Canadians' Perspectives on Nature, Conservation, and the Economy

Canada's Nature Advantage

September 2026

Methodology

- Sample size: 1,941 adult Canadians
  - → Includes a sample boost of Manitobans (n=502)
- Survey field dates: September 2 to 10, 2026
- Margin of error: (+/-) ~2.22%, 19 times out of 20.
  - → Manitoba residents = (+/-) ~4.37%
- The data was weighted by age, gender, education, and region.
- Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

- **Nature is overwhelmingly seen as one of Canada's most valuable economic assets.** Nearly all Canadians agree nature is one of the country's most valuable economic assets (96%, up five points from 2025) and that investing in nature can secure long-term economic resilience and independence (93%, up six points). Almost all (96%, up three points) say it is important for Canada to position nature this way.

- **Canadians support treating nature as a capital asset and measuring its value.** More than three in four (77%) support treating investments in natural assets like public infrastructure that strengthens long-term economic resilience. Most also support measuring nature's economic value in government budgets and investment plans (74%) and federal investment in environmental monitoring, mapping and data systems (75%).

- **There is broad support for public dollars that mobilize private capital.** Three in four (76%) support directing more of the federal government's existing investment portfolio toward encouraging private investment in nature-based solutions, stable from 2025 (75%). Most also support programs where most funding comes from the private sector (77%) and using public investment to attract private conservation funding (70%).

- **Around seven in ten support regulated credit markets for nature.** Support reaches 70% for biodiversity credits that let investors compensate for environmental impacts through conservation and restoration, and 69% for carbon credits that create revenue for activities that reduce emissions and improve ecosystems. Three in four (75%) also support lower taxes for private investments that deliver measurable environmental outcomes.

- **Most Canadians support anchoring nature projects in Indigenous partnership.** Majorities support tax incentives for partnerships between Indigenous Nations and the private sector (71%), expanding Indigenous ownership of revenue-generating nature projects (68%), and funding Indigenous-led monitoring and stewardship (64%).

Executive Summary

- **Support is strongest when benefits reach the people who steward the land.** Eight in ten (81%) support targeted tax breaks for farmers, foresters and land managers adopting practices that improve habitat, water quality, carbon storage and wildfire resilience. This is the highest level of support of any approach tested.

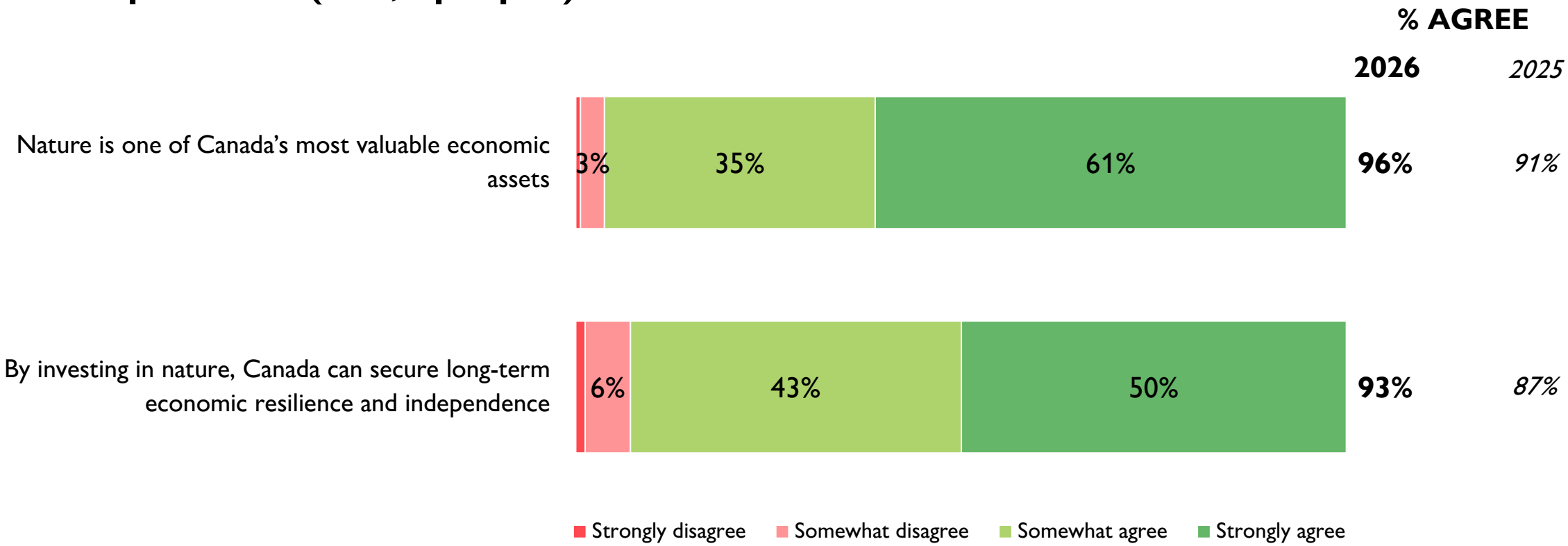
- **Canadians support linking major project approvals to verified benefits for nature.** When major projects have unavoidable impacts on nature, more than half (54%) prefer that projects leave nature better off overall through conservation or restoration investments. Only 7% say projects should not have to offset impacts beyond existing regulations. Three in four (76%) support faster approvals when developers commit in advance to independently verified investments that deliver a net benefit to nature, and better environmental outcomes is the most valued benefit of this approach (38%).

- **Canadians increasingly see nature-based solutions as an economic and trade strategy.** Eight in ten (80%) continue to support the federal government helping businesses transition to nature-based solutions. Majorities believe these solutions can strengthen Canada's energy and resource independence (62%), improve trade resilience (57%, up six points) and enhance global competitiveness (57%, up four points). Over half now see them as a way to protect Canada from U.S. tariffs and trade disputes (52%, up eight points).

FINDINGS

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

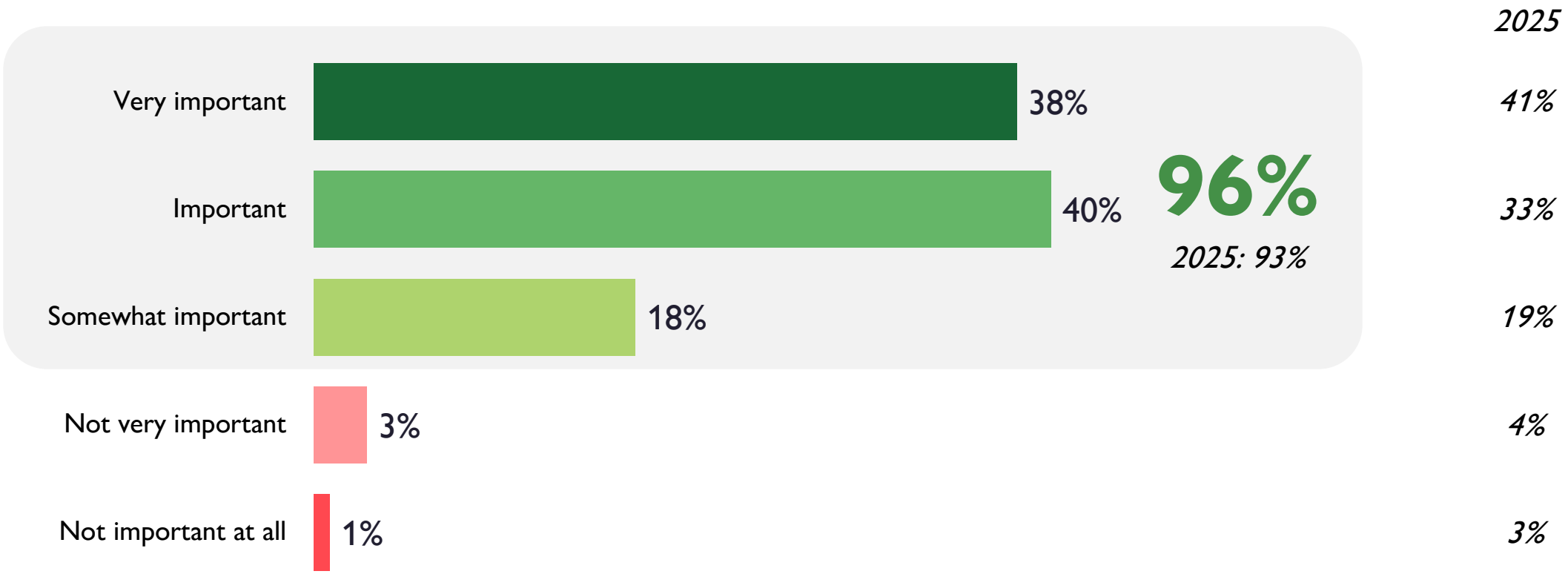
Canadians almost unanimously agree that nature is one of the country's most valuable economic assets (96%, up 5 pts. since 2025) and critical for long-term economic resilience and independence (93%, up 6 pts.).



