



# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL CLIMATE EMERGENCY SURVEY

## FINDINGS

May 2020

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) Climate Emergency Survey offers insights regarding the perspectives of First Nations on the climate emergency and related impacts, concerns, barriers and priorities. The data gained from this survey will be used to inform the development of a draft First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

The findings may also be useful for those who are developing provincial and federal plans and policy related to climate change adaptation and mitigation, and any other organizations that work in this space in BC and wish to respect and work with the Indigenous population. However, this survey does not replace the need for First Nations to be full participants in the development of plans and policies and should be used to inform, not to replace meaningful participation by First Nations in BC in all current and future processes.

The survey was hosted online from August to September 2019, and the target audience was all First Nation communities and Tribal Councils in British Columbia, including the Chiefs, Elders, Youth, Women, staff and community members. The responses came from 139 First Nations and Tribal Councils across all eight regions of British Columbia. A total of 244 people began the questionnaire of which 221 completed it, including 54 Chiefs and Councillors, 9 technicians, 10 elders, 108 members and 40 responses from staff members working for First Nations.

This summary provides an overview of the data collection and major findings of the FNLC Climate Change Survey. The complete findings of the survey can be found in the main body of this report.

### **Major Findings:**

#### **1. Perspectives on severe weather events**

The vast majority of the survey respondents believe that severe and unusual weather events are caused by human activities (83%), a small number of respondents disagree (6%), and about 11% are not sure. Respondents in agreement based their opinions on the fact that there is clear scientific evidence that greenhouse gas emissions have been increasing exponentially in recent decades and believe it is due to the excessive use of fossil fuel, livestock pollution and over population.

One of the most visible consequences of a warming world is an increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, and associated events. The main weather events identified by respondents depended largely on the region. Warmer winters, heat waves, wildfire, warming rivers or lakes (and ocean), and flooding were the top five events described overall.

#### **2. Impacts to territories, cultures and health**

Respondents identified impacts to First Nations from severe weather events and climate change; nearly 50% of participants identified impacts to sacred and cultural sites due to either disappearance, damage or loss of access. The events causing these impacts included wind events, fires, floods, erosion, landslides and degradation of ecosystems.

Respondents identified plants and animals which have decreased as a result of climate change, with salmon, medicinal plants, land-based plants, and moose being the top four responses. Respondents found that there was an increase in non-traditional plants, animals and insects. Lastly, respondents cited that

there is an “ecosystem shift” creating anomalies in animals and plants, including migration routes and the loss of certain species.

Water quality and quantity impacts were noted: both a decrease in water quality and generally lower levels of water, although extreme weather events also cause drastic changes in water levels at certain times (e.g. flooding).

Participants were asked to identify health problems possibly associated with climate change; responses included stress/anxiety and respiratory disease. Stress and anxiety, according to the comments, could be linked to the loss of traditional foods and extreme weather events, and respiratory disease could be related to effects from wildfires and extreme heat events. Health Canada has identified seven categories of climate-related impacts, and the potential effects these can have on health and well-being. These include weather-related natural hazards (including population displacement) and air quality (including respiratory disease, heart attacks, stroke and cancer).

### **3. Main Priorities for First Nations**

The responses from First Nations identified five top priorities for climate change response, in order of importance:

- i. Integration of traditional knowledge into strategies
- ii. Developing action plans
- iii. Carbon reduction
- iv. Strengthening community capacity to work on climate actions, and
- v. Education programs

### **4. Barriers and Concerns in First Nations’ communities**

The largest barrier identified is the lack of sufficient funding or resources to undertake climate actions. Respondents also cited a lack of capacity to deal with climate change in concurrence with addressing other, more immediate issues in communities that need to take priority. A lack of consultation with First Nations by government in regard to developing climate policies and laws, and weak government-to-government relationships were also identified as obstacles to implementing climate action in communities.

The main concerns identified included loss of wildlife, loss of traditional food, berries and medicines, and declining salmon and other fish, among other issues. Respondents also mentioned the loss of First Nations ways of life and the lack of support from all levels of government to collaborate with First Nations communities.

### **5. Energy Sources in First Nations’ communities**

A range of energy sources were identified, with a majority relying upon hydroelectric/run-of-river power sources, followed by natural gas and then a range of other sources such as diesel, biomass, geothermal, solar, wind and coal. Communities were most interested in developing solar, wind and run-of-river energy generation to increase their access to renewable energy.

## 6. Climate Actions

The majority of respondents noted that their community either does not have a climate action plan, or they were unaware of such a plan. They noted that their community lacks the funds to develop an action plan and many are searching for funds. A small number of communities now have a climate change coordinator, which is in marked contrast to communities who do not have staff working on climate change, and who noted the lack of capacity to develop plans. A very small number of communities have a renewable energy plan which highlights the need for major investments to support the transition to renewable energy in First Nations' communities.

Respondents were asked about what climate change mitigation and adaptation actions have been undertaken in their community. Education and awareness-raising was the most common mitigation action, followed by consuming less and producing less garbage. With respect to adaptation actions, respondents identified emergency management or response programs, cultural revival of traditional practices, and environmental monitoring programs as the most common, followed by agriculture, food security and community gardens.

## 7. First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Respondents identified a number of priorities and keywords for the vision statement in the First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. The comments reinforced the priorities identified, and in particular noted that safeguarding Rights and Title were always important, and salmon and food security were critical. The top priorities identified in order of importance were:

- I. Protection of land, water and cultural identity
- II. Traditional knowledge
- III. Rights and Title
- IV. Clean energy

Goals for the First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan were also identified and prioritized. The top priorities in order of importance were:

- I. Inherent Aboriginal Title, Rights and Treaty Rights are recognized, respected and affirmed
- II. Traditional knowledge informs adaptation planning
- III. Sufficient resources are in place to adapt to climate change impacts
- IV. Renewable energy as a main source of electricity
- V. Communities are enabled to be leaders in the transition to a green economy
- VI. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emission are reduced

## 8. Participation in Federal or Provincial Initiatives

Only 10% of respondents believed that their community had been consulted by the Federal or Provincial Governments on climate change initiatives (with about 20% noting that they had not been *meaningfully* consulted and a large proportion unsure). Respondents also noted that the lack of tangible results from engagement (in addition with the deficiency of funding) means "it isn't worth it".

These results point to a systemic problem with the governments' forms and depth of engagement (and capacity from communities to engage) to date, and provide further rationale for why a First Nations

Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan are needed at this time to inform provincial and federal decision makers, planners, and others about First Nations perspectives, priorities and concerns in BC.

# 1. Introduction

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## Context

Climate change threatens the security and way of life of Indigenous peoples throughout Canada and the world. Canada is warming twice that the global average. Scientific evidence tells us that taking urgent action now and in the immediate future is the only way to avoid a world that warms to a point that our world as we know it is threatened.

Impacts of a warming climate are already affecting First Nations in BC, including unprecedented wildfires, flooding, erosion, and warming rivers and lakes. Many plant and animal species that are central to First Nations' ways of life are threatened. This in turn affects food security and the health of all First Nations peoples in BC. Developing robust responses to climate change is a critical component to keeping First Nations communities safe.

In February 2019 and March 2019, respectively, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) Chiefs Council and the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) Chiefs-in-Assembly passed resolutions directing the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) to work together to develop a First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

## Purpose

The purpose of the FNLC Climate Emergency Survey was to identify First Nations' perspectives on the climate emergency, and related impacts, concerns, barriers and priorities. The data gained from this survey will be used mainly to inform the development of a draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. The draft will be sent to all First Nation Chief & Councils for their review and community input prior to subsequent approval by Chiefs-in-Assemblies.

The findings of this survey may be also useful for those who are developing provincial and federal plans and policy related to climate change adaptation and mitigation with the inclusion of First Nations' perspectives, concerns, barriers and priorities. However, this survey does not replace the need for First Nations to be full participants in the development of plans and policies and should not be relied upon to replace meaningful participation by First Nations in BC in all current and future processes.

This survey was confidential, voluntary and anonymous; no names are included in this report.

## 2. Data Collection and Survey Delivery

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### 2.1 Delivery

The survey was designed for all First Nation communities and Tribal Councils, including the Chiefs, Elders, Youth, Women, staff and community members. It was delivered through SurveyMonkey and was promoted via email and social media. The survey was also available for completion at BCAFN events where assistance was offered to complete it.

### 2.2 Data Collection

The survey had a total of 244 people begin the questionnaire of which 221 completed it, including 54 Chiefs and Councillors, 9 technicians, 10 elders, 108 members and 40 responses under the category of “Others” (see **Table 2-1**). The majority of the *others* are staff members working for First Nations.

<i>Title or role</i>	<b>Responses</b>	
<i>Chief</i>	11.71%	26
<i>Councillor</i>	12.61%	28
<i>Technician</i>	4.05%	9
<i>Elder</i>	4.50%	10
<i>Member</i>	49.10%	108
<i>Others</i>	18.02%	40

Table 2-1. Responses by Title of Role in the community

The responses came from 139 First Nations and Tribal Councils across all eight regions of British Columbia, with Vancouver Island & Coast providing the most responses (26%), followed by Thompson Okanagan (19%). The region with the least response was the Northeast (0.1%). **Table 2-2** shows the geographic distribution of the survey responses.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Responses</b>	
<i>Vancouver island &amp; Coast</i>	26.4%	58
<i>Thompson Okanagan</i>	18.6%	41
<i>North Coast</i>	17.7%	40
<i>Cariboo</i>	13.6%	30
<i>Lower mainland Southwest</i>	13.6%	30
<i>Nechako</i>	7.3%	16
<i>Kootenay</i>	1.8%	4
<i>Northeast</i>	0.9%	2

Table 2-2. Responses by region in BC



### 3. Perspectives on Severe Weather Events and Impacts to Territories, Cultures, and Health

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#### 3.1. Perspectives on the causes of severe and unusual weather events

The climate is changing, and it is producing severe and unusual weather events such as extreme heat or cold, strong winds, unusual precipitation and so on. But are those weather events caused by human activities? **Figure 3-1** describes the responses, with the vast majority of the respondents believing that severe and unusual weather events are caused by human activities, a small number of respondents in disagreement, and about 1 in 10 were not sure.

