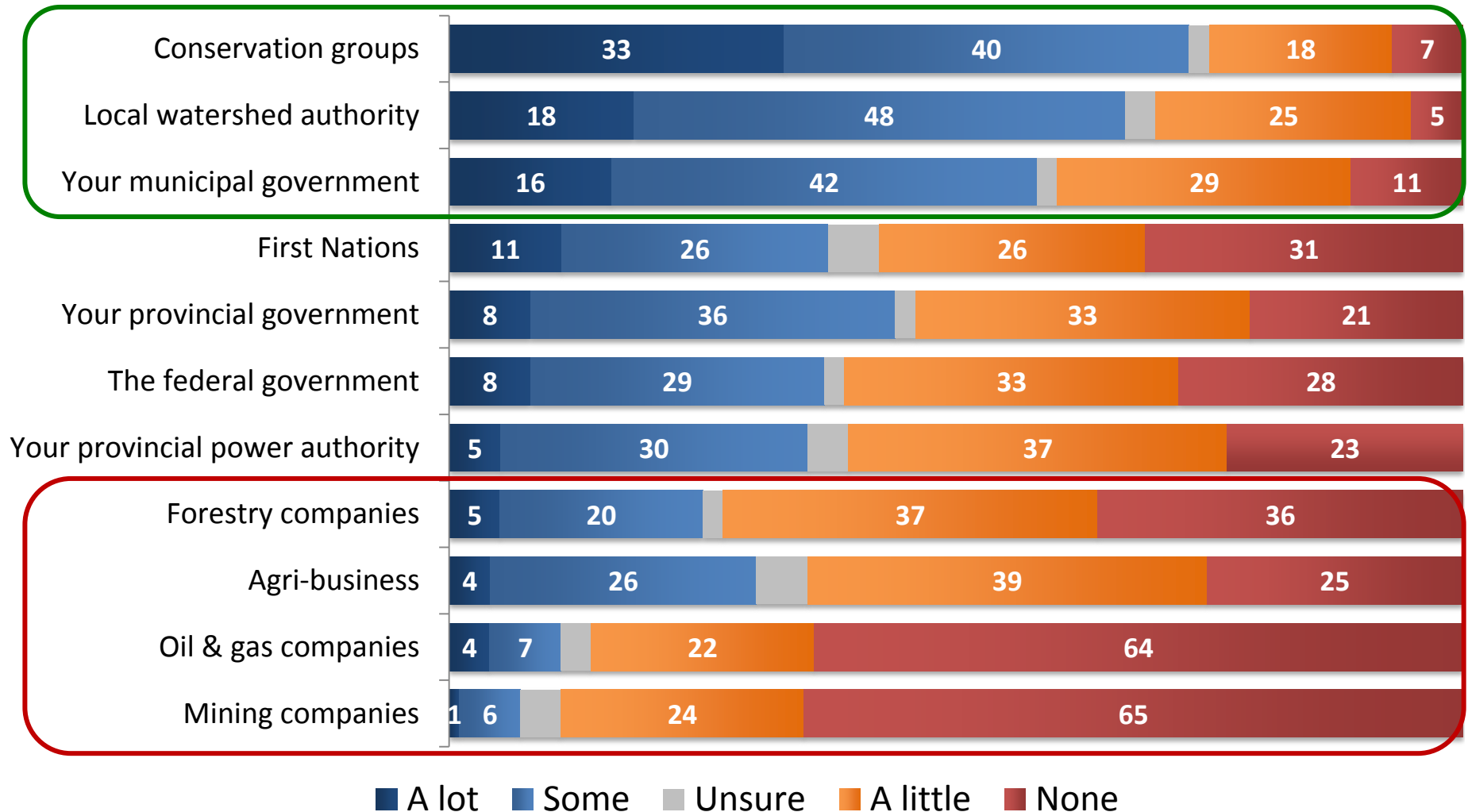
Strong support for ecosystem health & local community control as priorities; ambivalence around water pricing

Please say if you AGREE or DISAGREE with the statements below.