[all] Base n=1,941

Overall, how important do you think it is for Canada to position nature as one of its most valuable economic assets?

Canadians also near unanimously (96%) believe it is important for Canada to position nature as one of its most valuable economic assets, up 3 pts.



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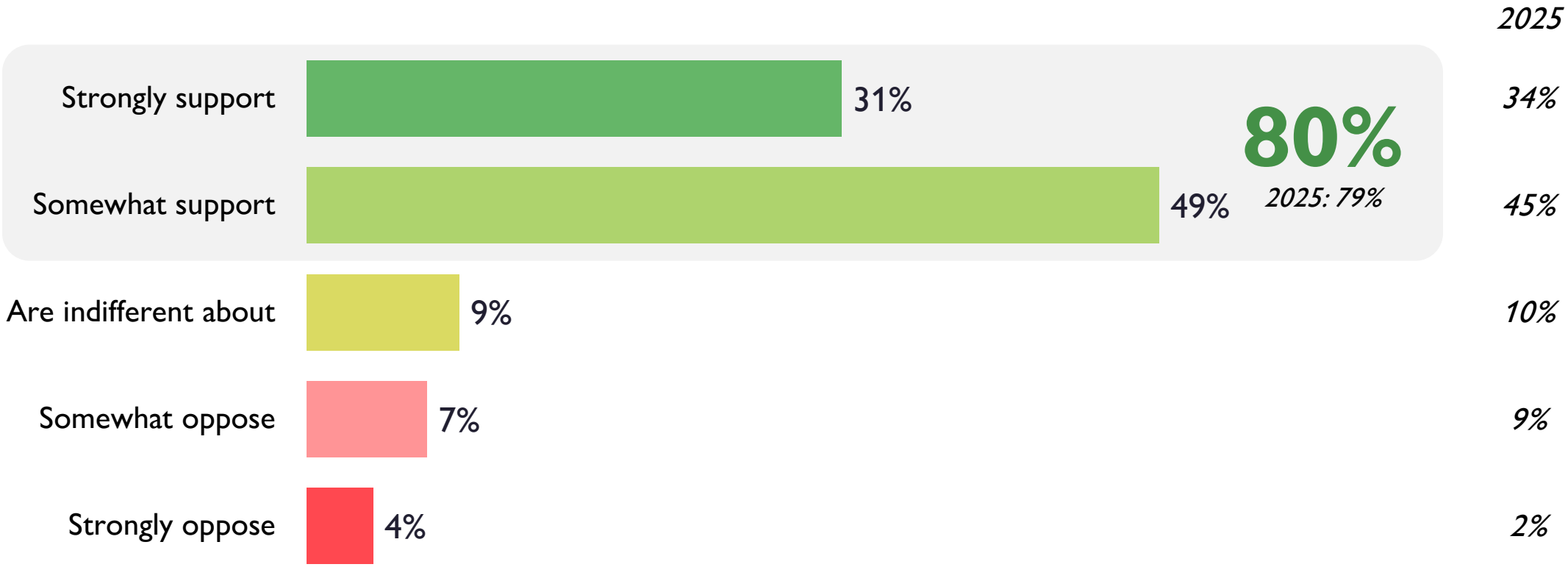
To what extent do you support or oppose the **federal government** helping businesses to transition their operations to adopt Nature-based Solutions?

8 in 10 (80%) Canadians continue to support the federal government helping businesses transition their operations to adopt Nature-based Solutions.



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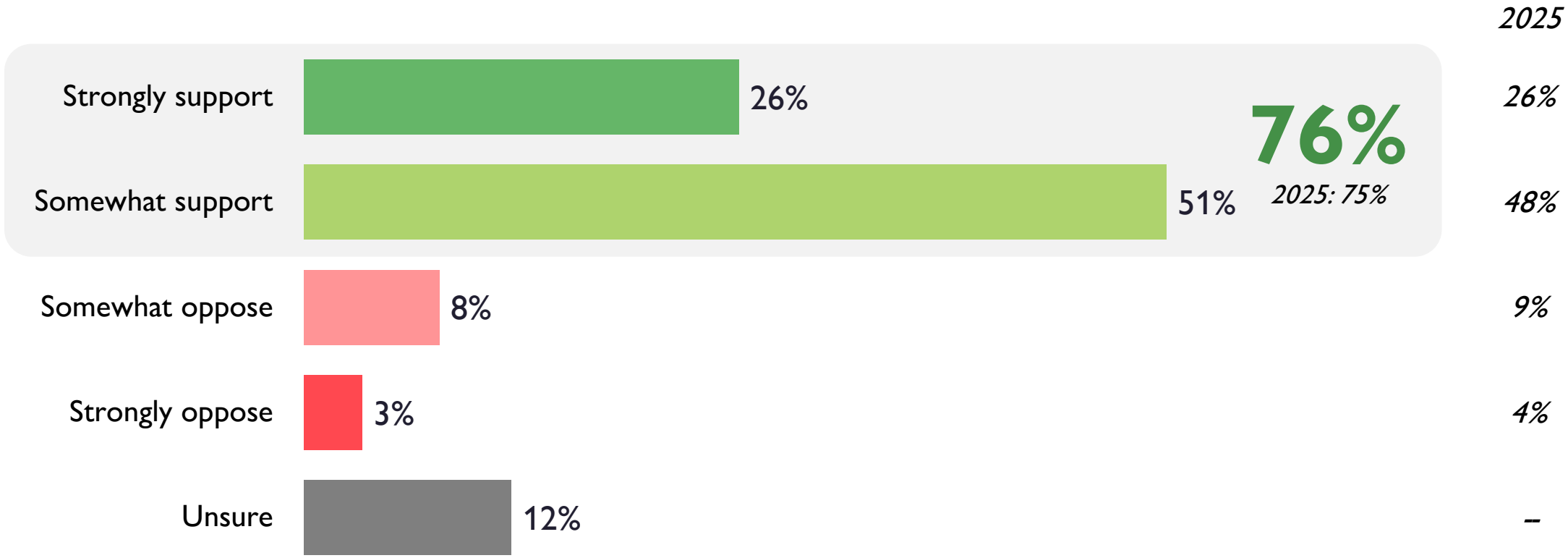
The Government of Canada manages an investment portfolio supporting economic stability, growth, and innovation. There is discussion about dedicating a larger share of this portfolio toward policies that encourage private investment in Nature-based solutions. For example, incentives for companies, farmers, forest managers, and Indigenous businesses to adopt practices that improve and protect Canada's natural assets. Based on what you know & assume about the potential of nature-based solutions to support Canada's economy, how strongly do you support or oppose the federal government dedicating more investment in this way?

3 in 4 (76%) Canadians continue to support the federal government dedicating more of its existing investment portfolio to encourage private investment in Nature-based Solutions.