Many respondents that believe that human activities cause severe weather events based their opinion on the clear scientific evidence that greenhouse gas emissions have been increasing exponentially over recent decades. They mentioned this incremental increase is due to issues such as the excessive use of fossil fuels, livestock pollution and over population.

Respondents also attributed unusual weather events to the accumulated impacts and destruction of ecosystems caused by industrial activities, large scale deforestation, poor land and water management practices, and the loss of connection between people and nature.

Respondents that do not believe or are not sure that human activities are a factor in severe weather events based their responses in the existence of cyclical climate changes or weather patterns that have not been well studied.

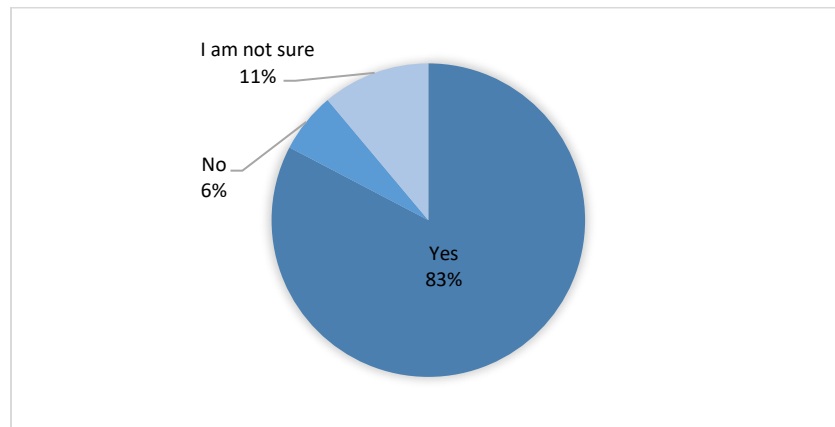


Figure 3-1. Belief if severe and unusual weather events are caused by human activity

#### 3.2. Weather Events and associated occurrences

One of the most visible consequences of a warming world is an increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, and associated occurrences such as wildfires, flood, droughts, coastal erosion, etc.

The main weather and associated events respondents have experienced in the last 30 years are described in **Figure 3-2**. Warmer winters are the most important weather event identified with 63% of the responses, follow by heat weaves, wildfire, warming rivers or lakes, flood, etc.

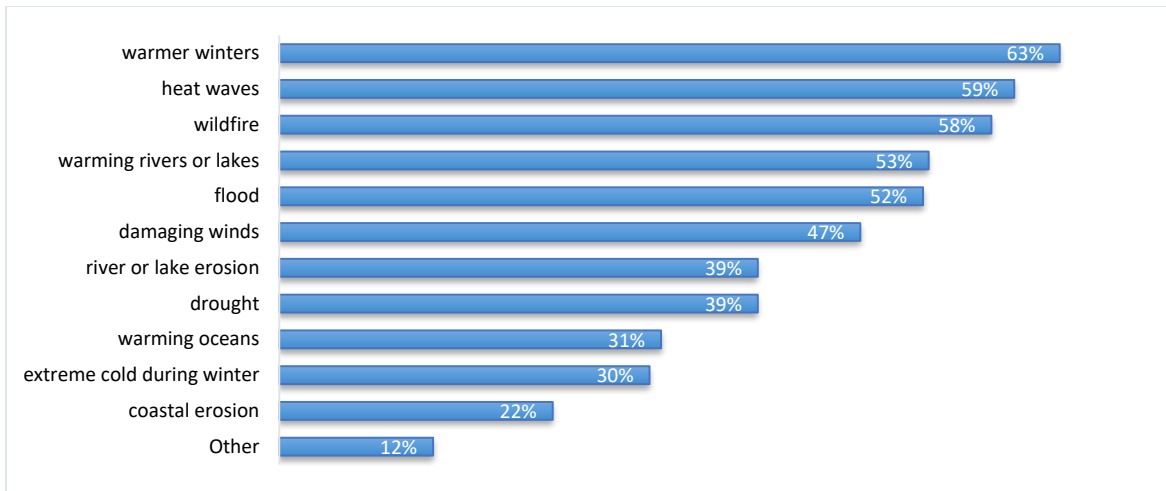


Figure 3-2. Weather events and associated occurrences identified by the respondents in the last 30 years

The weather events and related occurrences experienced over the last 30 years changes by region and is shown in **Figure 3-3**. For regions in BC's interior, the main event identified is *wildfires* (Nechako, Northeast, Cariboo, Thompson Okanagan), for coastal regions are *warmer winters* and *warmer oceans* (North Coast and Vancouver/Island Coast respectively), for the Kootenay region is *flood* and the Lower Mainland/Southwest region is *heatwaves*. For the Kootenay and the Northeast, the results should be used with caution due to the low number of overall responses.

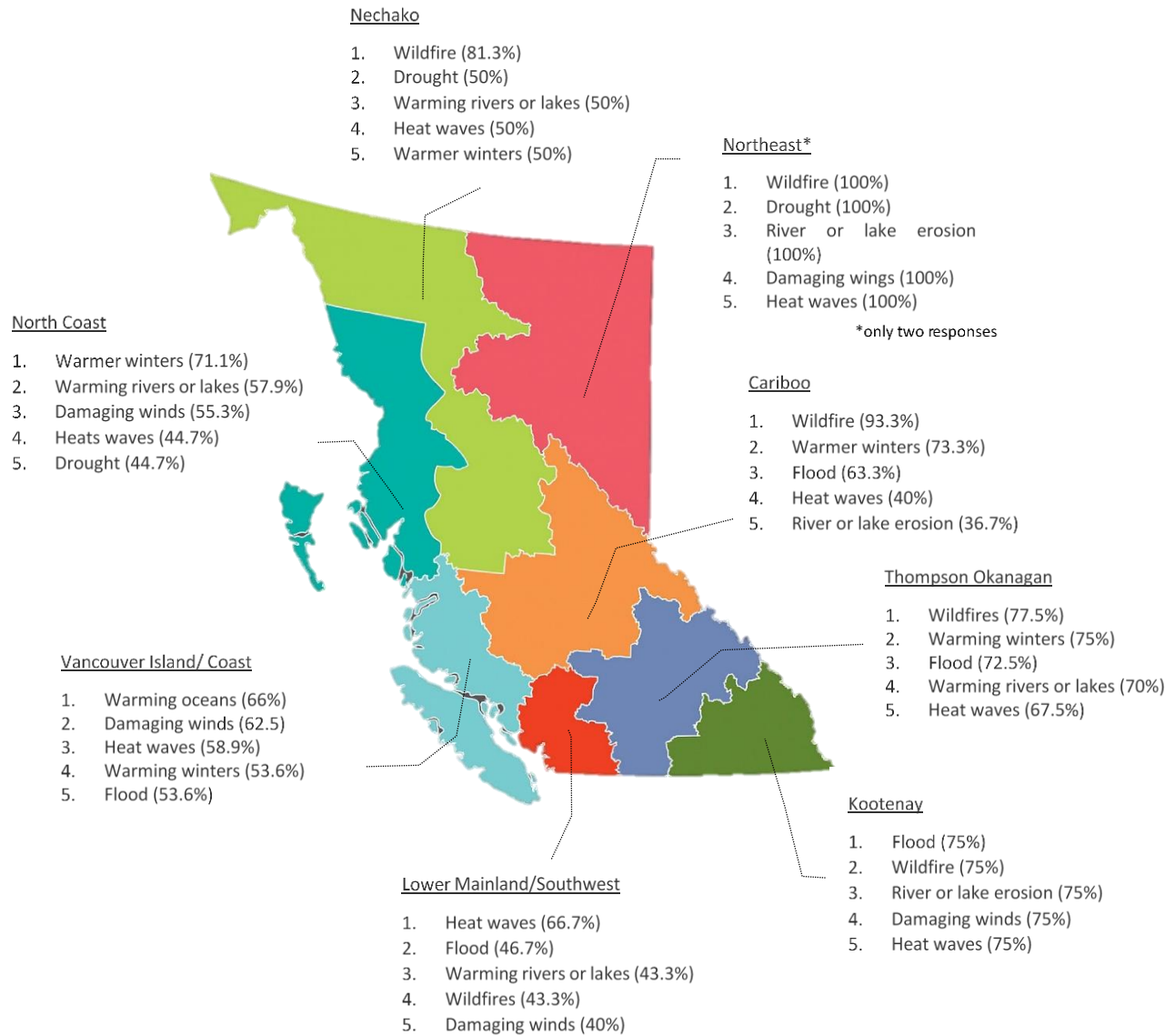


Figure 3-3. Weather events and associated occurrences by region

### 3.3. Impacts to sacred and cultural sites

**Table 3-1** describes the impacts of weather events on sacred and cultural sites. Almost half (45%) of the respondents cannot access their sacred and cultural sites for two reasons: they have disappeared or been damaged (27%) or they continue to exist but cannot be accessed anymore (17%). Approximately 9% believe that the weather events have had no effect, and a significant proportion of respondents do not know (30%).

When asked to describe how access was affected by weather events, a significant proportion of respondents identified erosion, flooding, and degradation of ecosystems. A small group of responses also identified human activities indirectly related to climate change. When asked to describe how weather

events have caused sacred and cultural sites to disappear, wind events, fires, floods, erosion and landslides were the most common responses.

<i>Answer Choices</i>	<i>Responses</i>	
<i>They have disappeared or been damaged</i>	27%	59
<i>They are still here, but we cannot access them anymore.</i>	17%	37
<i>They are not affected</i>	9%	20
<i>I don't know</i>	30%	64
<i>Other (please describe)</i>	16%	35

Table 3-1. Impacts to sacred and cultural sites

### 3.4. Climate Change Impacts on plants and animals

The impacts from climate change on plants and animals identified by the respondents are shown in the following figures. **Figure 3-4** describes the responses identifying decreases in plant and animal populations. Almost all respondents (88% of respondents) identified a reduction in salmon stocks as an impact of climate change. Significant numbers of respondents also identified reductions in plant populations (e.g., medicinal and land-based plants, 55% of respondents) and moose populations (53% of respondents). Deer (48% of respondents) and freshwater fish (47% of respondents) were also identified as having reduced populations.

