



PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

CONSERVATION CONSENSUS

**PUBLIC ATTITUDES ON CONSERVATION
AND THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL AND
INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIP**

NATIONAL SURVEY OF 2,000 CANADIANS

ABACUS DATA

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted online with 2,000 Canadians aged 18 and over from April 4th to 9th, 2019. A random sample of panelists were invited to complete the survey from a set of partner panels based on the Lucid exchange platform. These partners are typically double opt-in survey panels, blended to manage out potential skews in the data from a single source.

The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is +/- 2.1%, 19 times out of 20.

The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Canada's population according to age, gender, educational attainment, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

The study was conducted for the International Boreal Conservation Campaign.

RESEARCH SUMMARY

There's near consensus support for conserving more natural spaces.

Almost all Canadians support conserving more of Canada's natural spaces in principle feeling that clean water and air, protecting the land for future generations, and dealing with climate change are the more important reasons why conservation is important.

There is broad support for Canada meeting its conservation commitments.

Almost nine in ten Canadians want Canada to achieve its 2010 commitment to conserve 17% of land and fresh water and most hope for Canada to be a world leader on the issue.

Vast majority value international cooperation on conservation.

88% believe government should prioritize working with other countries to conserve and protect ecologically important lands. There is also widespread support for Canada to co-operate with international organizations to help conserve plants and animals.

There is strong support for Indigenous-led conservation.

Almost 80% back a federal program to support Indigenous protected areas that conserve lands and wildlife. Furthermore, eight in ten Canadians either strongly support or support long-term federal funding for Indigenous Guardian programs.

Most see the climate benefits of making conservation gains.

When told that scientists have shown the boreal region plays a major role in capturing and storing carbon dioxide, there is near consensus that it is a good idea to protect and conserve more of Canada's boreal region.



**CANADIANS OVERWHELMINGLY
SUPPORT CONSERVING
CANADA'S NATURAL SPACES**

KEY FINDINGS

Almost all Canadians support conserving more of Canada's natural spaces in principle feeling that clean water and air, protecting the land for future generations, and dealing with climate change are the most compelling reasons why conservation is important.

When asked whether reasons were important or not to conserving more space, ensuring clean air and water, protecting lands for future generations, protecting endangered wildlife, and dealing with climate change were all identified as at least important by most Canadians.

These views were almost universally held across the country.

SUPPORT FOR CONSERVING NATURAL SPACES IN CANADA



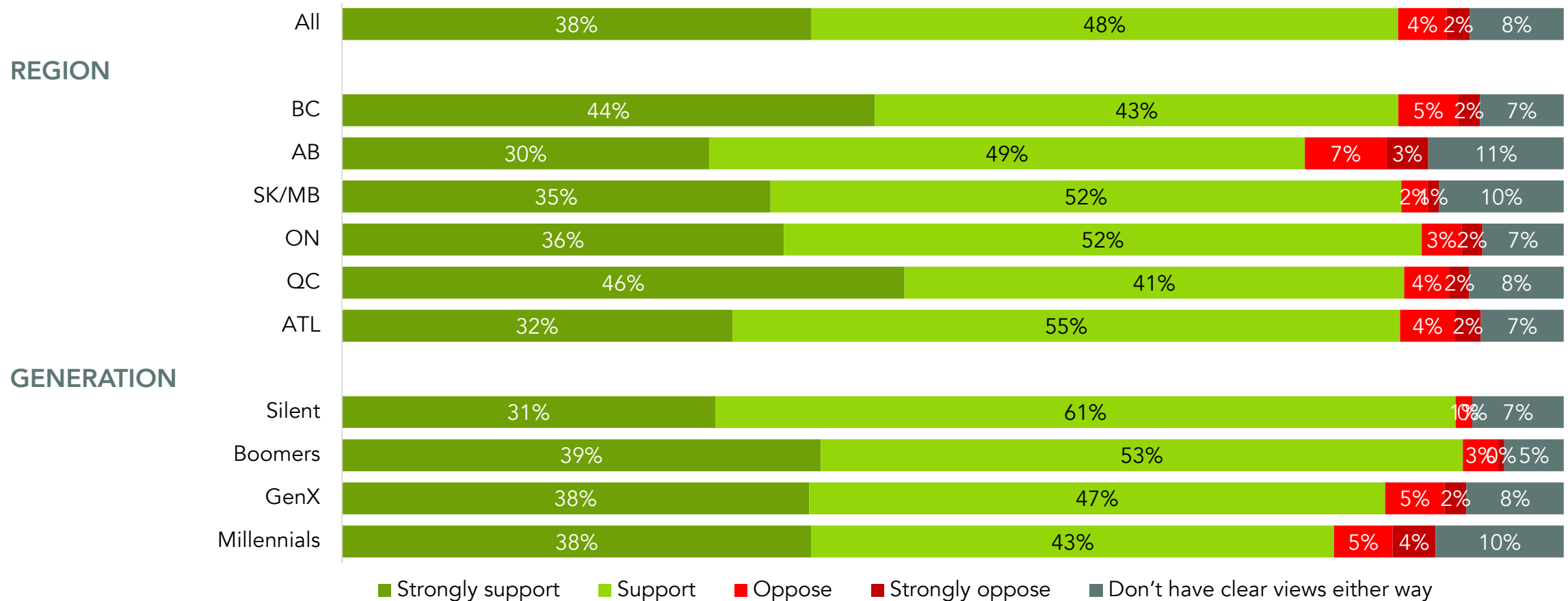
■ Strongly support ■ Support ■ Oppose ■ Strongly oppose ■ Don't have clear views either way

In principle, almost all Canadians (86%) either strongly support or support protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada.

This view is widely held across the country, across generations, and among all party stripes but is more intensively felt among Quebecers, British Columbians.