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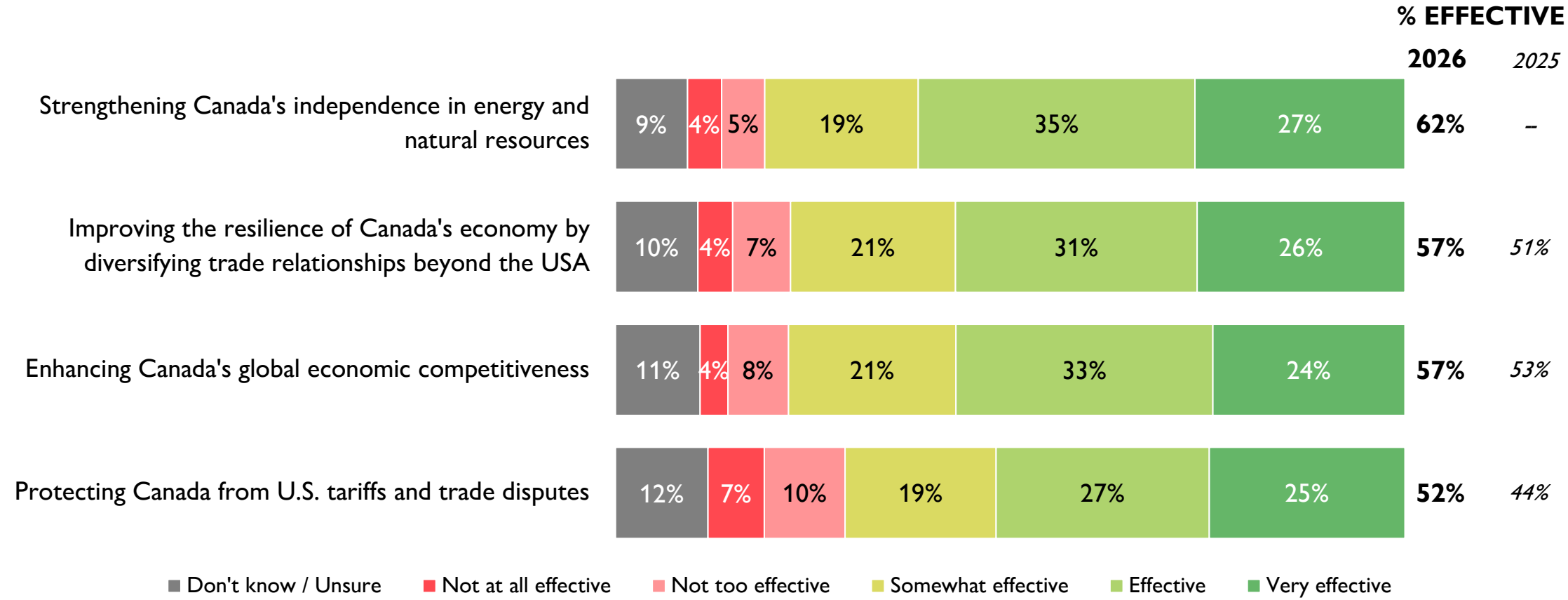
Some countries, like members of the European Union, are starting to bring in new trade rules. These include things like carbon border taxes or environmental import standards. This means that in the future, Canadian products could face extra costs or limits if they are not made in ways that meet those environmental standards. Nature-based solutions could help mitigate the impacts of these trade rules. With this context in mind, how effective do you assume Nature-based Solutions could be at…

Majorities of Canadians believe Nature-based Solutions can strengthen Canada's energy and resource independence (62%), improve trade resilience (57%, up 6 pts.), enhance global competitiveness (57%, up 4 pts.) and protect Canada from U.S. tariffs and trade disputes (52%, up 8 pts.)



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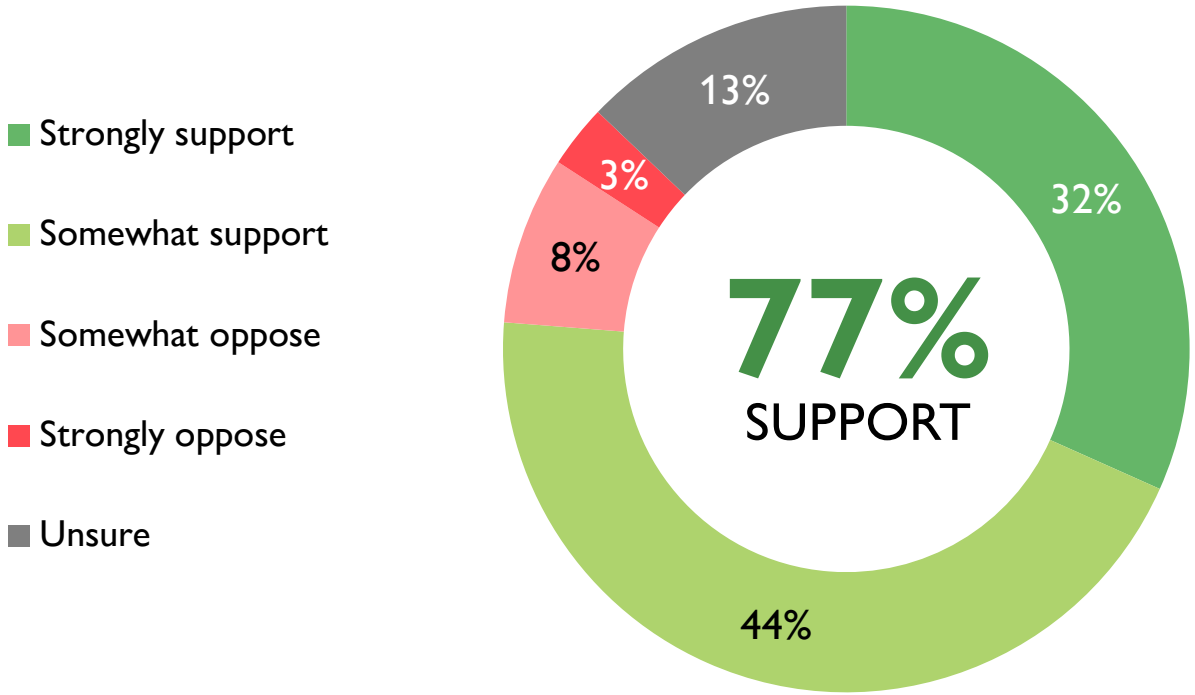
How much do you support or oppose each of the following?

More than 3 in 4 Canadians (77%) support government programs that encourage private companies and investors to fund productive practices that work with nature, reducing reliance on taxpayers.



Government programs designed to encourage private companies and investors to put their own money into productive practices that work with nature so that most of the funding comes from the private sector, not taxpayers.

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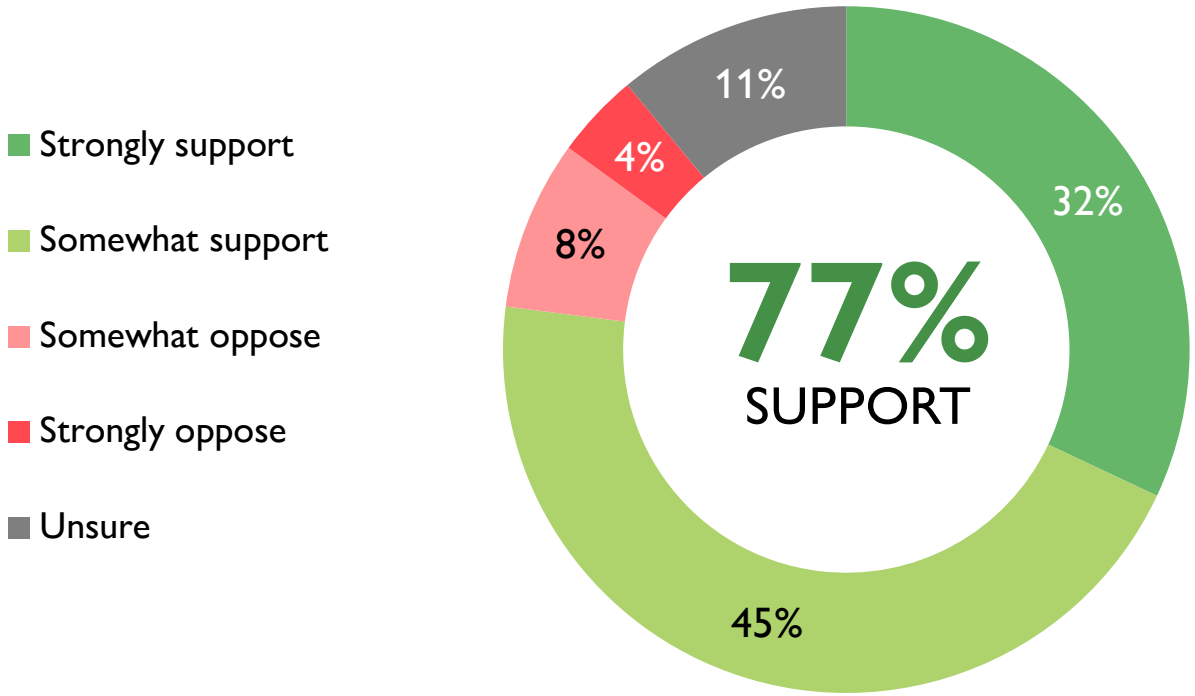
ADAPTED How much do you support or oppose each of the following?

More than 3 in 4 Canadians (77%) support treating investments in natural assets as investments in Canada's long-term economic resilience, similar to roads, bridges and other public infrastructure.



Treating investments that improve natural assets as investments in Canada's long-term economic resilience, similarly to public investments like roads, bridges, and other infrastructure.