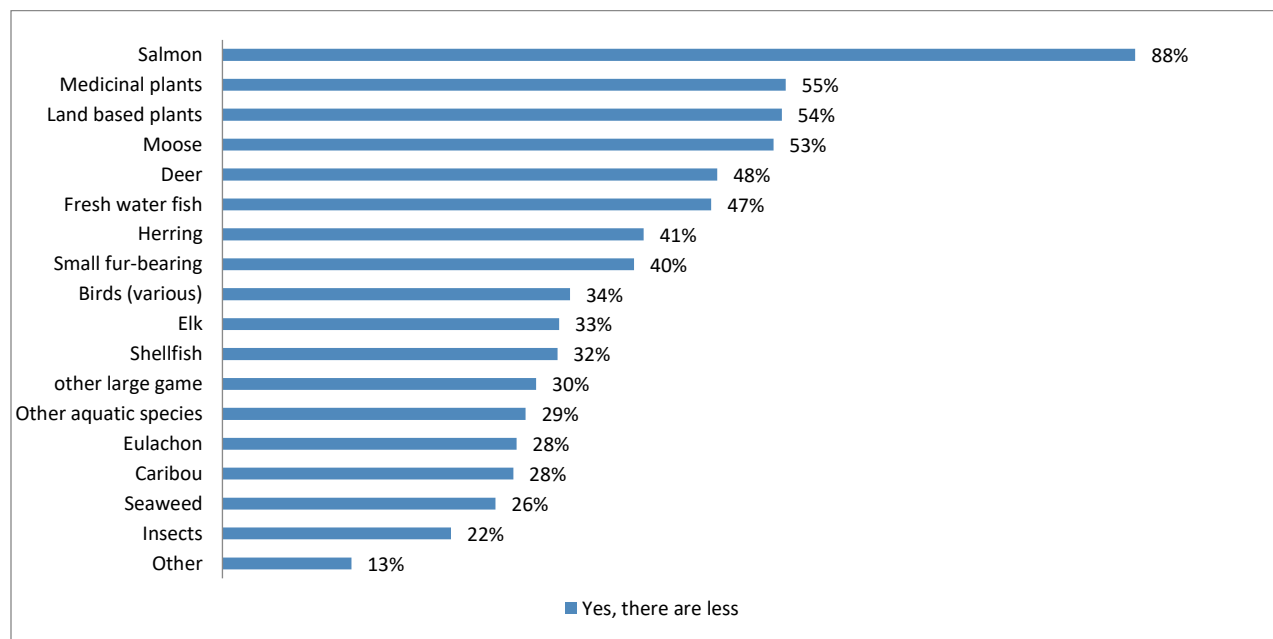


Figure 3-4. Reductions in plant and animal populations

**Figure 3-5** describes the responses identifying increases in some species, including insects, deer and birds. Respondents also noted that increases and decreases were linked to shifts and changes in the location and timing of certain species as a result of warming trends and other human activities. Of interest is that some species were cited as both increasing and decreasing. Additional research would be needed to

explore this further, but it could depend on regional variability and other factors (e.g. hunting, other human development activities).

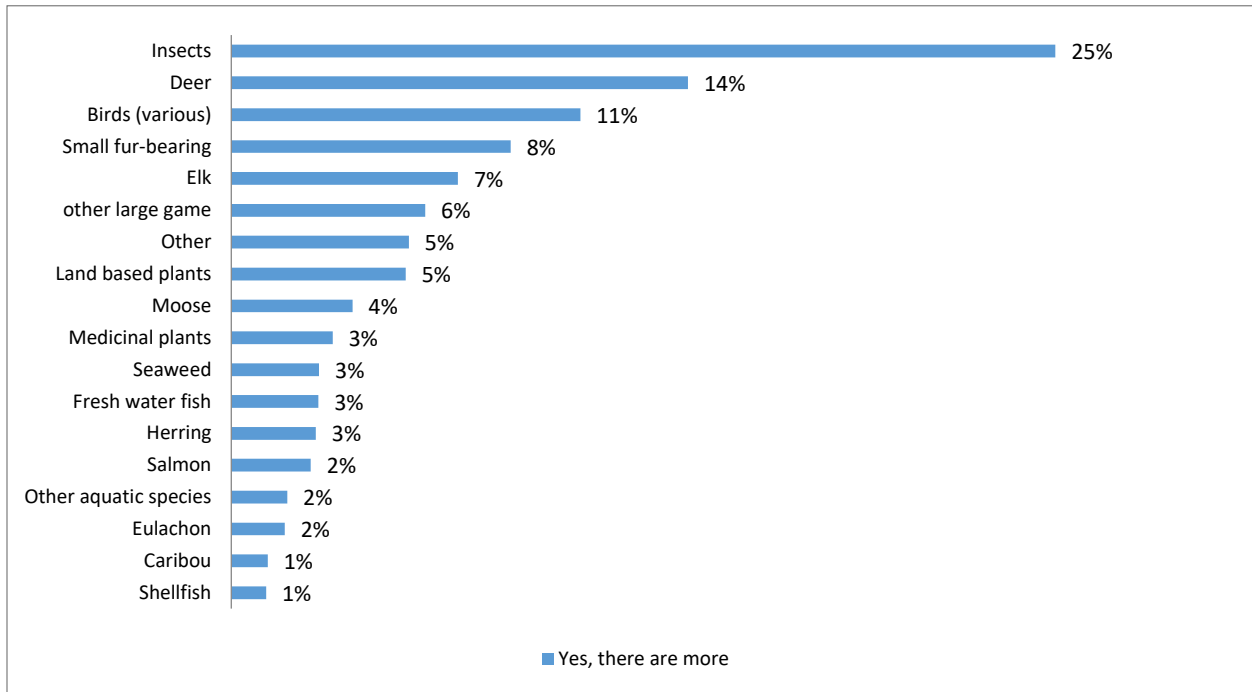


Figure 3-5. Increases in plant and animal populations.

In the comments, mentioned frequently were extreme weather events affecting animals and plants. An ecosystem shift is happening that creates anomalies in animals and plants (plants are dying and being replace by heat resistant weeds, birds are showing up earlier and Canada Goose are not leaving). Sources of food to sustain wildlife are in short supply and usual migration routes are being affected.

Also, respondents mentioned different human activities that are having impacts such as logging, hydroelectric, agriculture, mining, growing cities, etc.

### 3.5. Increase in non-traditional animals, invasive insects, plants or aquatic species

Similarly to some of the responses shown in **Figure 3-5**, **Table 3-2** suggests that there has been an increase in non-traditional animals, invasive insects, plants and/or aquatic species as a result of climate change. Respondents also mentioned that industry, tourism, and urbanization are strong factors leading to the increase of non-indigenous plant and animal species.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	70.5%	146
No	7.7%	16
I don't know	21.7%	45

Table 3-2. Believe of the increase in non-traditional animals, invasive insects, plants or aquatic species

### 3.6. Changes in the lakes, rivers and creeks

Participants were asked about which changes they have noticed in their lakes, rivers and creeks in their territory. Respondents noted low levels of water (rivers and lakes) and this was attributed to decreased precipitation (e.g. not enough snow in the mountains). Water levels were also an issue in terms of drastic changes. Creeks are drying up, and at other places/times there are extreme levels causing flooding.

Respondents cited changes to water quality as well. Their water is changing colour and they believe the water has more bacteria, increased turbidity and toxicity (attributed to more pollution in the water). Water temperature has been increasing (in rivers and lakes) and is affecting aquatic life, especially the survival of salmon.

### 3.7. Health problems possibly caused by warming events

Responses identifying health problems experienced in communities which may be the result of climate change related impacts are outlined in **Figure 3-6**. Two health problems were identified by a majority of respondents: stress or anxiety, and respiratory diseases. Further research would be required to confirm, but these could be linked to phenomenon already identified as having increased, e.g., extreme weather events (e.g. fire, flooding, wind) and changes in availability of traditional foods. Stress and anxiety are a logical outcome of extreme weather events causing displacement, loss of homes and livelihoods, and which threaten whole communities, as well as changes in the availability of traditional foods. Respiratory diseases could also be related to the smoke caused by wildfires, as well as extreme heat events, especially when the poor conditions of on-reserve housing are taken into account. A significant number of respondents identified other health problems as well (approximately 25% to 35%), including skin damage, cardiovascular disease, intestinal disorders, illness related to extreme cold and heat events, and disturbed immune function.

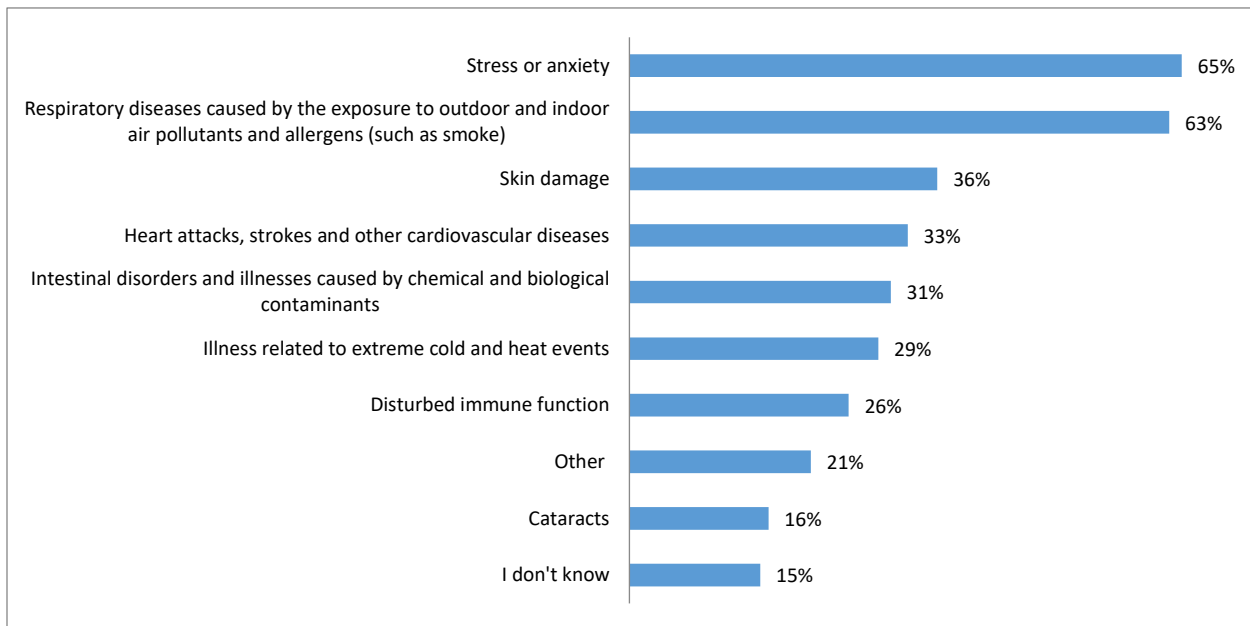


Figure 3-6. Health problems that may be the result of climate change related impacts

## 4. Priorities, Concerns and Barriers to Address Climate Change

### 4.1 Main priorities for First Nations communities regarding climate change

Participants were asked to rank priorities regarding climate change. As shown in **Figure 4-1**, there was no strong difference between what were identified as the “main” (e.g. top) priorities regarding climate change (the weighted value across all ten options ranged from 34.2% to 49.2%). However, the top five priorities identified were 1) integration of traditional knowledge into strategies, 2) developing action plans, 3) carbon reduction, 4) strengthening community capacity to work on climate actions, and 5) education programs.