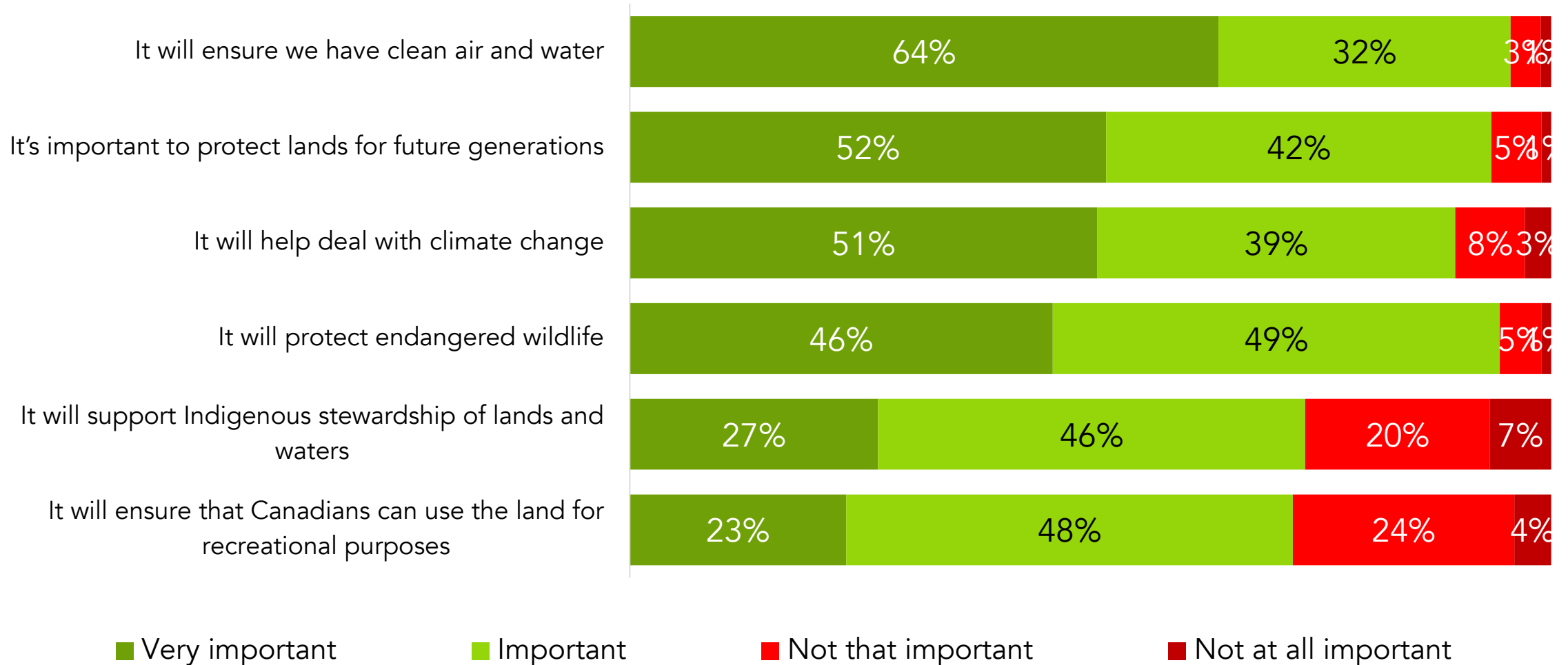
Do you generally support or oppose protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada?

SUPPORT FOR CONSERVING NATURAL SPACES IN CANADA



Do you generally support or oppose protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada?

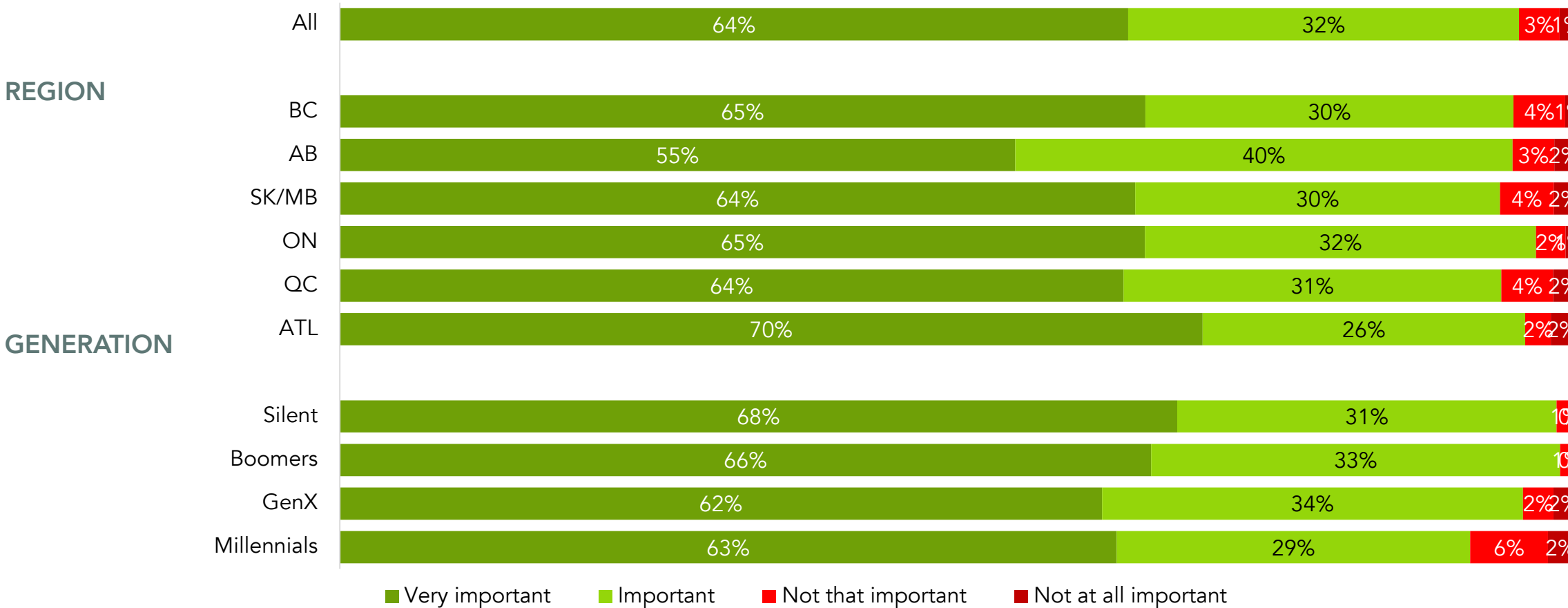
REASONS FOR SUPPORTING CONSERVATION



How important are the following reasons for why you support protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada?