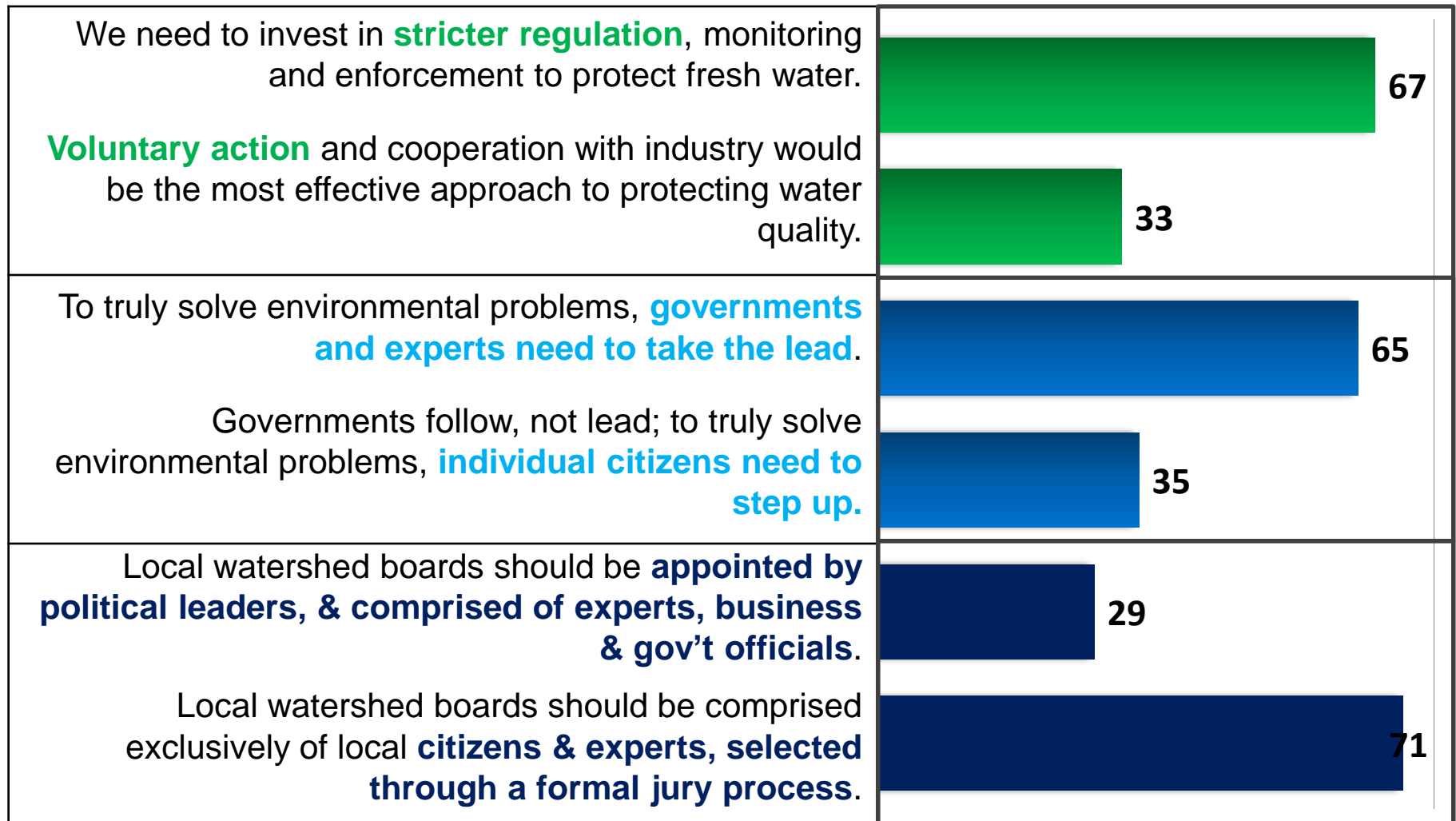
Confidence in the Players

How much CONFIDENCE do you have in each of the following players to act in the PUBLIC INTEREST when it comes to protecting fresh water?