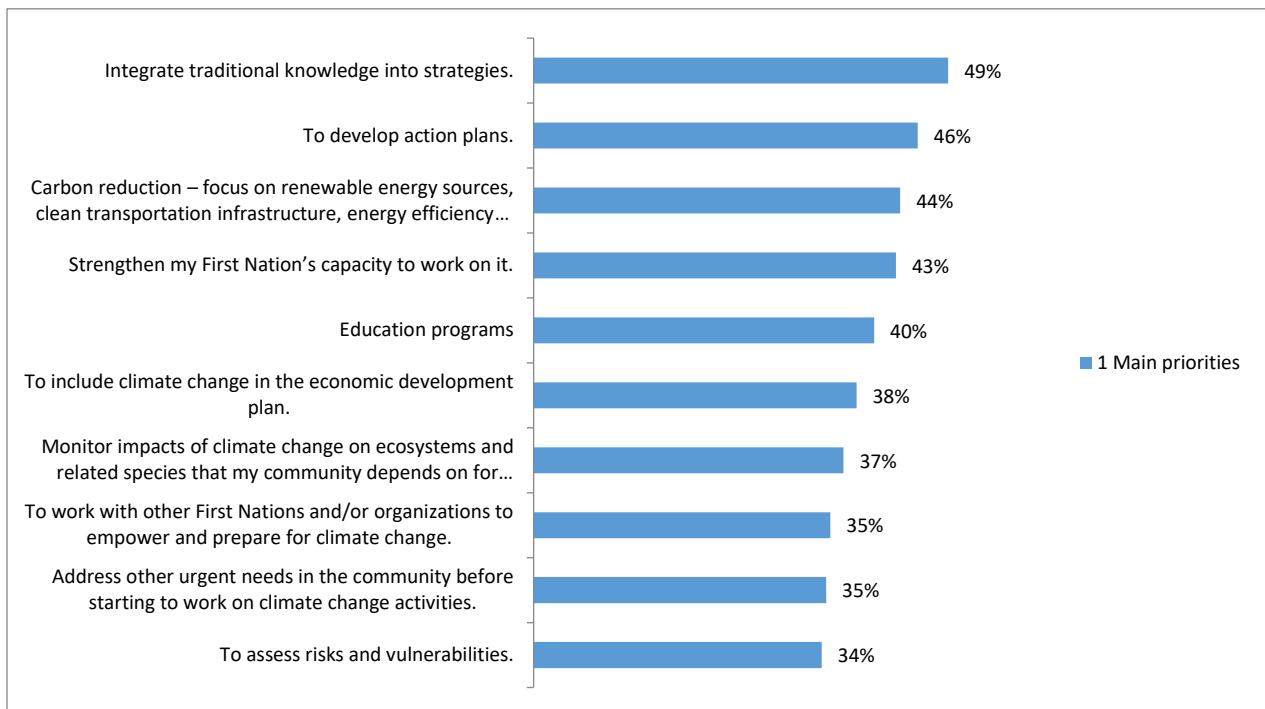


Figure 4-1. Main priorities in FN communities regarding climate change.

**Figure 4-2** describes what were identified as the second most important priority, with “addressing other urgent needs in the community before starting to work on climate activities” identified by 46% of respondents. Further research would be necessary to clarify those “other urgent needs” in communities.

The rest of the second most important priorities are 2) assessing risk and vulnerabilities, 3) monitoring impacts of climate change on ecosystems and implement conservation strategies, 4) working with other First Nations and/or organizations to empower and prepare for climate change, 5) include climate change in the economic development plan.

Other priorities mentioned frequently by respondents in the comments included the preservation of land and water, and treating water as an endangered resource. Also, to ensure the availability of traditional food was pointed out as a priority, and the development of energy efficiency projects.

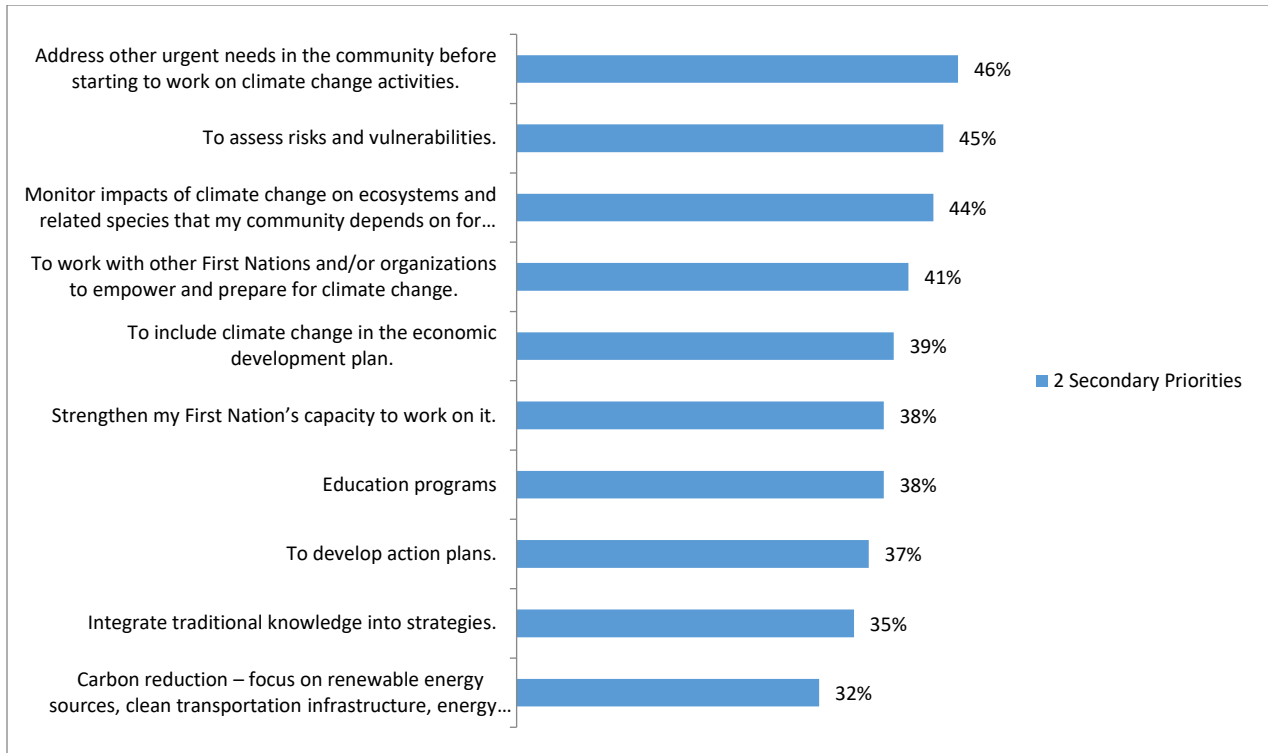


Figure 4-2 Second priorities in FN communities regarding climate change

#### 4.2 Priorities for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

Participants were asked about their priorities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and at different scales: in a community plan, a government plan, both or none. As shown in **Figure 4-3**, respondents identified all five options as priorities for greenhouse gas reduction plans, mainly at both scales (community plan and government plan). The first priority was education programs to reduce individual carbon footprints with 59% responses supporting plans at both scales and 22% in a community plan.

The next three options that were similarly supported by a vast majority of respondents are: “phase Out fossil fueled electricity (using clean energy)”; “improving forest carbon management”; and “energy efficient built environment”. The responses indicate that for the community scale, the most important priority is the creation of an energy efficient “built environment” through new net-zero energy buildings and homes and energy efficiency retrofit programs. For the government scale, relying on lower-emitting modes of transportation is considered the most important.