REASONS FOR WHY YOU SUPPORT PROTECTING AND CONSERVING MORE NATURAL SPACES IN CANADA

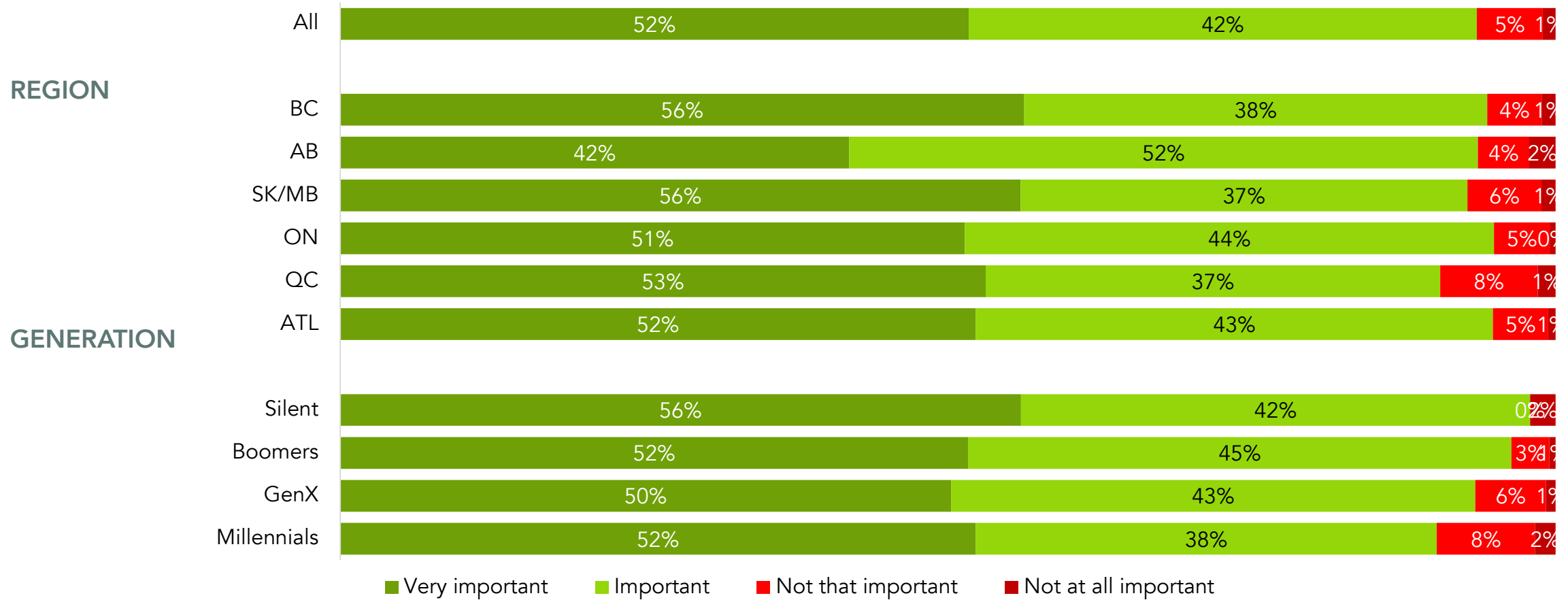
IT WILL ENSURE WE HAVE CLEAN AIR AND WATER



How important are the following reasons for why you support protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada?

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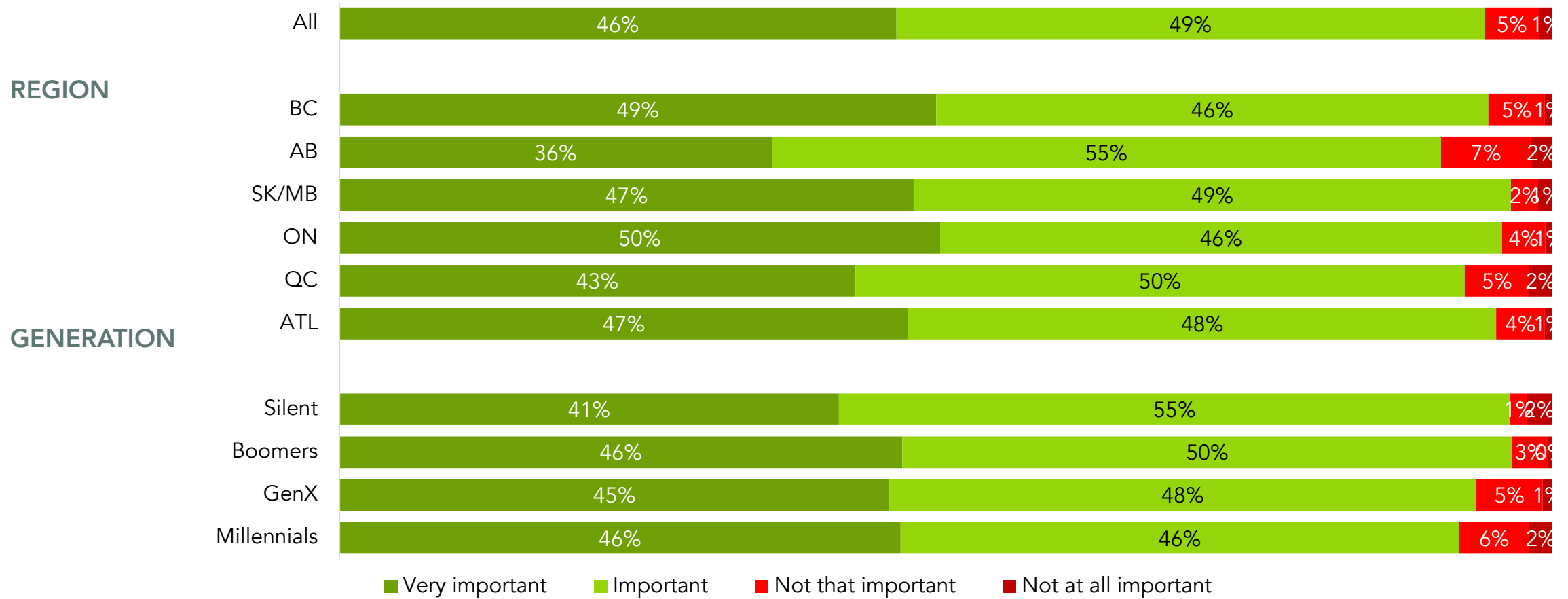
IT'S IMPORTANT TO PROTECT LANDS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



How important are the following reasons for why you support protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada?