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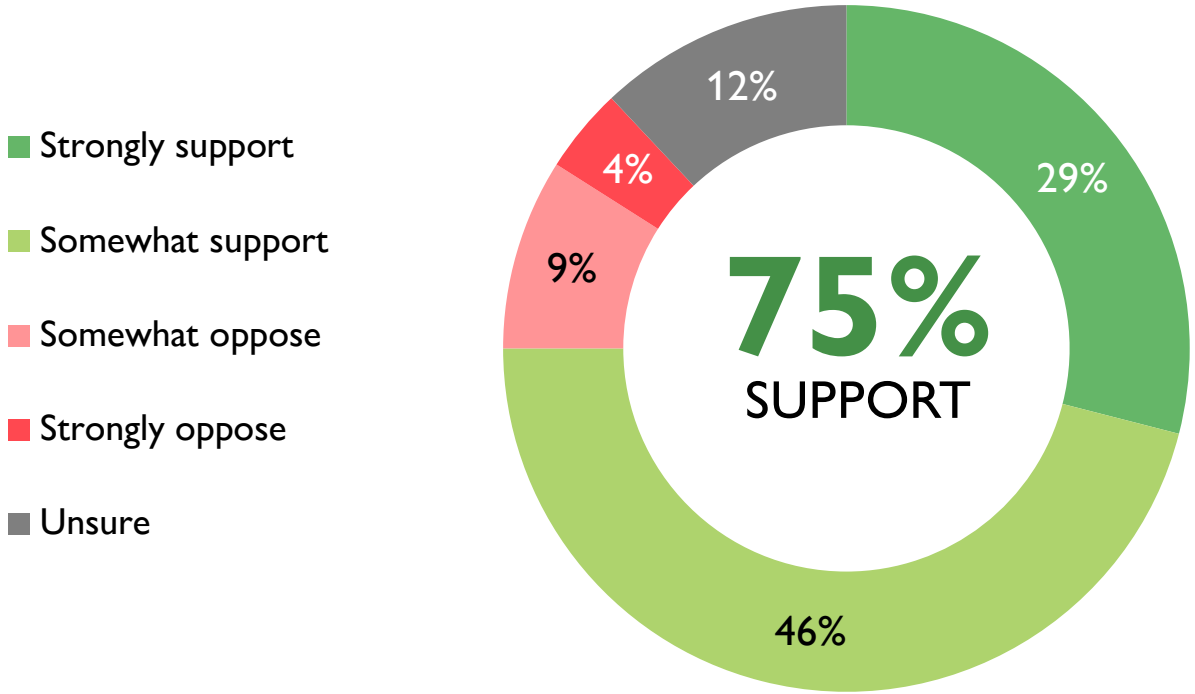
ADAPTED How much do you support or oppose each of the following?

3 in 4 Canadians (75%) support federal investment in environmental monitoring, mapping and data systems to help governments, industry, Indigenous Nations, researchers and other organizations make better land-management decisions.



Federal investment in environmental monitoring, mapping, and data systems to support better land-management decisions by governments, industry, Indigenous Nations, researchers, and other qualified organizations.

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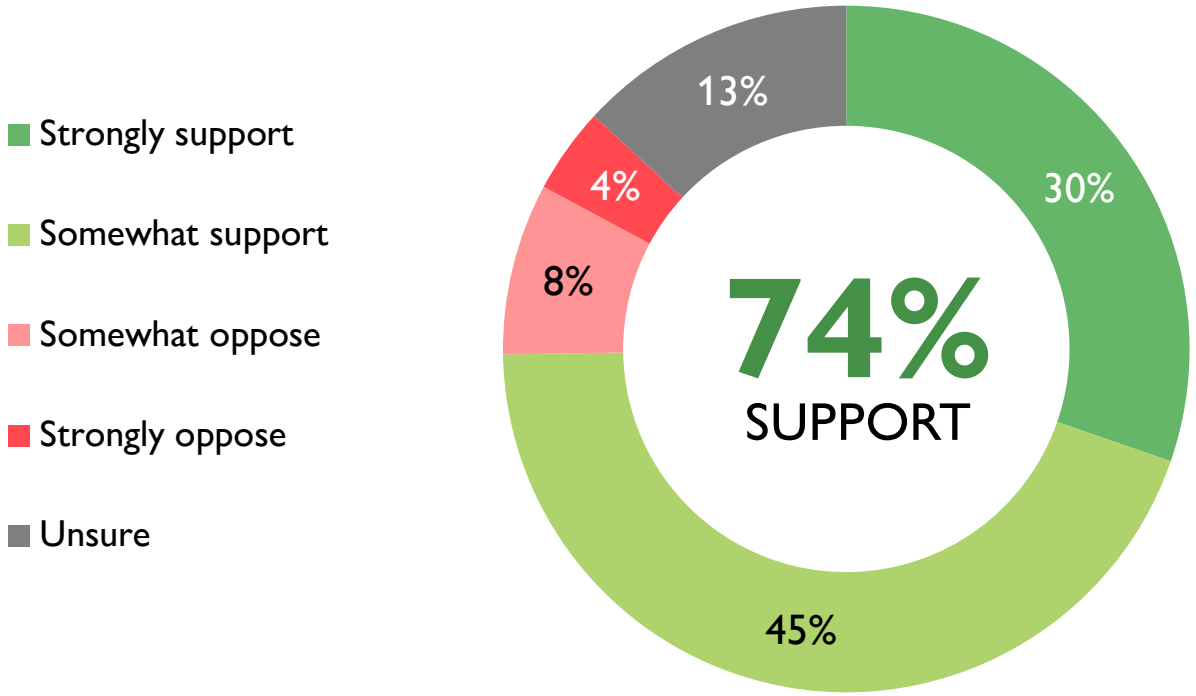
ADAPTED How much do you support or oppose each of the following?

Nearly 3 in 4 Canadians (74%) support governments measuring the economic value of natural assets - such as forests, wetlands, grasslands and freshwater - when preparing budgets and investment plans.



Governments measuring the economic value of natural assets - like forests, wetlands, grasslands, and freshwater - when preparing budgets and investment plans.

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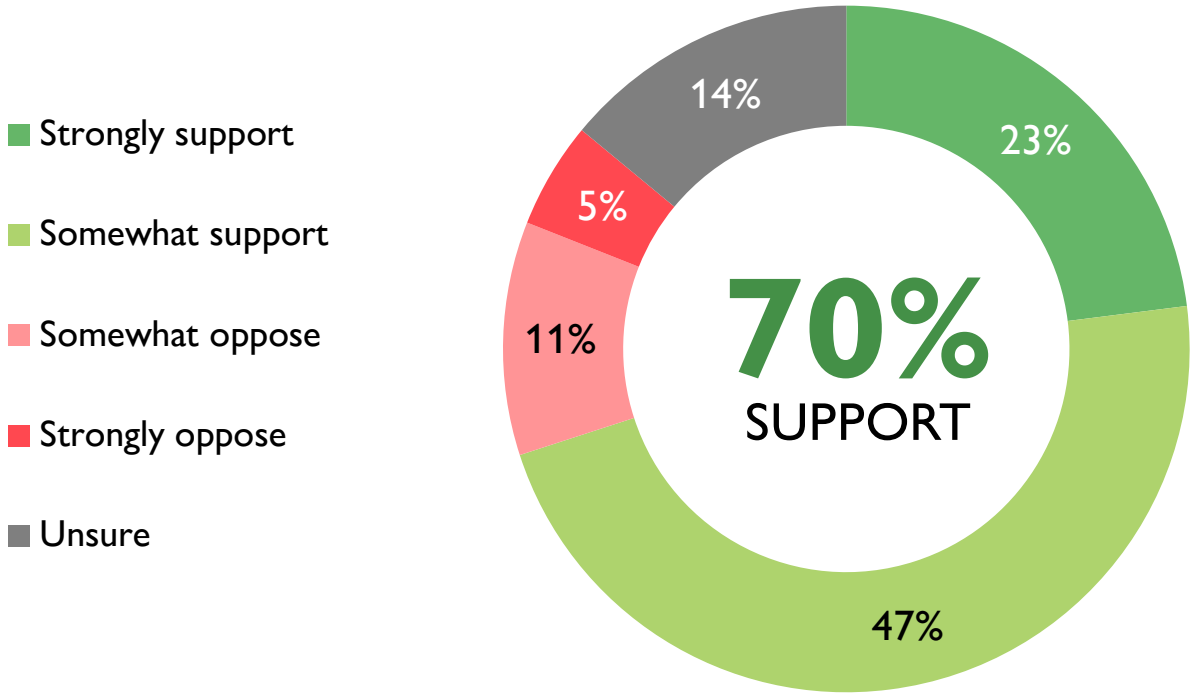
ADAPTED How much do you support or oppose each of the following?