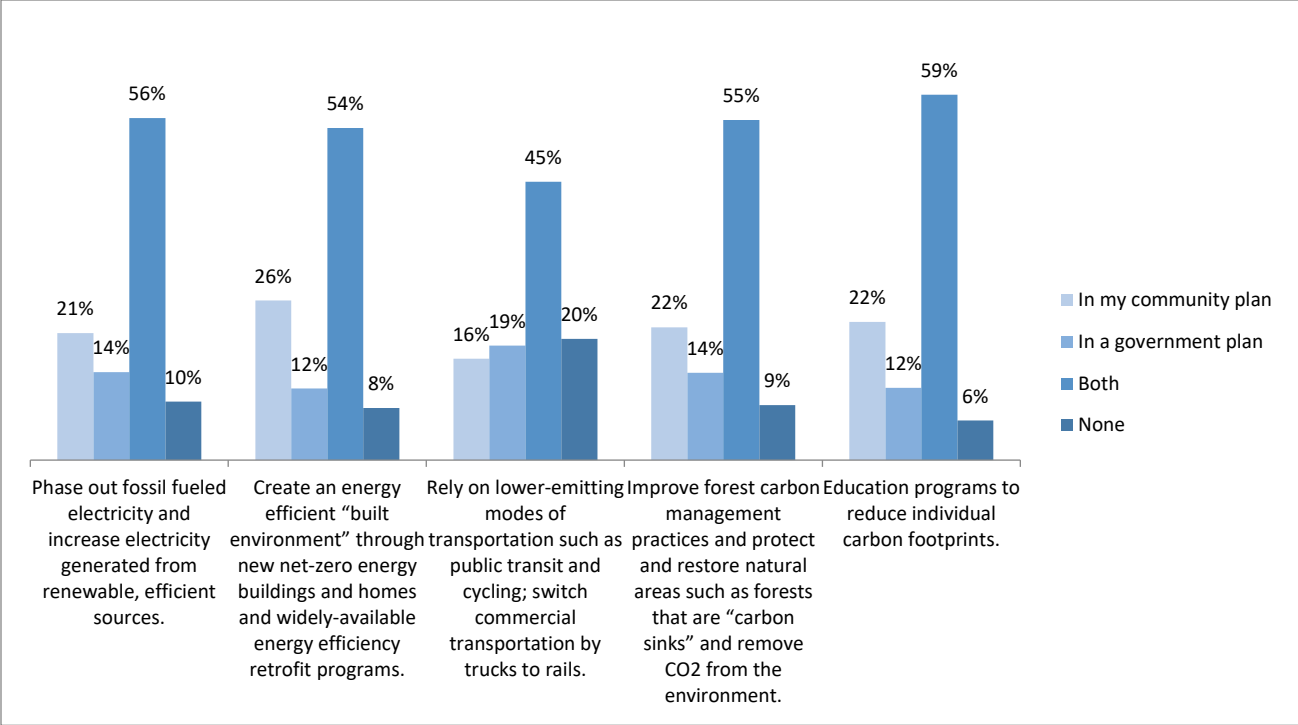


Figure 4-3. Priorities for a greenhouse gas reduction plan

4.3 **Barriers in First Nations' communities**

Figure 4-4 demonstrates the main barriers that a respondent's community faces when addressing climate change, ranked in order of importance. The largest barrier identified is the lack of sufficient funding or resources to undertake climate actions, followed by lack of interest of community members because there are other urgent needs. These highlight the chronic under-funding of programs with First Nations communities in BC.

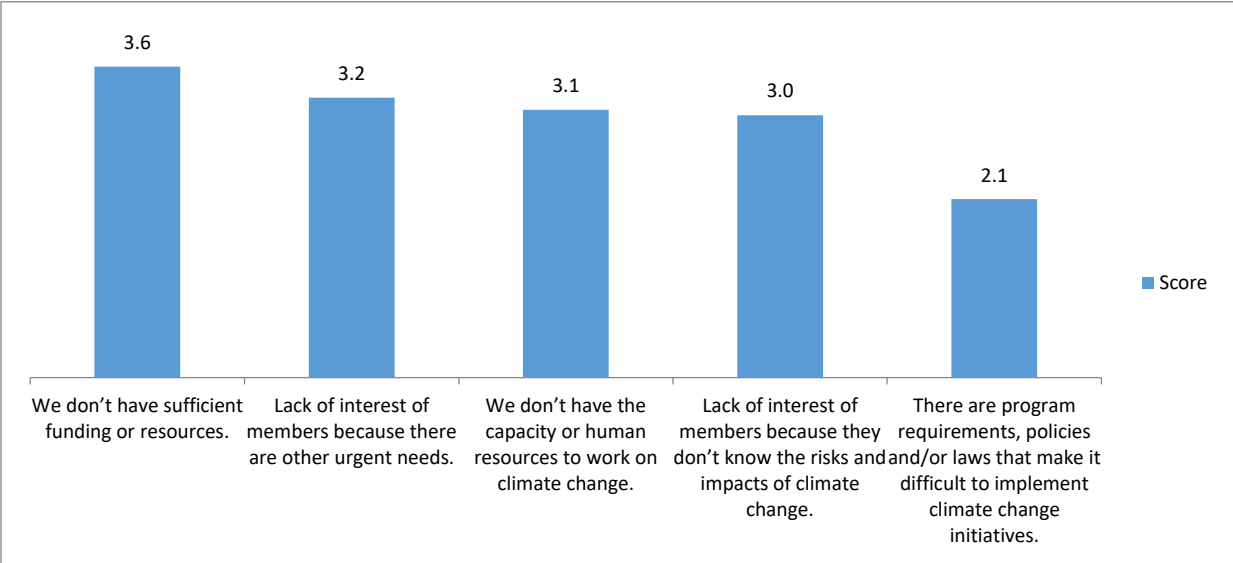


Figure 4-4. Barriers in First Nations to addressing climate change

#### 4.3.1 Programs, policies and/or laws that make climate change initiatives difficult to implement

Participants were asked to describe if there are program requirements, policies and/or laws that make it difficult to implement climate change initiatives. The *Indian Act* (reserves do not get allocated the sufficient resources) was identified as a big barrier to First Nations as well as laws and policies that prioritize industrial development and subsidize mining and oil and gas, which de-prioritizes green energy and green development projects.

Respondents highlighted the lack of capacity in many First Nations communities, especially small communities, to apply for funding. Additionally, funding program requirements are often complex and difficult for rural regions to access. Respondents noted that some communities do not know about existing laws and policies or programs that are available.

Respondents also believe that their communities are excluded in the development and approval of laws, plans, and programs. ‘Others’ make decisions about/for First Nations despite not knowing what they need and what they don’t need.

#### 4.4 Concerns in First Nations’ communities

**Figure 4-5** shows respondents’ main concerns with respect to climate change impacts on communities, ranked in order of importance. Impacts to animals, fish, plants and air are listed as the top concern, followed by reduced food security and access to clean water.

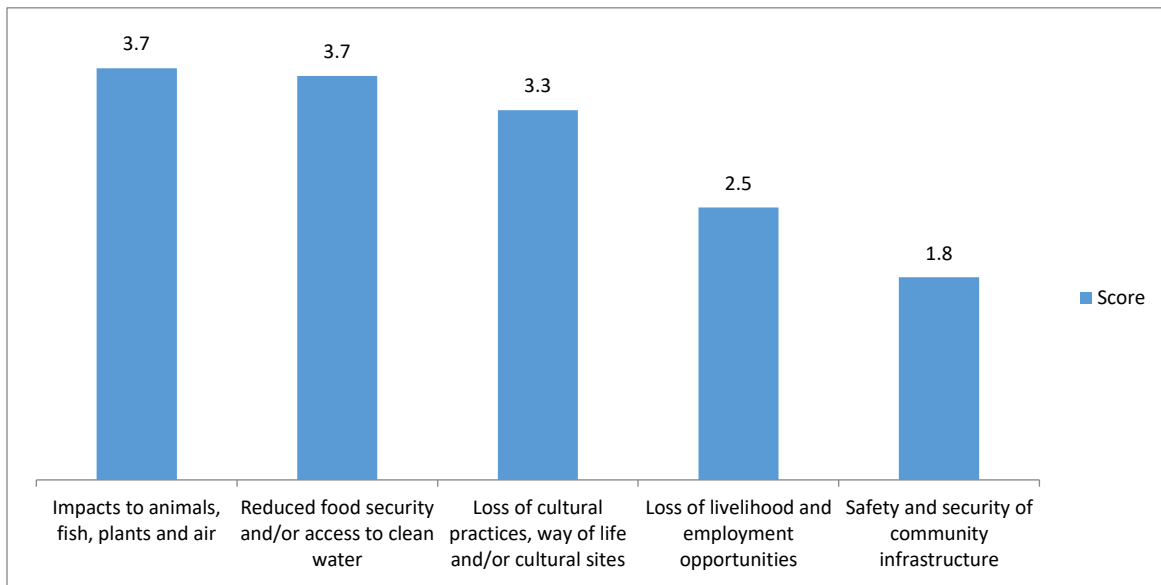
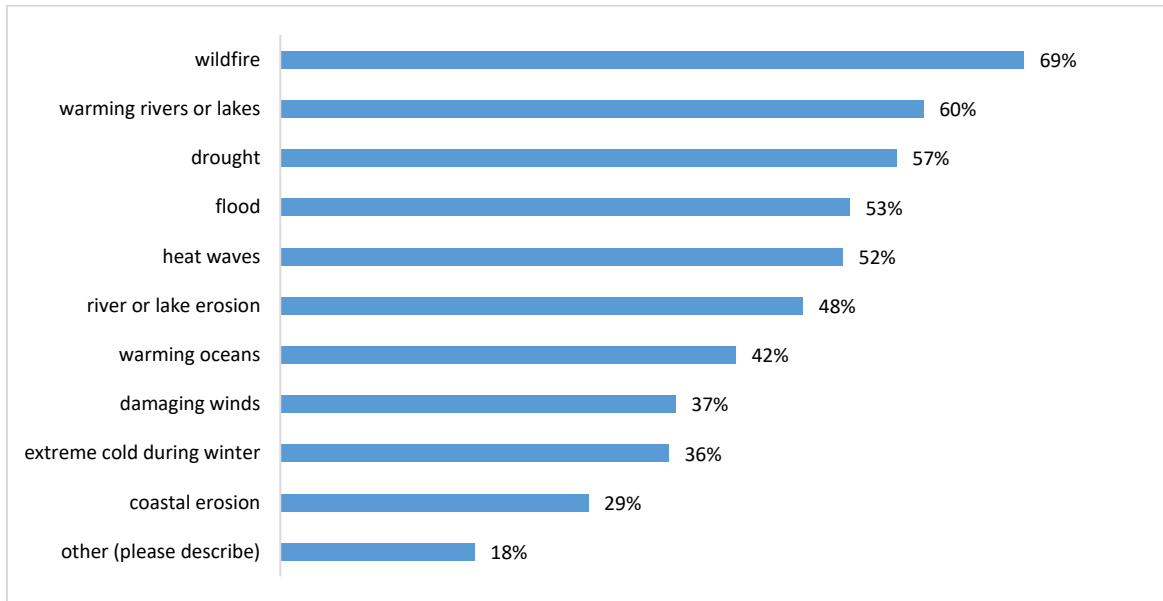


Figure 4-5. Main concerns about climate change impacts on communities

**Figure 4-6** lists climate change-related impacts that respondents were most concerned about over the next 30 years. Wildfires, warming rivers or lakes, drought and flood are the top four concerns.



*Figure 4-6. Climate change impacts that a community is most concerned about over the next 30 years*

When asked to describe other concerns, respondents included loss of wildlife, loss of traditional food, berries and medicines, declining salmon and other fish, food pollution, ocean pollution, impacts of development on water, and reduced snowpack and retreating glaciers.