REASONS FOR WHY YOU SUPPORT PROTECTING AND CONSERVING MORE NATURAL SPACES IN CANADA

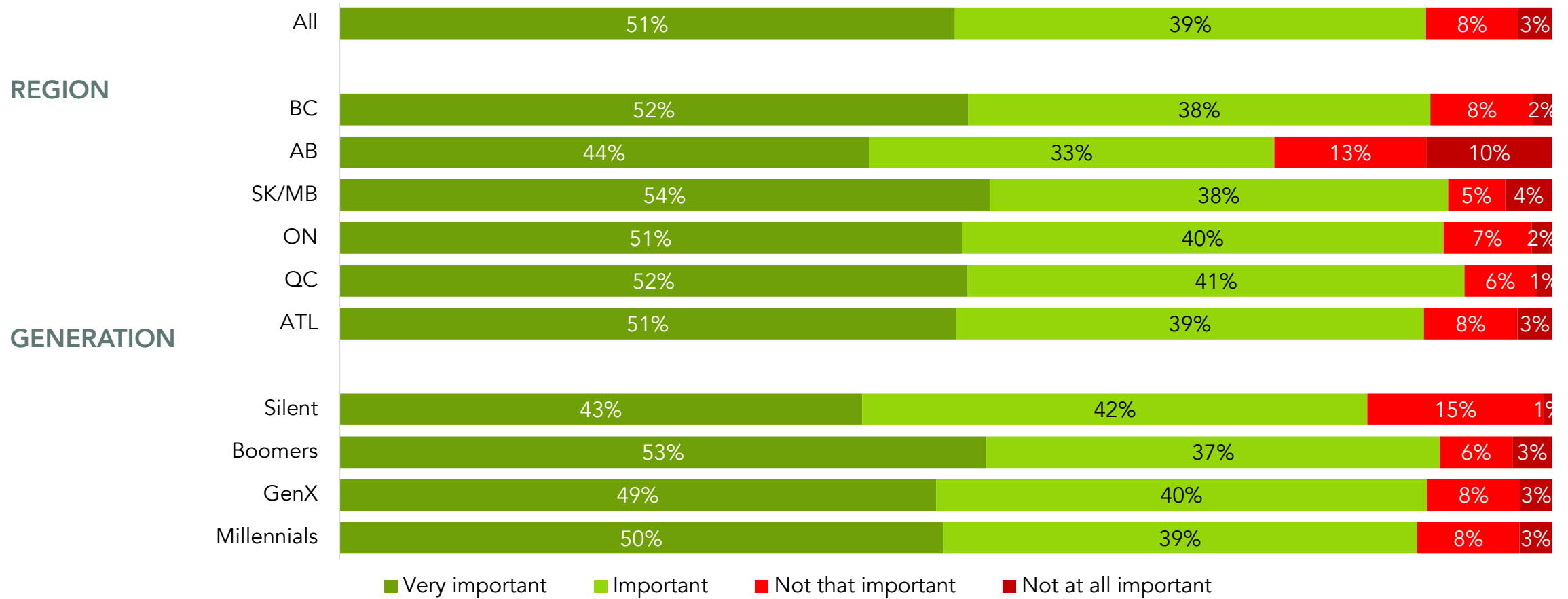
IT WILL PROTECT ENDANGERED WILDLIFE



How important are the following reasons for why you support protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada?

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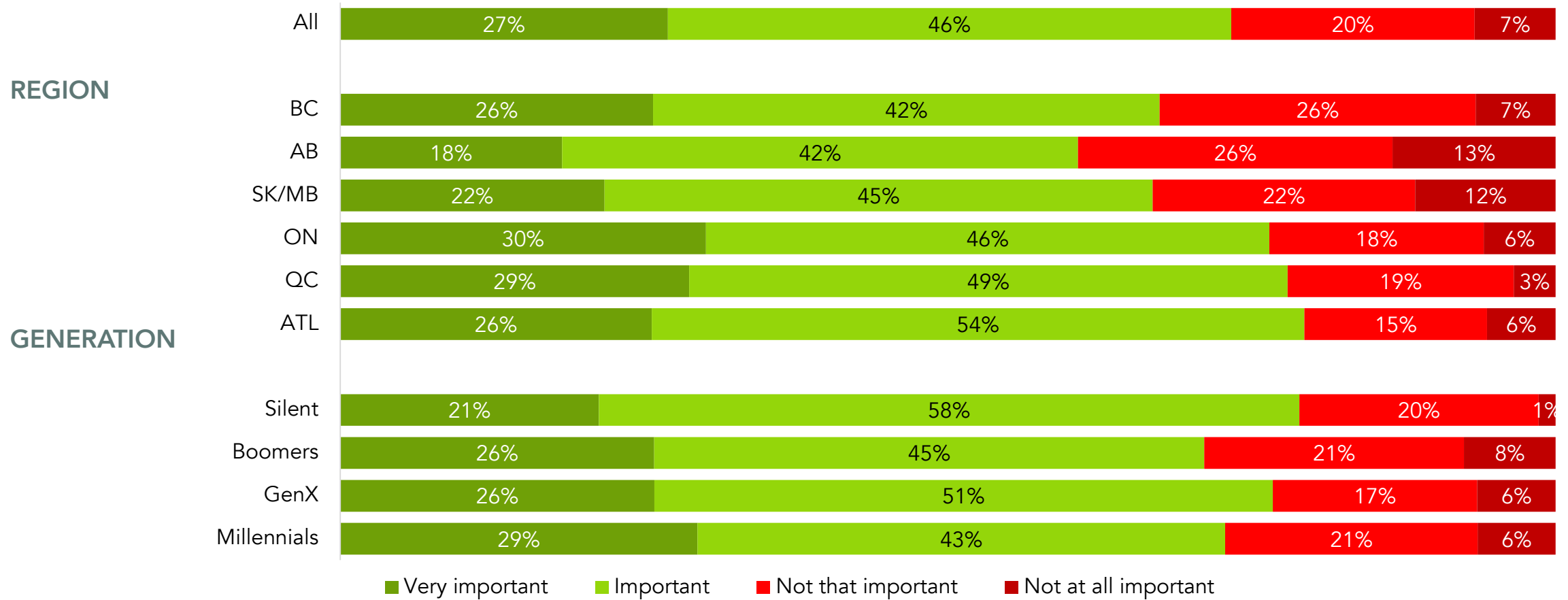
IT WILL HELP DEAL WITH CLIMATE CHANGE