7 in 10 Canadians (70%) support using public investment to attract greater private investment in conservation, restoration and sustainable land-management projects.

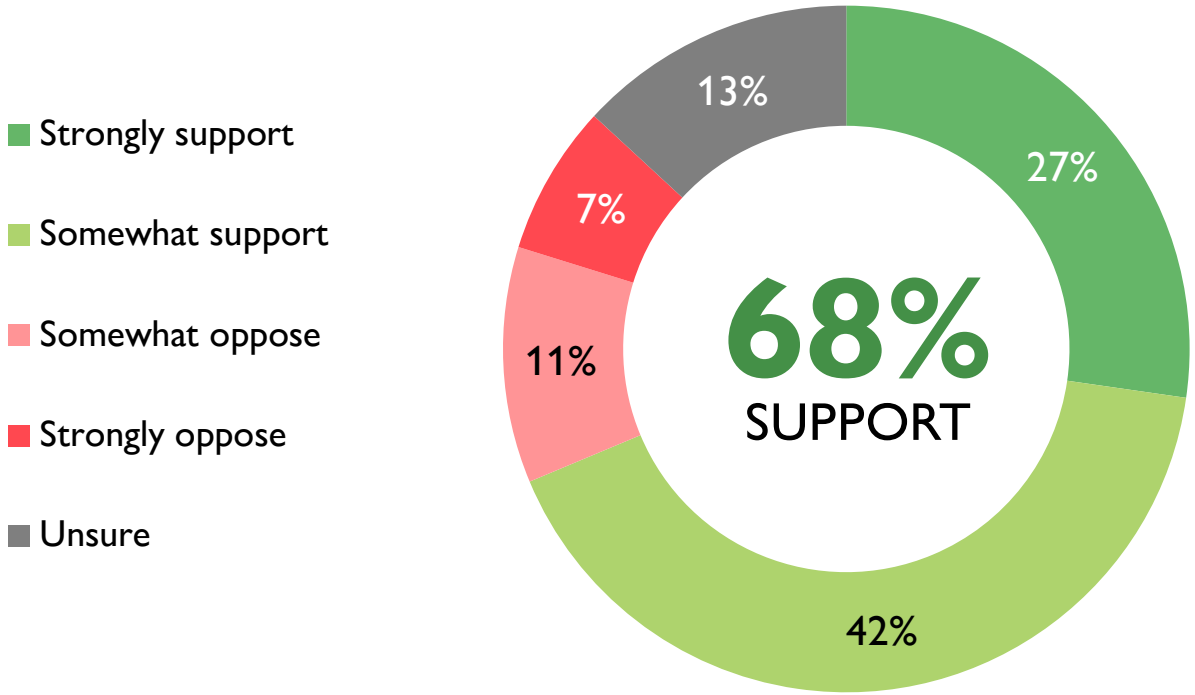


Using public investment to attract larger amounts of private investment into conservation, restoration, and sustainable land management projects.

[all] Base n=1,941

ADAPTED How much do you support or oppose each of the following?

More than 2 in 3 Canadians (68%) support expanding opportunities for Indigenous Nations to own, manage and benefit from revenue-generating nature-based projects on public lands.

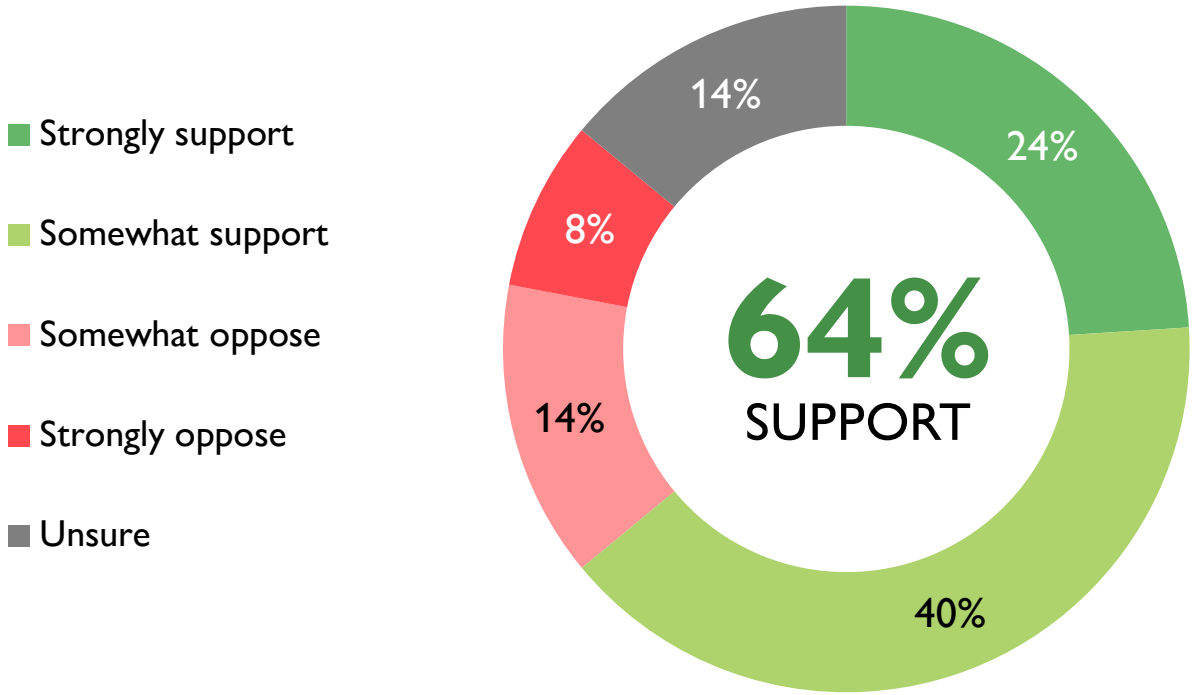


Expanding opportunities for Indigenous Nations to own, manage, and benefit from nature-based projects on public lands that generate revenue from activities like carbon storage, habitat conservation, and land and water restoration.

[all] Base n=1,941

ADAPTED How much do you support or oppose each of the following?

Nearly 2 in 3 Canadians (64%) support investing public funds in Indigenous-led environmental monitoring, stewardship and land-management programs.



Investing public funds in Indigenous-led environmental monitoring, stewardship, and land-management programs.

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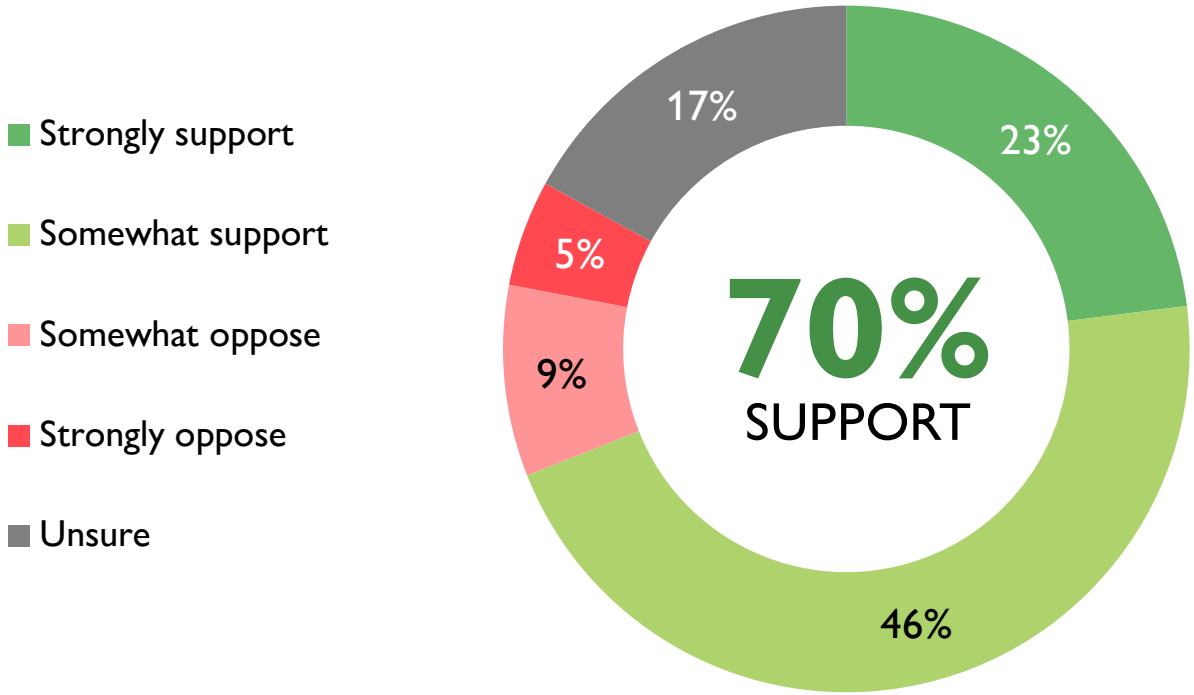
ADAPTED And how much do you support or oppose each of the following?