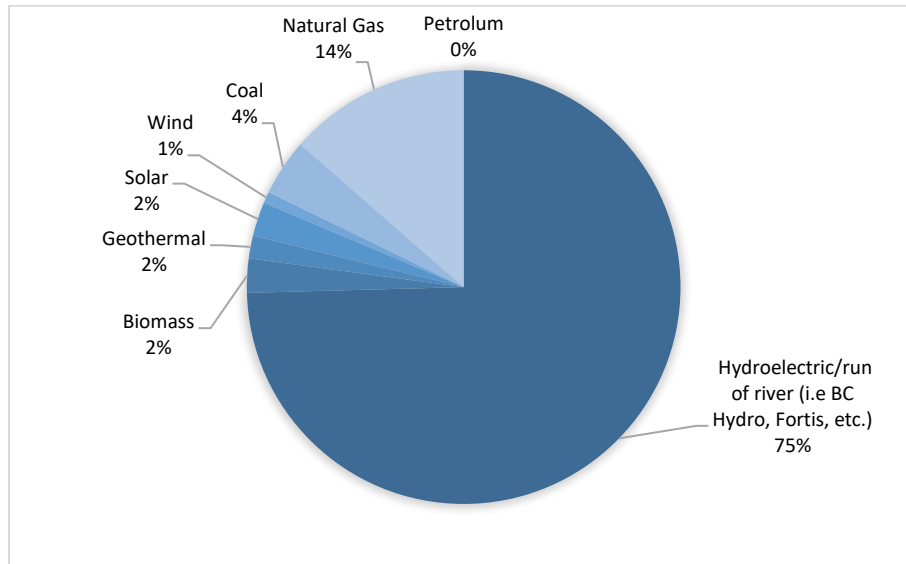
Respondents also mentioned the loss of Indigenous ways of life, the lack of support/interest from all levels of government to collaborate with Indigenous communities & Nations, and the lack of strong government-to-government relations.

## 5. Energy Sources in First Nations' Communities

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### 5.1 Main Power Source in Community

**Figure 5-1** shows the range of different primary power sources in First Nations communities in BC. The strong majority rely upon hydroelectric/run-of-river power sources, followed by natural gas and then a range of other sources such as biomass, geothermal, solar, wind and coal. The results would benefit from further research as they are affected by other communities not being represented in the survey.



*Figure 5-1: Main power in communities that took the survey*

**Figure 5-2** describes the range of secondary power sources in First Nations communities in BC. Natural gas and petroleum (e.g., diesel) form the majority of the secondary power sources identified by respondents, with hydroelectric, biomass, geothermal, solar, wind and coal also identified. Respondents also noted wood stoves as a primary source of heating in their communities, as well as pellets and propane. These should be taken into account for planning and could be better understood through more careful research.

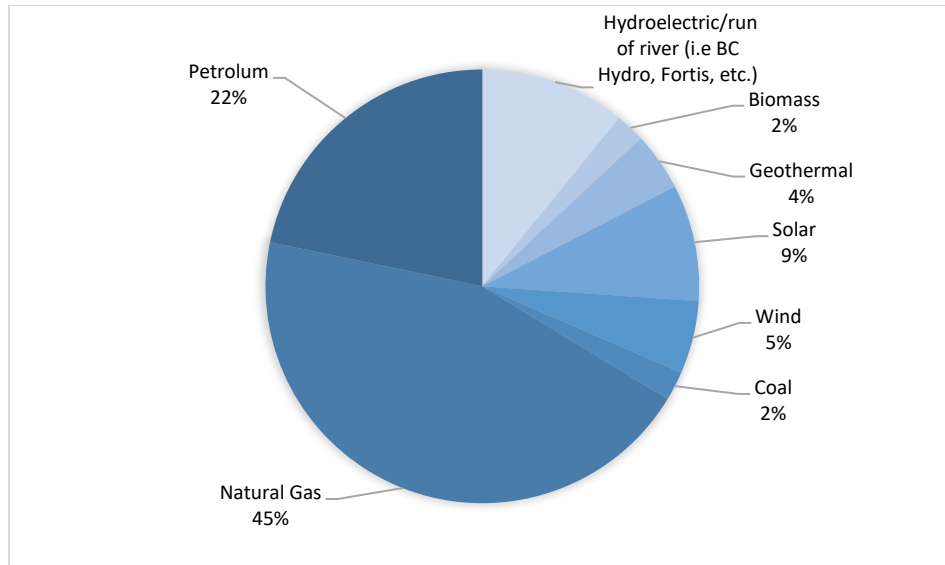


Figure 5-2. Second main power in communities that took the survey

## 5.2 Goals for Electrical Energy Generation

Figure 5-3 shows a ranking of different types of electrical energy generation. Respondents strongly favoured solar, followed by wind generation. However, run-of-river hydroelectricity was also ranked as “most important” by approximately 33% of respondents.

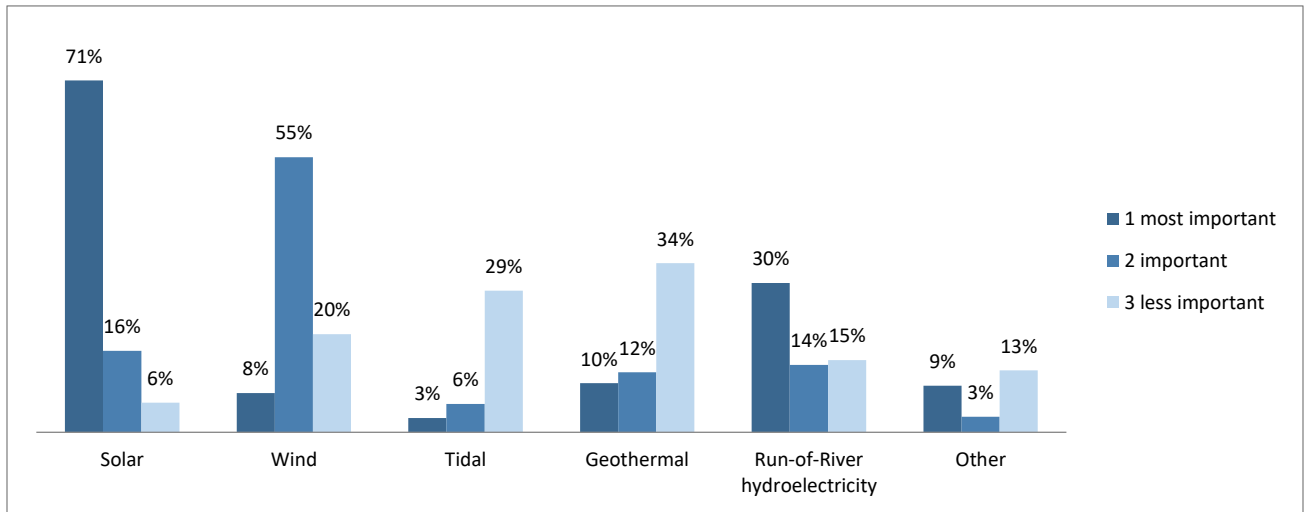


Figure 5-3. Type of electrical energy generation respondents want to see in their communities.

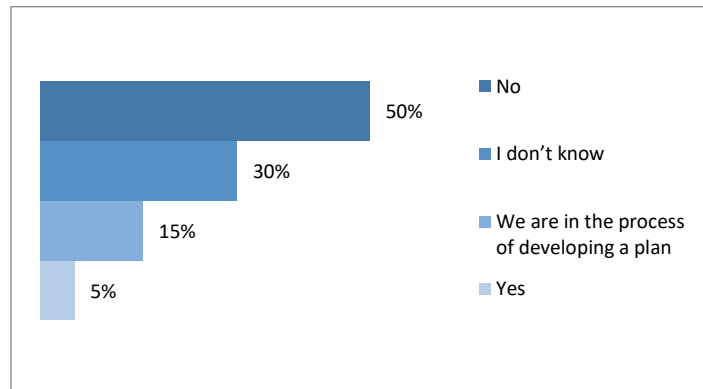
Some of the comments provided under this question also raised the regional variability associated with appropriateness of electrical energy generation. Respondents noted that *any* technology that will work in a First Nation community should be explored and built, but with the feasibility of the technology in certain contexts and locations as driving factors behind decision-making.

## 6. Climate Actions

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### 6.1 Climate Action Plans in Communities

**Figure 6-1** describes whether a respondents' community has a climate action plan, which could include adaptation to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Half of the respondents noted that their community does not have a plan, and another 30% did not know. A small number (5%) had a climate action plan, and another 15% were in the process of developing one.



*Figure 6-1. Climate Action Plans in Communities*

Respondents' comments also provided valuable information. Many noted that they lack funds to develop an action plan and are searching for funds. Others mentioned that the cost of developing an action plan is too high when compared to other urgent needs within the community. Some respondents cited that their communities now have Climate Action Coordinators who are working collectively and collaboratively to develop capacity and energy planning (and which are a marked contrast to other communities which noted the significant lack of capacity to address climate change). Others stated that climate change has been linked in their emergency planning and preparedness through climate vulnerability and risk assessments. There are also cases where the funds for plans had been accessed several years prior, and the funding has not continued, resulting in plans that are now out of date.

### 6.2 Renewable Energy Plans in Communities

As with Climate Action Plans, almost 80% of respondents noted that their community did not have a renewable energy plan or didn't know if their community had a renewable energy plan. **Figure 6-2** highlights that a small number of communities have a renewable energy plan (8%) and another 15% are in the process of developing a plan. These numbers demonstrate the levels of community preparedness in the transition to clean energy, and the need for major investments to support the transition.