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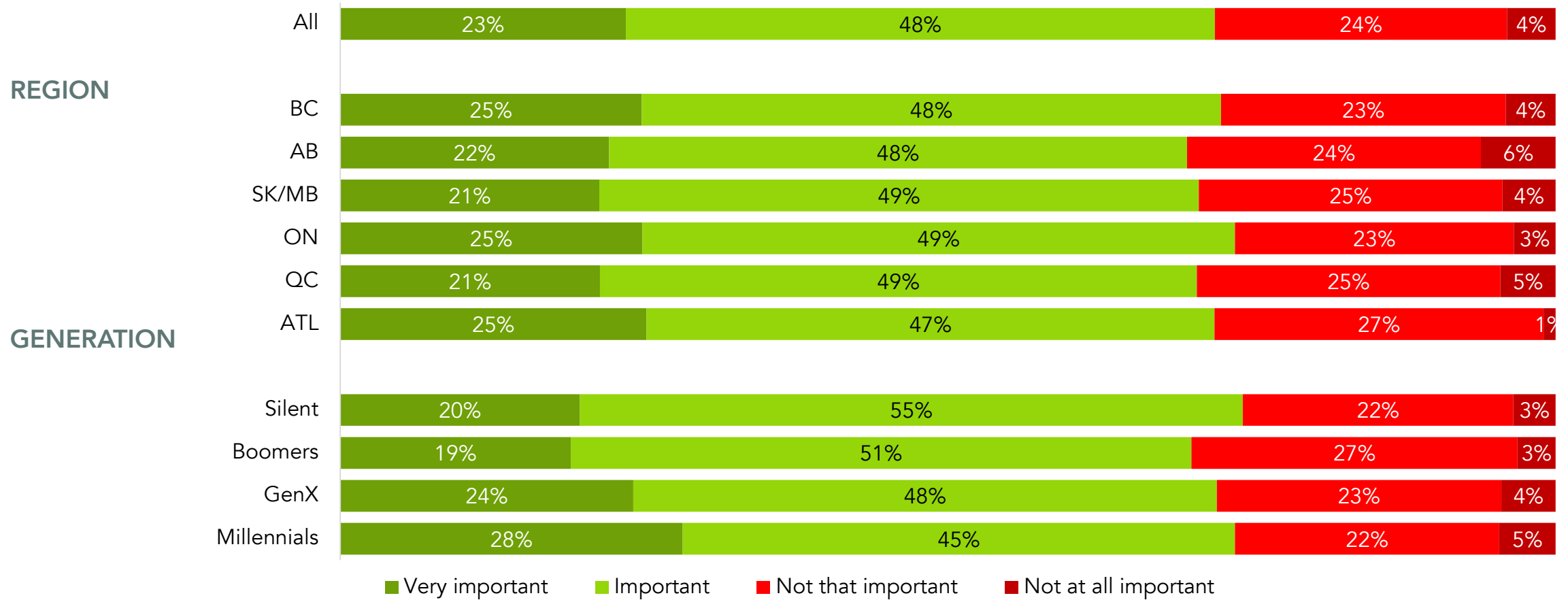
IT WILL SUPPORT INDIGENOUS STEWARDSHIP OF LANDS AND WATERS



How important are the following reasons for why you support protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada?

REASONS FOR WHY YOU SUPPORT PROTECTING AND CONSERVING MORE NATURAL SPACES IN CANADA

IT WILL ENSURE THAT CANADIANS CAN USE THE LAND FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES



How important are the following reasons for why you support protecting and conserving more natural spaces in Canada?



CANADA'S COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING NATURAL SPACES

KEY FINDINGS

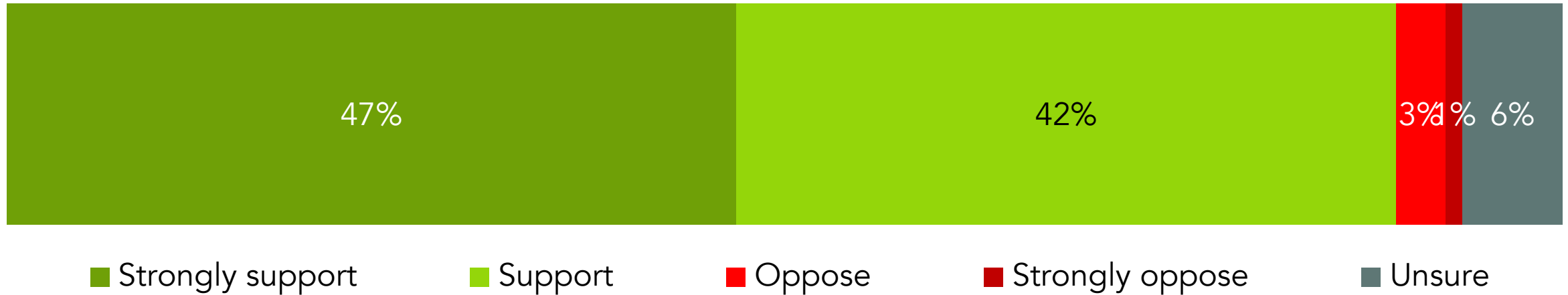
Almost all Canadians support the 2010 commitment Canada made to protect 17% of its lands and fresh water by 2020.

When told that Canada has protected a lower percentage of land than other comparable countries, most Canadians expressed disappointment. Few were pleased, one in four were indifferent, while 11% were angry.

At the same time, 38% say at minimum Canada should do its part and 59% say Canada should demonstrate global leadership.

There is also widespread support for Canada to co-operate with international organizations to help conserve natural spaces.

SUPPORT FOR 2010 CONSERVATION COMMITMENT



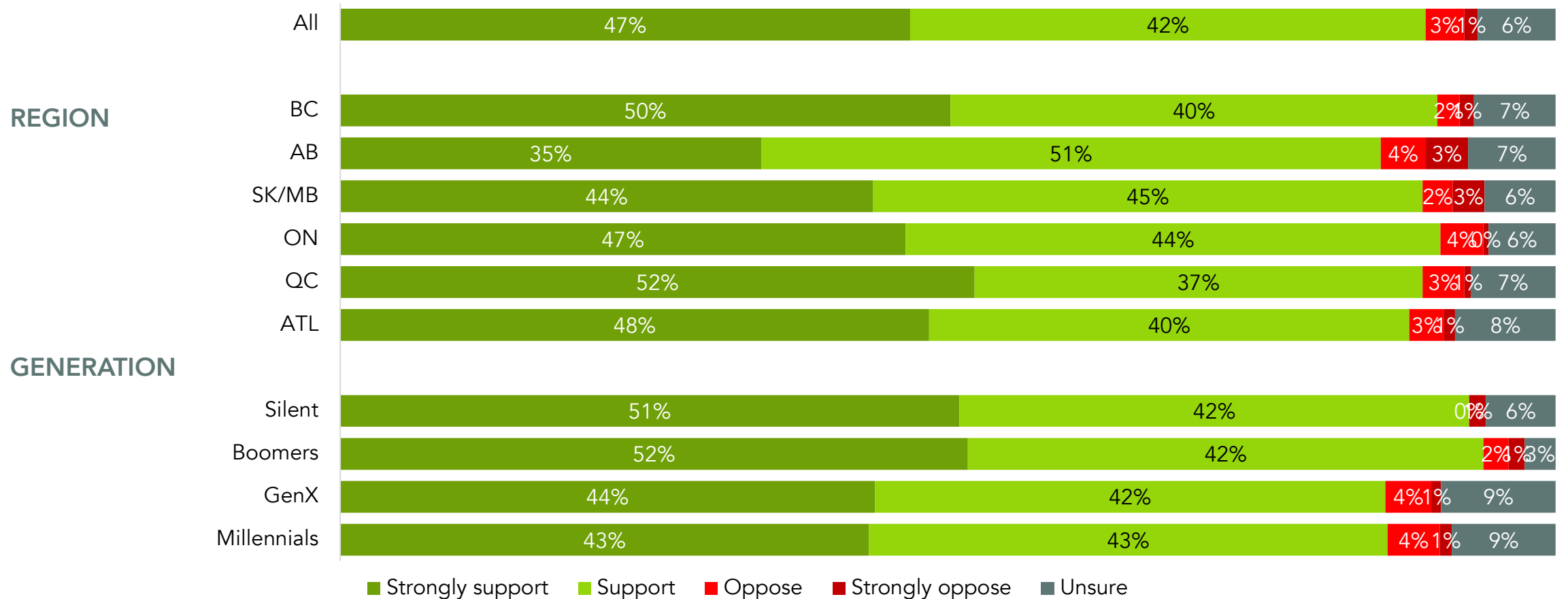
Almost nine in ten Canadians either strongly support or support the 2010 commitment Canada made to protect at least 17% of lands and fresh water by 2010.