7 in 10 Canadians (70%) support regulated biodiversity credit systems that require private investors to offset the environmental impacts of resource extraction and infrastructure development by investing in conservation and restoration.



Regulated biodiversity credit systems that allow private investors to compensate for environmental impacts of resource extraction and infrastructure development by investing in conservation and restoration.

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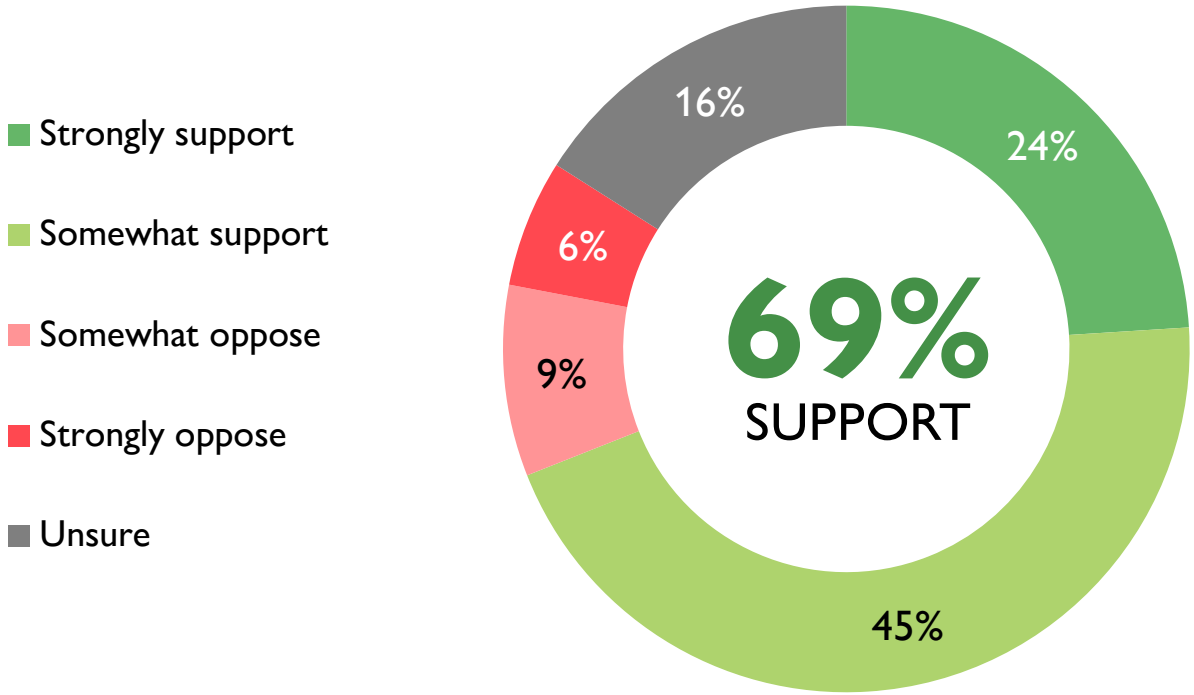
ADAPTED And how much do you support or oppose each of the following?

Nearly 7 in 10 Canadians (69%) support regulated carbon credit systems that create new revenue opportunities for landowners, Indigenous Nations and businesses that reduce emissions and improve ecosystem health.



Regulated carbon credit systems that create new revenue opportunities for landowners, Indigenous Nations, and businesses undertaking activities that reduce emissions and improve ecosystem health.

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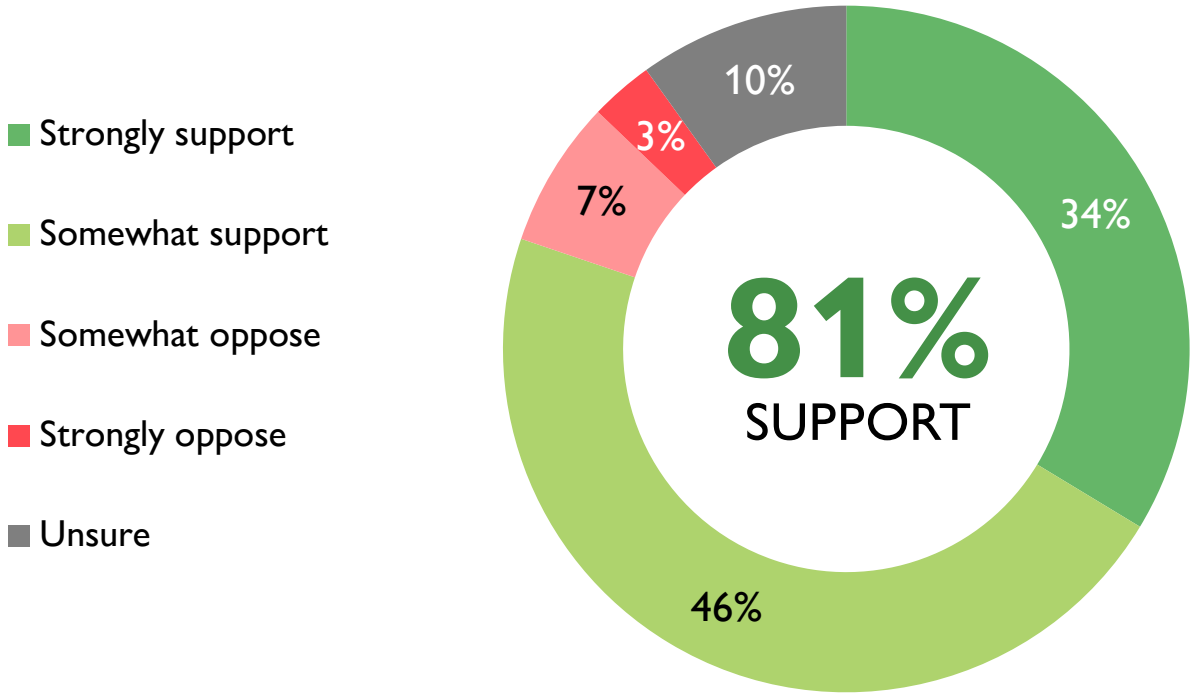
ADAPTED And how much do you support or oppose each of the following?

8 in 10 Canadians (81%) support targeted tax breaks that help farmers, foresters and land managers adopt practices that improve wildlife habitat, water quality, carbon storage and wildfire resilience.



Targeted tax breaks that help farmers, foresters, and land managers adopt practices that improve wildlife habitat, water quality, carbon storage, and wildfire resilience.

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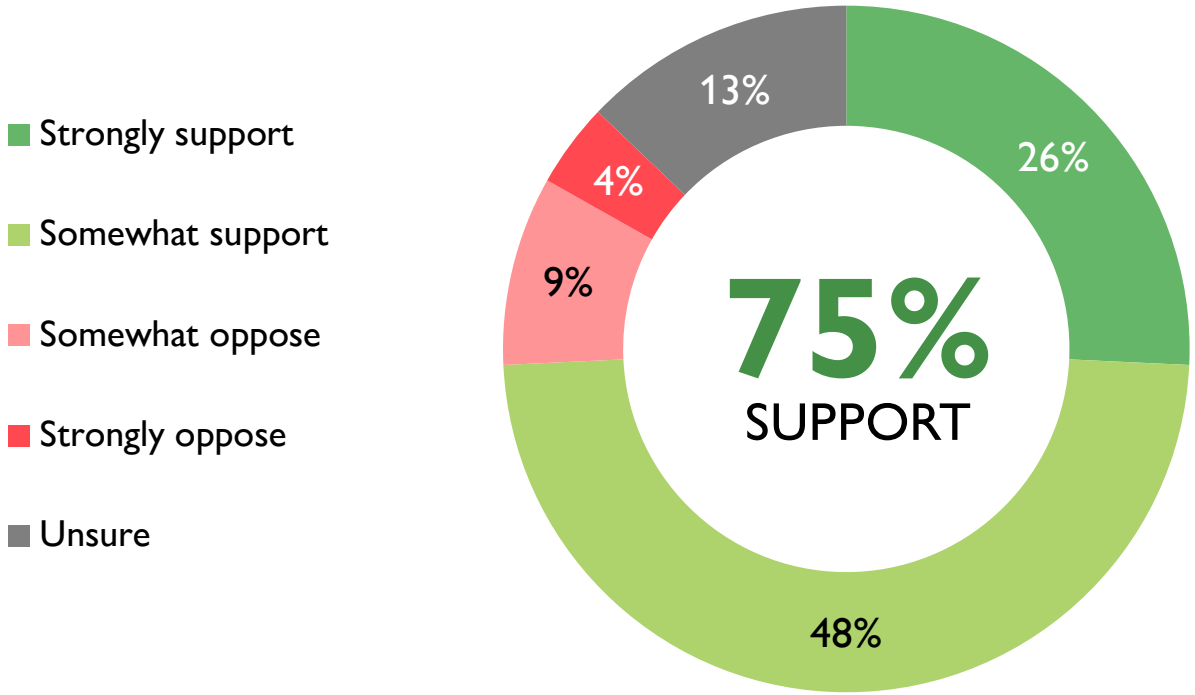
ADAPTED And how much do you support or oppose each of the following?