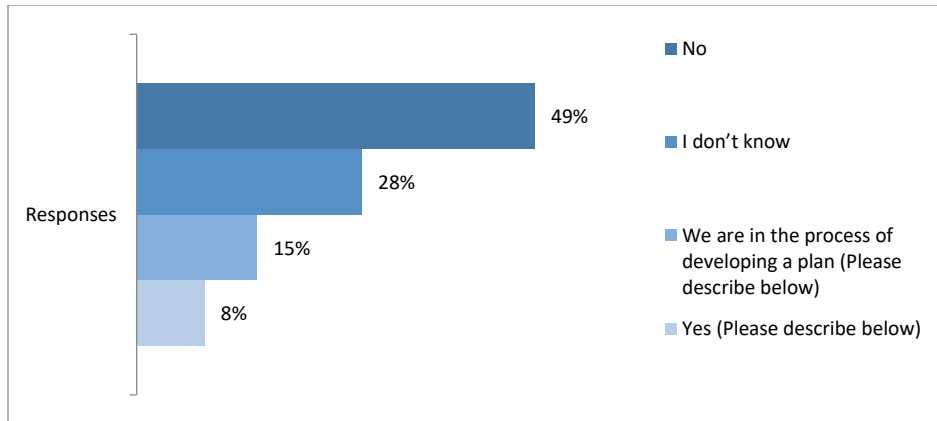


Figure 6-2. Renewable Energy Plans in Communities

Comments noted that communities, even without a renewable energy plan, have been working towards different renewable energy projects, including biomass, geothermal, and small run-of-river. Respondents also raised concerns with BC Hydro’s suspension of the Standing Offer Program, which had been the opportunity to advance renewable energy plans in their community.

### 6.3 Climate Change Mitigation

Respondents were asked about what climate change mitigation actions have been undertaken in the community (e.g. mitigation actions are those that aim to reduce emissions that cause climate change) and were provided a list to choose from.

Figure 6-3 shows the results, with education and awareness-raising as the top activity (41%), followed by consuming less and producing less garbage (37%). A quarter of respondents were not sure what actions had been undertaken, and nearly the same number noted improvements to building efficiency and switching to clean energy generation.

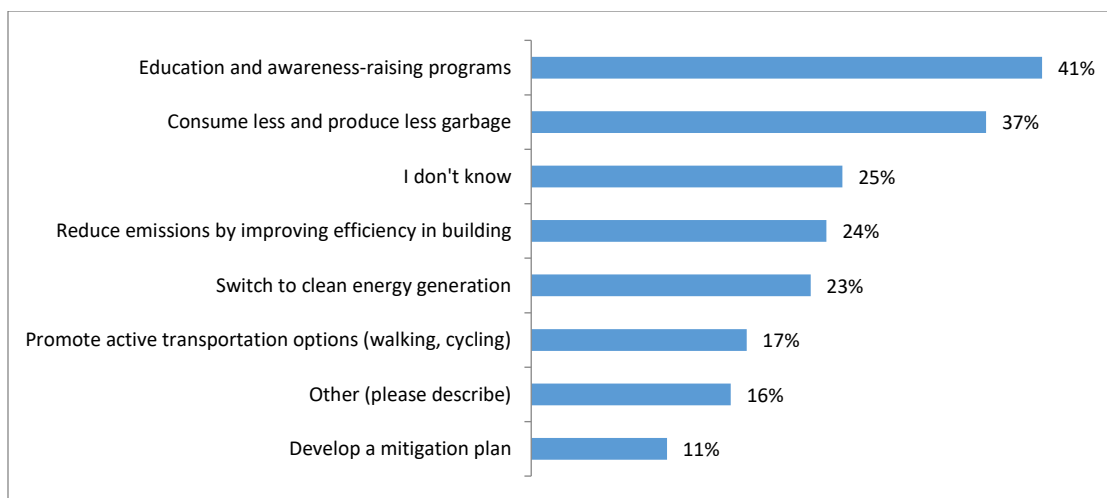


Figure 6-3. Climate Change Mitigation Actions

## 6.4 Climate Change Adaptation

Respondents were asked about what climate change adaptation actions have been undertaken in the community (e.g. adaptation are actions to manage the risks of climate change impacts) and were provided a list to choose from. **Figure 6-4** shows the results, with emergency management and response programs being identified by more than half of the respondents. Cultural revival of traditional practices was identified by nearly 40% of respondents, and environmental monitoring programs by more than 33% of respondents.

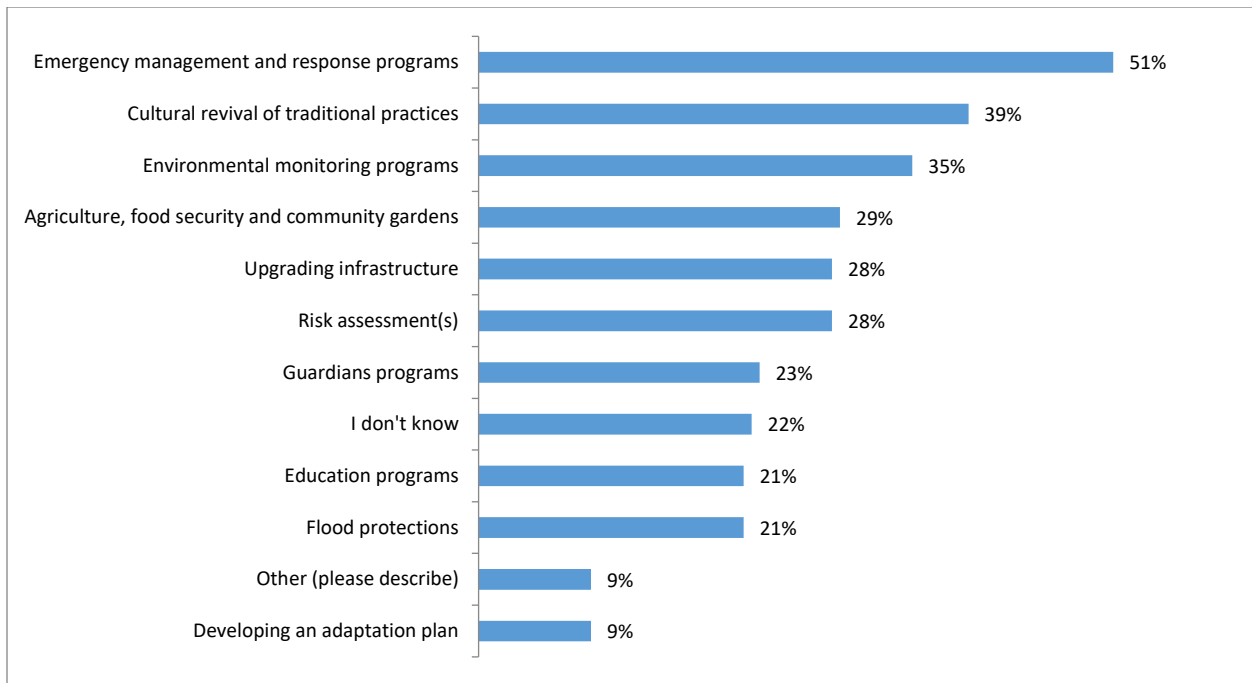


Figure 6-4. Climate Change Adaptation Actions

## 6.5 Inclusion of climate impacts within environmental evaluations

**Figure 6-5** shows the responses to a question asking respondents whether broader impacts on climate should be considered when a community is conducting its environmental evaluation. Half of the respondents agreed this should happen, 35% were unsure, and 14% disagreed that this should take place.

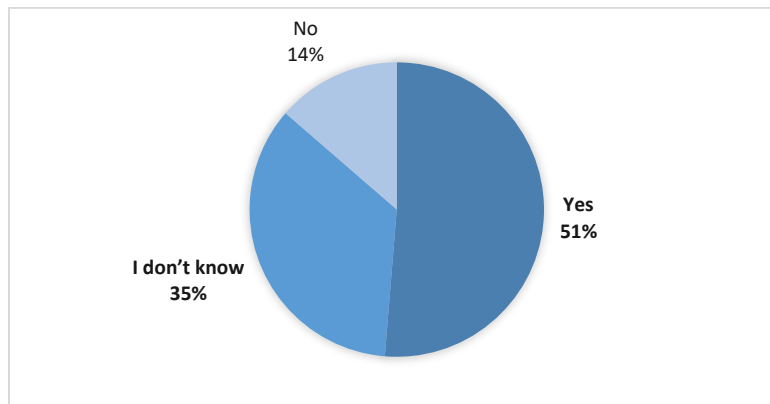


Figure 6-5. Climate change impacts as part of environmental evaluations in communities



## 7. First Nations' Participation in Federal or Provincial Initiatives

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### 7.1 Participation in Federal climate plans/policy

Respondents were asked about whether their community had been consulted on Federal climate plans or policy. As shown in **Figure 7-1**, almost half of respondents (46%) did not know, almost a quarter (23%) said they had not been consulted, and only 10% believe their community had been consulted. Another 21.4% said that their community had not been meaningfully consulted.

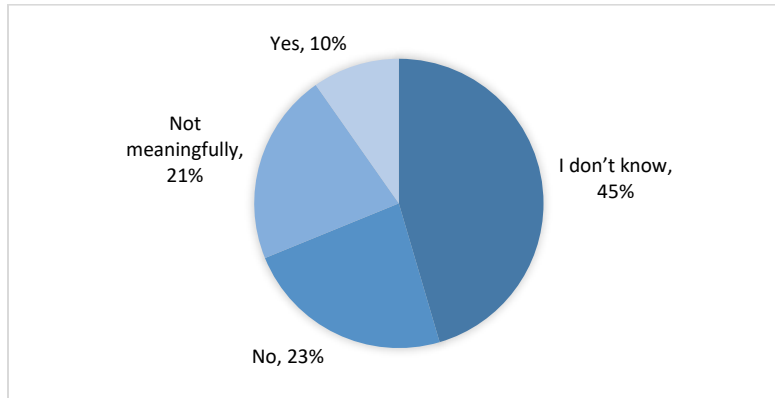


Figure 7-1. Consultation on Federal climate plans/policy

### 7.2 Participation in Provincial climate plans/policy

The responses about whether communities had been consulted on provincial climate plans and policy mirrored the results of the federal participation question. As shown in **Figure 7-2**, only 9% of respondents said their community had been consulted, almost a quarter said they had not, nearly half (44%) did not know, and 22% said that it was no meaningful.