That view is widely held but is more intensely felt in Quebec, BC, Ontario, and Atlantic Canada than in the Prairies.

In 2010, Canada joined 195 other countries in committing to conserve forests, freshwaters and other landscapes that support a wide variety of animals and plants. Canada's federal, provincial, and territorial governments have agreed to reach the international target of protecting at least 17% of lands and fresh water by 2020.

Do you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose this commitment?

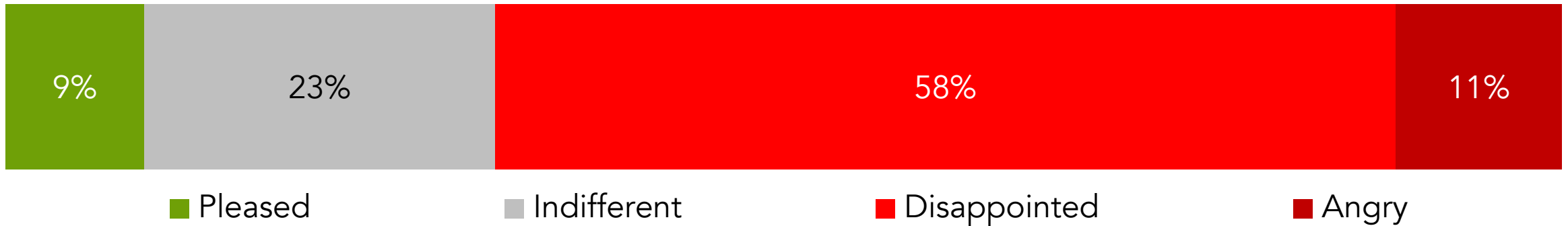
SUPPORT FOR 2010 COMMITMENT



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Do you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose this commitment?

CANADA HAS PROTECTED A LOWER PERCENTAGE OF LAND THAN OTHERS

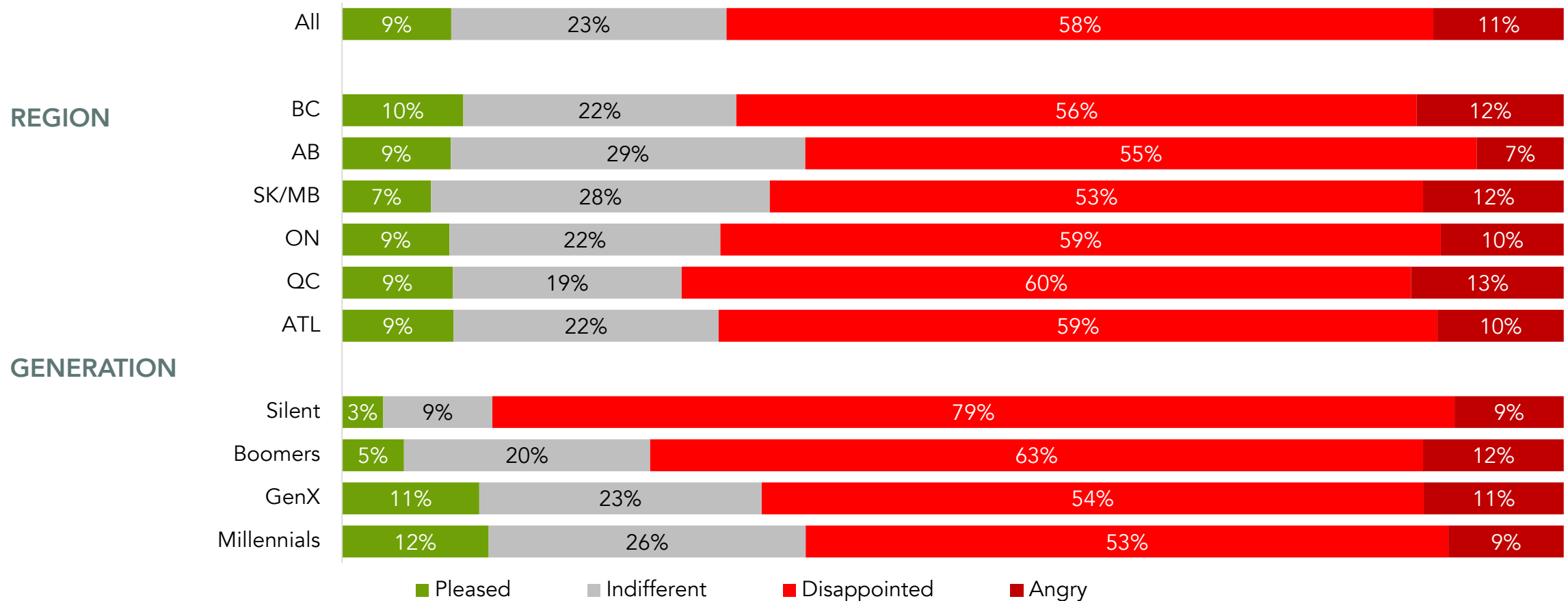


When told that Canada has protected a lower percentage of land than other comparable countries, most Canadians expressed disappointment. Few were pleased, one in four were indifferent, while 11% were angry.

Disappointment was felt across the country.