3 in 4 Canadians (75%) support lower taxes for private-sector investments that deliver measurable environmental outcomes, such as improved wildlife habitat, healthier soils and forests, wetland restoration or carbon storage.



Lower taxes for private sector investments that demonstrate measurable environmental outcomes, such as improved wildlife habitat, healthier soils and forests, wetland restoration, or carbon storage.

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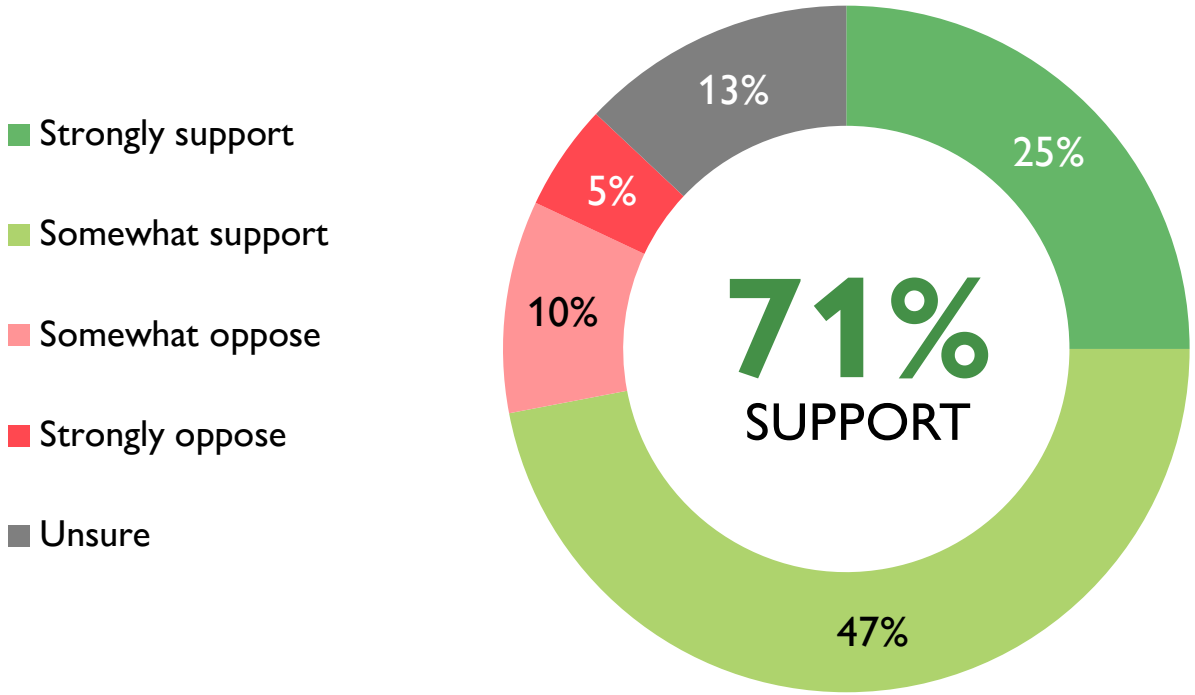
ADAPTED And how much do you support or oppose each of the following?

7 in 10 Canadians (71%) support lower taxes that encourage partnerships between Indigenous Nations and private-sector organizations undertaking sustainable land-management projects.



Lower taxes that encourage partnerships and joint ventures between Indigenous Nations and private-sector organizations undertaking sustainable land management projects.