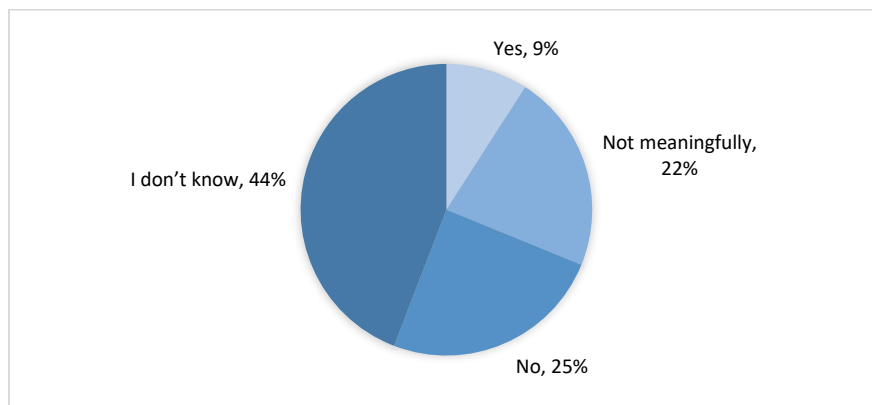


Figure 7-2. Consultation on Provincial climate plans/policy

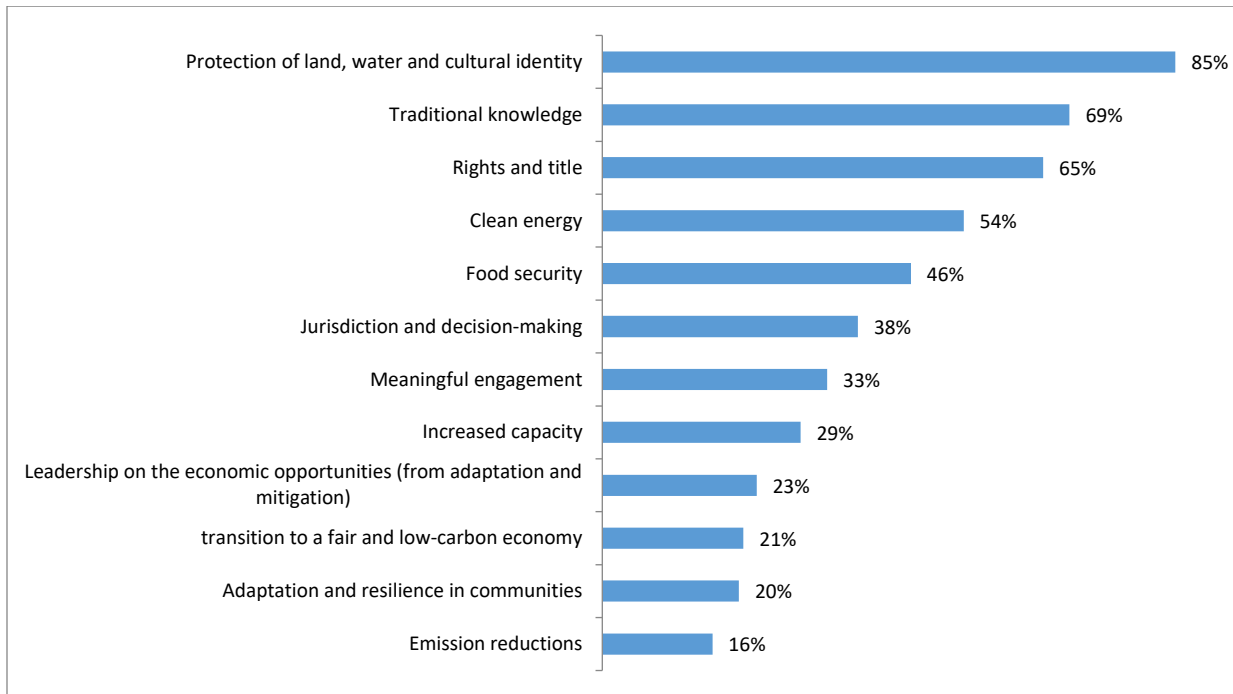
Comments from participants noted that there were no tangible results from consultation, and this together with the lack of funding is a real problem. As a result, participants said the process “isn't worth it.”

## 8. Developing a First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

### 8.1 First Nations Climate Change Strategy Vision Statement

Participants were asked what keywords should be in the Vision Statement of the First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

**Figure 8-1** shows the results, with protection of land, water and cultural identity having the most support (85%), followed by traditional knowledge (69%), rights and title (65%), and clean energy (54%).



*Figure 8-1. Keywords for First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan*

Comments from respondents about what should be included in the First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan included that rights and title should be included automatically, and salmon and food security are a top priority. Also raised was that First Nations must play a significant role in the development of clean energy and the transition to electrification of our cities and economy, concerns about massive flooding resulting from major hydroelectric facilities such as Site C, and that First Nations are able to deliver electrical energy without the impacts of large megaprojects. Shared decision-making was also raised by respondents as an important factor to include.

### 8.2 First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan Goals

Participants were asked what the goals should be for the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

**Figure 8-2** shows the results, with having inherent Aboriginal title, rights, and treaty rights recognized, respected and affirmed as the first goal (78%). Adaptation planning informed by traditional knowledge was the second-most endorsed goal, with 59% of support, and having sufficient resources and capacity to adapt to climate change impacts as the third highest priority with 57%.

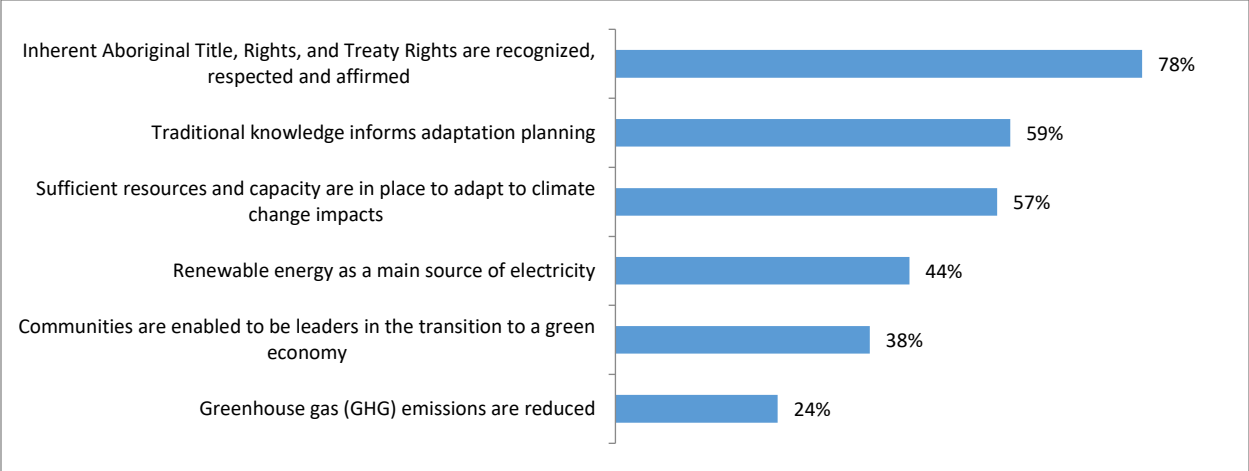


Figure 8-2. Goals for BC First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

Respondents also noted that all the goals provided in the list should be in the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Despite the relatively lower ranking (44%), comments highlighted the importance of renewable energy as a main source of electricity and raised concerns about provincial policies which are not opening new opportunities to develop local renewable electricity generation.

## 9. Appendix – Survey Objectives and Questions

Objective	Questions	
<b>Tell us about climate change events and its effects/impacts in your community</b>		
<p><i>Identify First Nations' perspectives on severe and unusual weather events.</i></p> <p><i>Identify impacts to the territories, cultures and health of First Nations from climate change</i></p>	<p>Q4. Do you believe that severe and unusual weather events (e.g. extreme heat or cold, strong winds, unusual precipitation, etc.) are caused by human activities?</p> <p>Q5. In the last 30 years, has your First Nation experienced the following weather and climate events?</p> <p>Q6. How have weather events affected your First Nation's sacred and cultural sites?</p> <p>Q7. If your sacred and cultural sites have disappeared or been damaged, how did it happen?</p> <p>Q8. Why can't your community access your sacred and cultural sites?</p>	<p>Q9. Have you noticed a change in the following plants and animals that have been impacted by climate change?</p> <p>Q10. Do you think there is an increase in non-traditional animals, invasive insects, plants or aquatic species in your region?</p> <p>Q11. Which changes have you noticed in the lakes, rivers and creeks in your territory?</p> <p>Q12. Which health problems have you or others in your community experienced that may be the result of climate change related impacts?</p>
<b>Tell us about your community's priorities</b>		
<p><i>Detect First Nations' priorities to address climate change</i></p>	<p>Q13. What are the main priorities for your community regarding climate change?</p>	<p>Q14. What priorities are you interested in seeing in a greenhouse gas reduction plan?</p>
<b>Tell us about your community's barriers and concerns</b>		
<p><i>Detect First Nations' barriers and concerns related to climate change</i></p>	<p>Q15. What are the main barriers that your community faces to address climate change?</p> <p>Q16. If there are program requirements, policies and/or laws that make it difficult to implement climate change initiatives, can you please describe it/them?</p>	<p>Q17. How concerning are the impacts of climate change to your community?</p> <p>Q18. In the next 30 years, what is your community most concerned about? Do you have other climate change concerns within your community?</p>
<b>Tell us about the energy sources in your community</b>		
<p><i>Identify the main power sources in communities</i></p>	<p>Q19. Do you have any other climate concern within your community?</p> <p>Q20. What is the main power source in your community?</p>	<p>Q21. What type of electrical energy generation do you want to see in your community?</p>
<b>Tell us about your community climate actions</b>		
<p><i>Identify actions that communities are undertaking to mitigate and adapt to climate change</i></p>	<p>Q22. Does your community have a climate action plan?</p> <p>Q23. Does your community have a renewable energy plan? (e.g. to transition to clean energy)</p> <p>Q24. Which actions has your community taken to mitigate the effects of climate change?</p>	<p>Q25. Which actions has your community taken to adapt to the effects of climate change?</p> <p>Q26. In considering projects in your territory, would your environmental evaluation include broader/global impacts on the climate such as greenhouse gas emissions?</p>
<b>Tell us about your participation on Federal or Provincial initiatives</b>		
<p><i>Determine the level of participation of First Nations in provincial and</i></p>	<p>Q27. Has your community been consulted on Federal climate plans/policy?</p>	<p>Q28. Has your community been consulted on Provincial climate plans/policy?</p>

**Developing a BC First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan**

*Identify the most important  
topics and goals to be  
considered in the First  
Nation Climate Change  
Strategy*

Q29. What keywords should be in the Vision  
Statement of the Strategy?

Q30. What three goals should be  
considered in the strategy? From the list,  
only three (3) can be selected