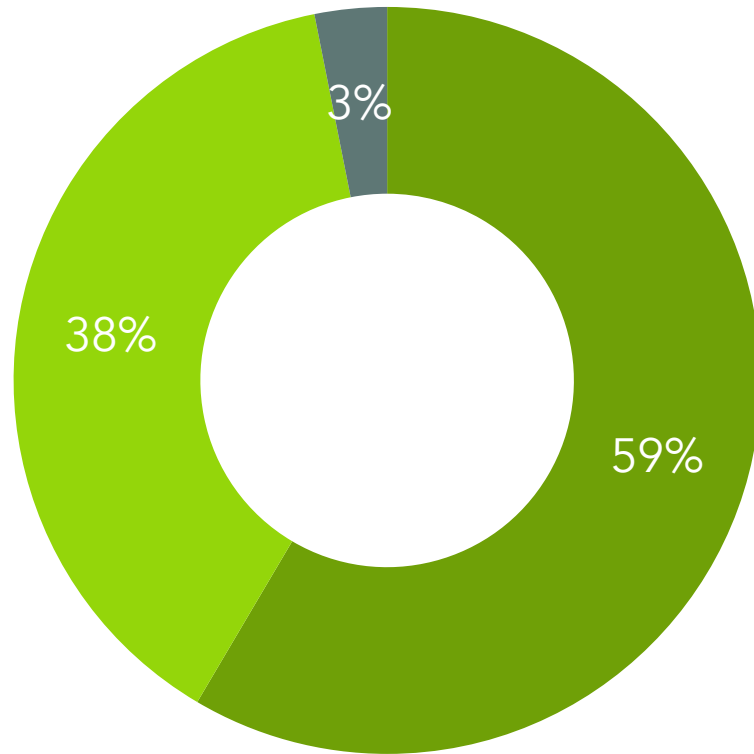
So far, Canada has protected a lower percentage of land than the United States, Germany, Japan and other economic leaders
How does learning this make you feel? Are you...

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DO YOU THINK CANADA SHOULD...

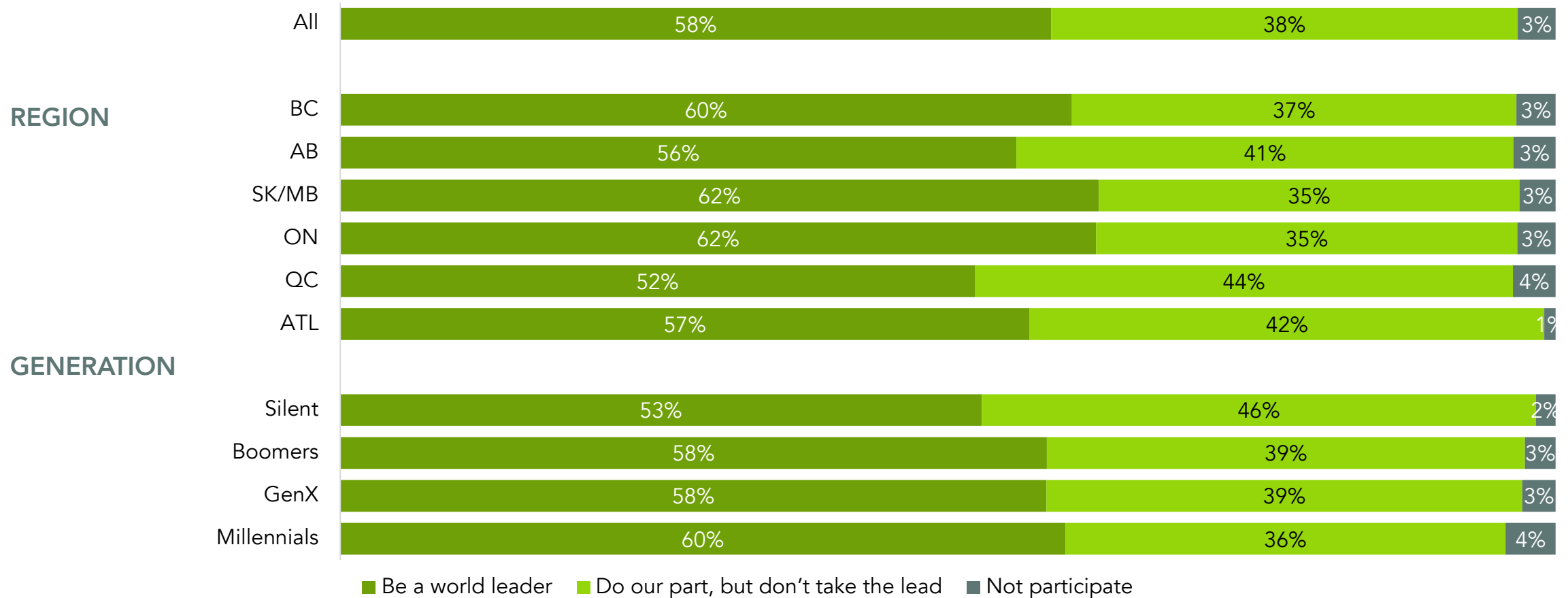


- Be a world leader
- Do our part, but don't take the lead
- Not participate in global efforts to conserve and protect natural spaces and wildlife

At the same time, most Canadians (59%) believe that Canada should be a world leader when it comes to conservation and protecting wildlife versus 38% who feel we should do our part, but not take the lead.

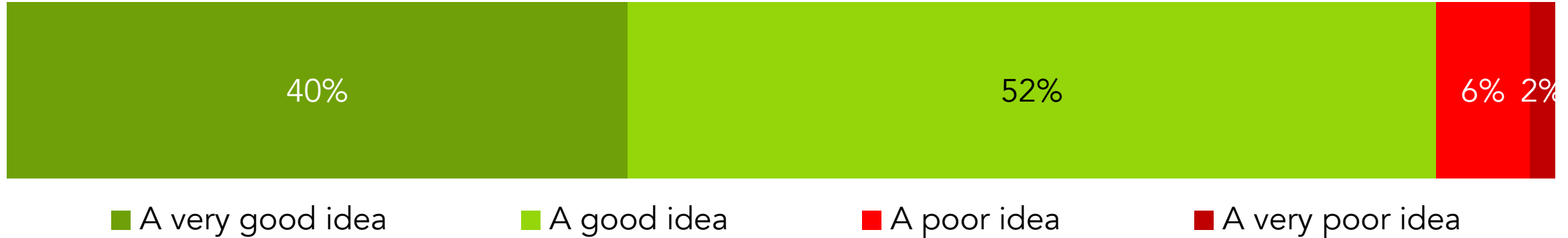
What role do you think Canada should play when it comes to conservation and protecting wildlife? Do you think Canada should...

DO YOU THINK CANADA SHOULD...