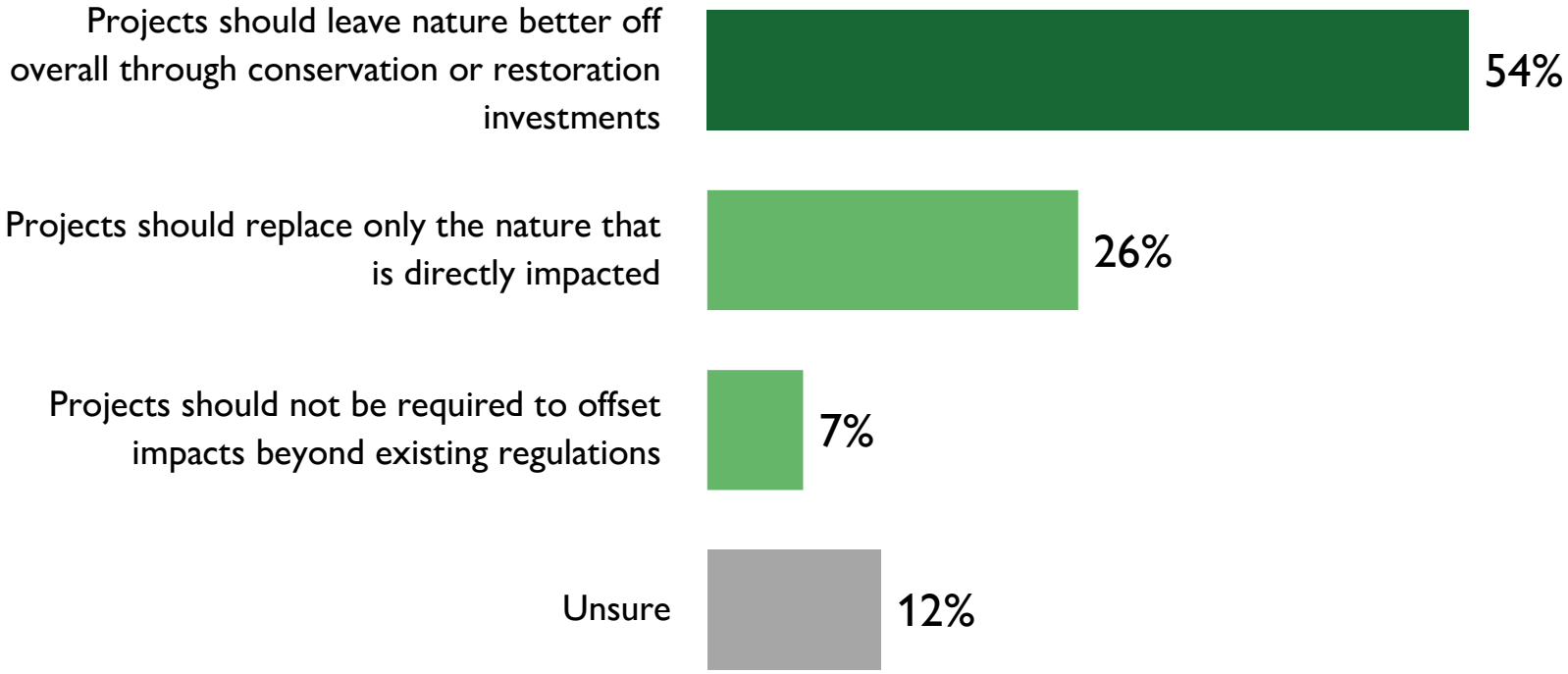
[all] Base n=1,941

OVERVIEW OF SENTIMENT TOWARD PROPOSED APPROACHES FOR INVESTING IN NATURE

	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
Targeted tax breaks that help farmers, foresters, and land managers adopt practices that improve wildlife habitat, water quality, carbon storage, and wildfire resilience.	81%	10%
Treating investments that improve natural assets as investments in Canada's long-term economic resilience, similarly to public investments like roads, bridges, and other infrastructure.	77%	12%
Government programs designed to encourage private companies and investors to put their own money into productive practices that work with nature so that most of the funding comes from the private sector, not taxpayers.	77%	11%
Federal investment in environmental monitoring, mapping, and data systems to support better land-management decisions by governments, industry, Indigenous Nations, researchers, and other qualified organizations.	75%	13%
Lower taxes for private sector investments that demonstrate measurable environmental outcomes, such as improved wildlife habitat, healthier soils and forests, wetland restoration, or carbon storage.	75%	13%
Governments measuring the economic value of natural assets - like forests, wetlands, grasslands, and freshwater - when preparing budgets and investment plans.	74%	12%
Lower taxes that encourage partnerships and joint ventures between Indigenous Nations and private-sector organizations undertaking sustainable land management projects.	71%	15%
Using public investment to attract larger amounts of private investment into conservation, restoration, and sustainable land management projects.	70%	16%
Regulated biodiversity credit systems that allow private investors to compensate for environmental impacts of resource extraction and infrastructure development by investing in conservation and restoration.	70%	14%
Regulated carbon credit systems that create new revenue opportunities for landowners, Indigenous Nations, and businesses undertaking activities that reduce emissions and improve ecosystem health.	69%	15%
Expanding opportunities for Indigenous Nations to own, manage, and benefit from nature-based projects on public lands that generate revenue from activities like carbon storage, habitat conservation, and land and water restoration.	68%	18%
Investing public funds in Indigenous-led environmental monitoring, stewardship, and land-management programs.	64%	22%

NEW *Major infrastructure, energy, and resource projects can have unavoidable impacts on nature.* Which approach would you prefer?

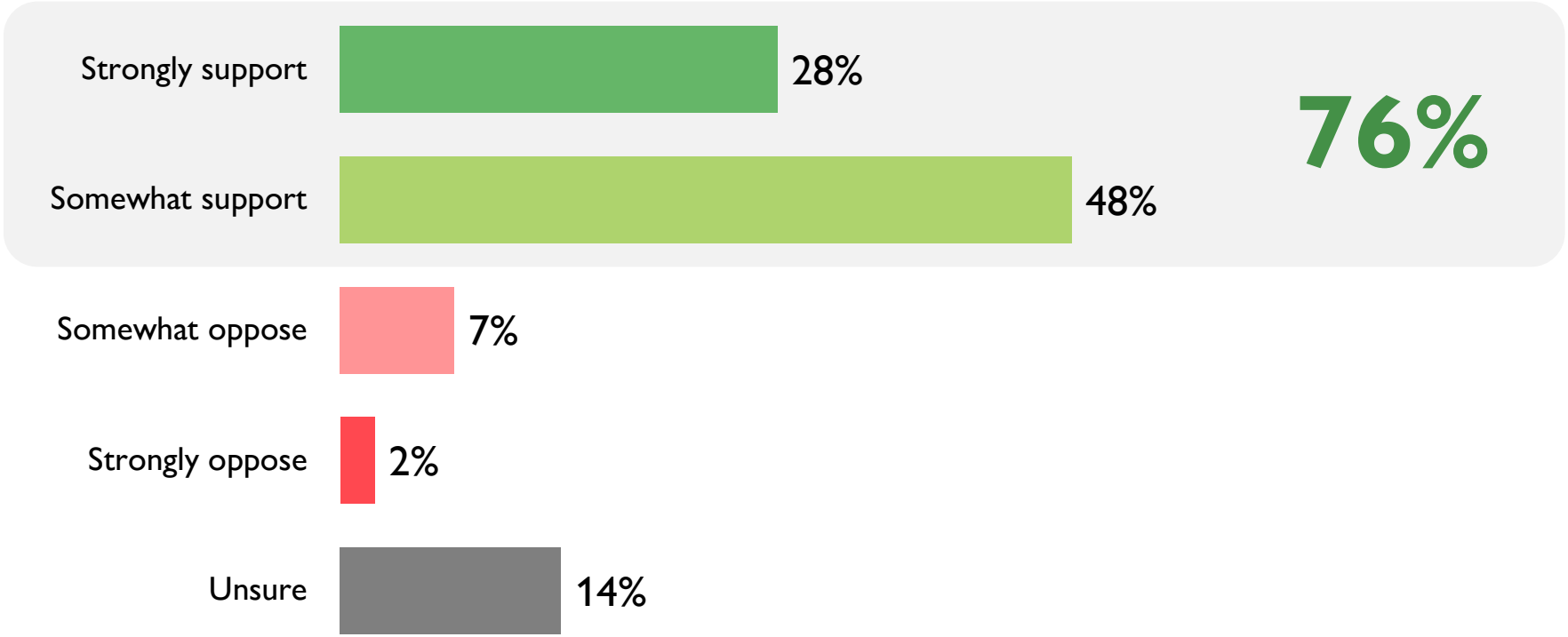
When major infrastructure, energy and resource projects have unavoidable impacts on nature, more than half of Canadians (54%) believe projects should leave nature better off overall through conservation or restoration investments, while only 7% believe projects should not be required to offset impacts beyond existing regulations.



[all] Base n=1,941

NEW Would you support or oppose a system where major projects can receive faster approvals when developers commit in advance to invest in independently verified conservation and restoration projects that result in a net benefit to nature?

3 in 4 Canadians (76%) support faster approvals for major projects when developers commit to independently verified conservation and restoration investments that provide a net benefit to nature; only 9% are opposed.



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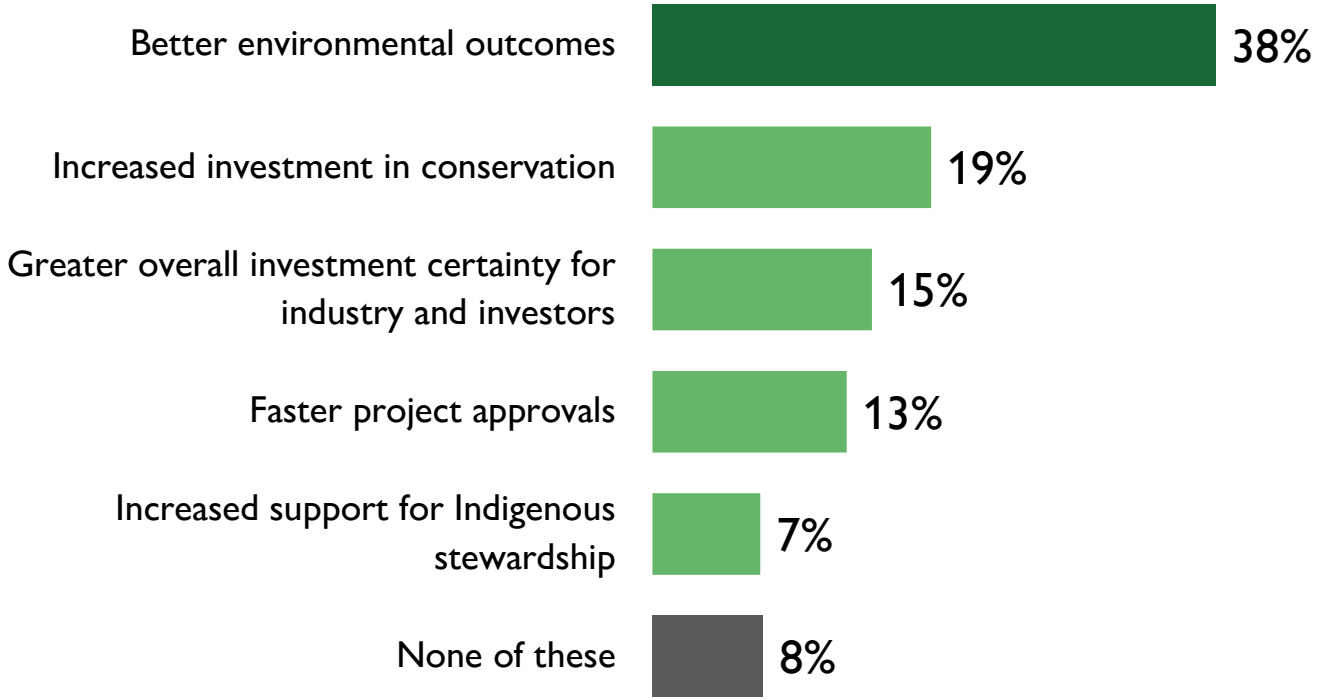
ADAPTED And which potential benefit of this approach would be most important to you?

When considering the benefits of tying faster project approvals to verified conservation and restoration investments, Canadians most often prioritize better environmental outcomes (38%), ahead of increased conservation investment (19%) and greater investment certainty for industry and investors (15%).



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Thank You

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