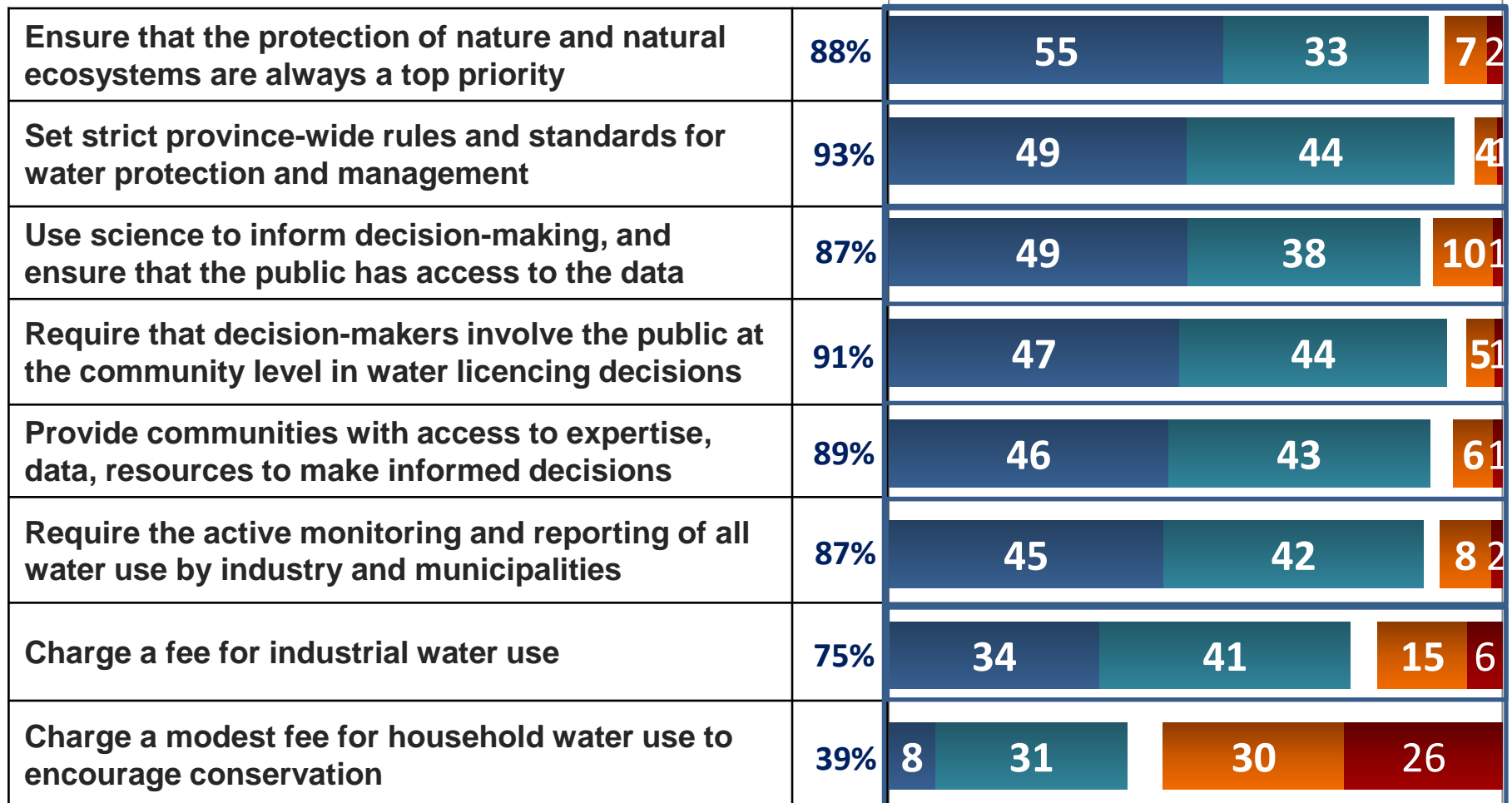
Strong support for local citizen water boards when empowered by regulation & expertise

Which of the following statements comes closest to your own view? (%)



Support for New Water Act: Updating rules for protecting & managing water

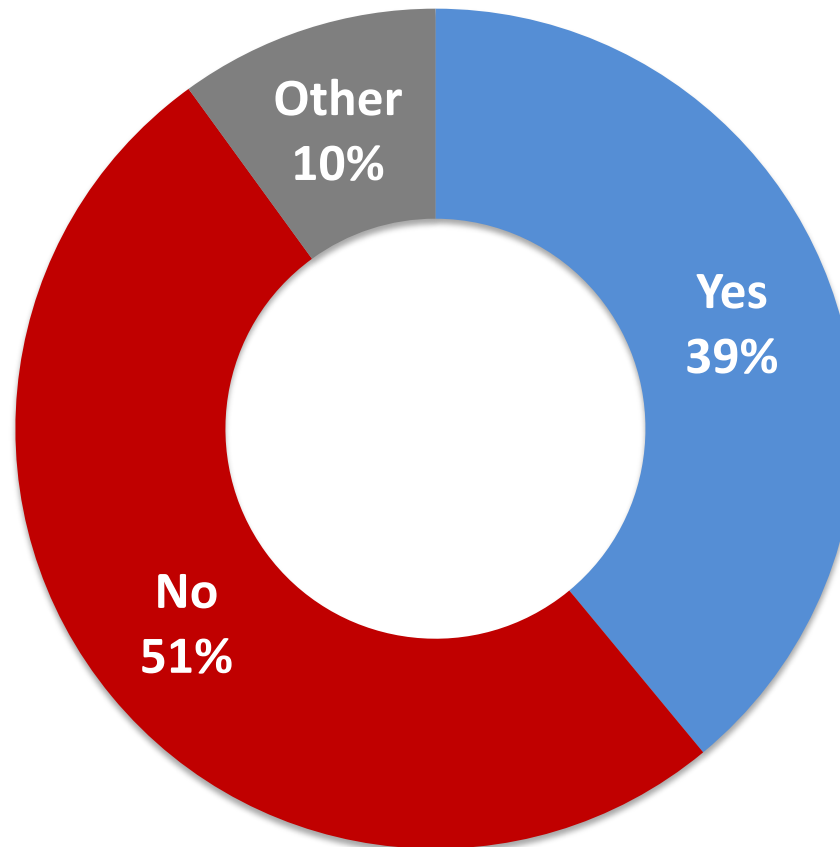
Please say much would you FAVOUR or OPPOSE each of the following... (%)



Strongly favour
 Somewhat favour
 Somewhat oppose
 Strongly oppose

Respondent profile

Do you consider yourself an environmentalist?



Three Takeaways

1. British Columbians view water as our most precious natural resource; water connects to prosperity, quality of life and sense of “home”.
2. Strong support for local community control, subject to strict environmental standards.
3. Federal & provincial governments expected to enforce rules and provide expertise.