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CO-OPERATING WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



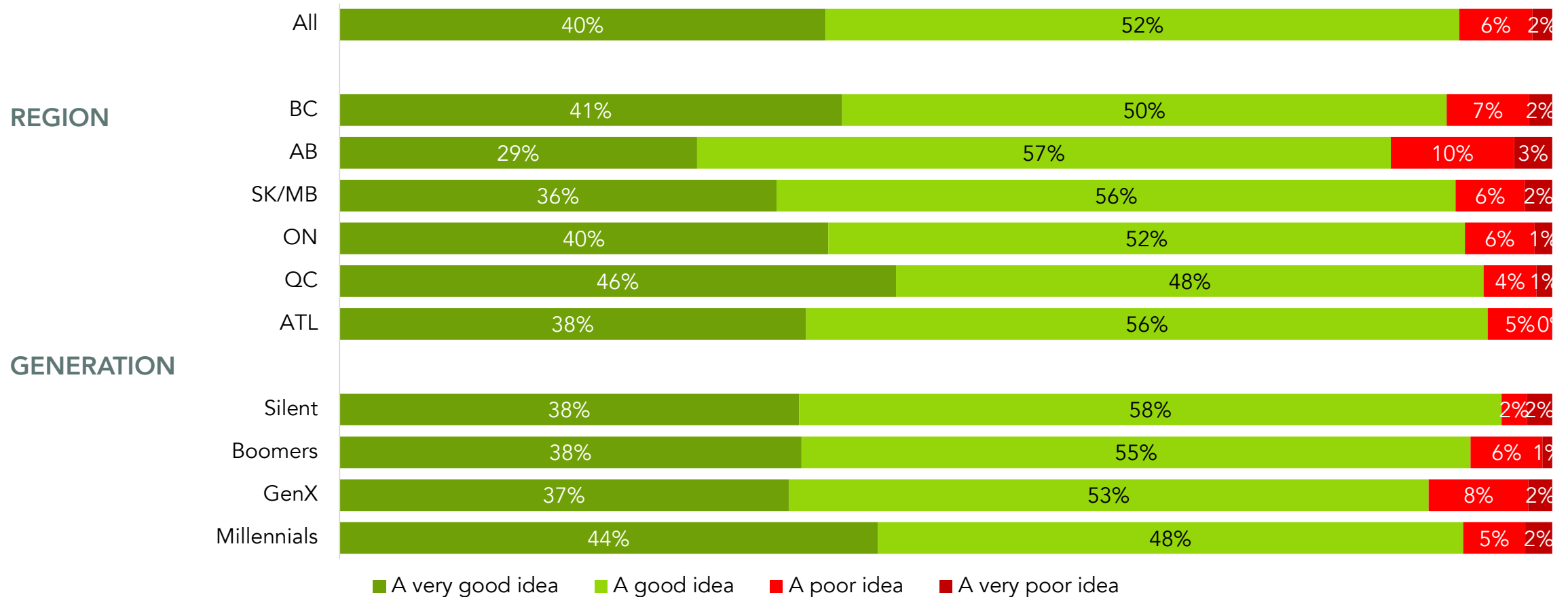
There is also widespread support for Canada to co-operate with international organizations to help conserve plants and animals.

The same patterns exist as with other questions. Quebec and BC are higher than other regions.

Conserving plants and animals sometimes requires international coordination, since wildlife travels across borders and forests and waterways can benefit people in different countries.

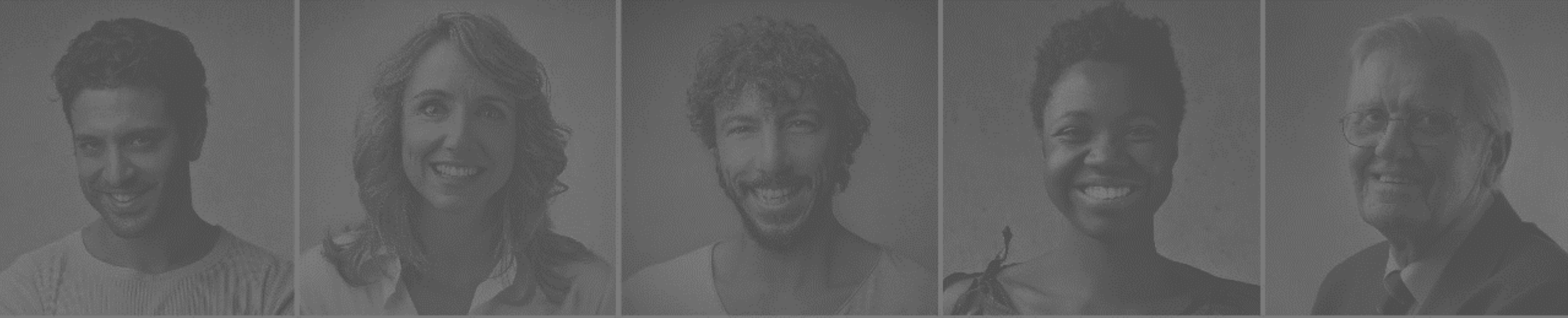
Do you think it's a very good idea, a good idea, a poor idea, or a very poor idea for Canada to co-operate with international organizations and accept technical and financial support from them to assist Canada in conserving natural spaces?

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INDIGENOUS STEWARDSHIP



KEY FINDINGS

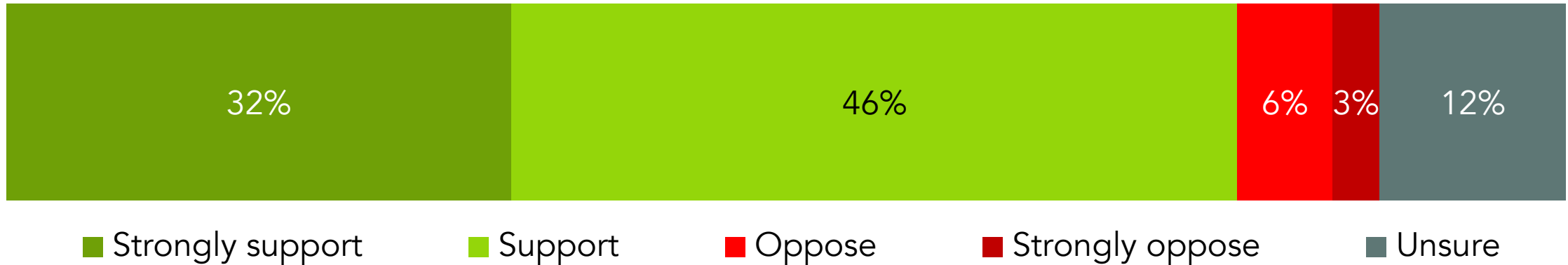
Almost eight in ten Canadians either strongly support or support long-term federal funding for Indigenous Guardians programs.

Similarly, 78% back a federal program to support Indigenous protected areas that conserve lands and wildlife.

Support crosses all regions of the country.

All the arguments in favour of the Indigenous Guardian program performed relatively well.

FEDERAL PROGRAM TO SUPPORT THE CREATION OF INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREAS

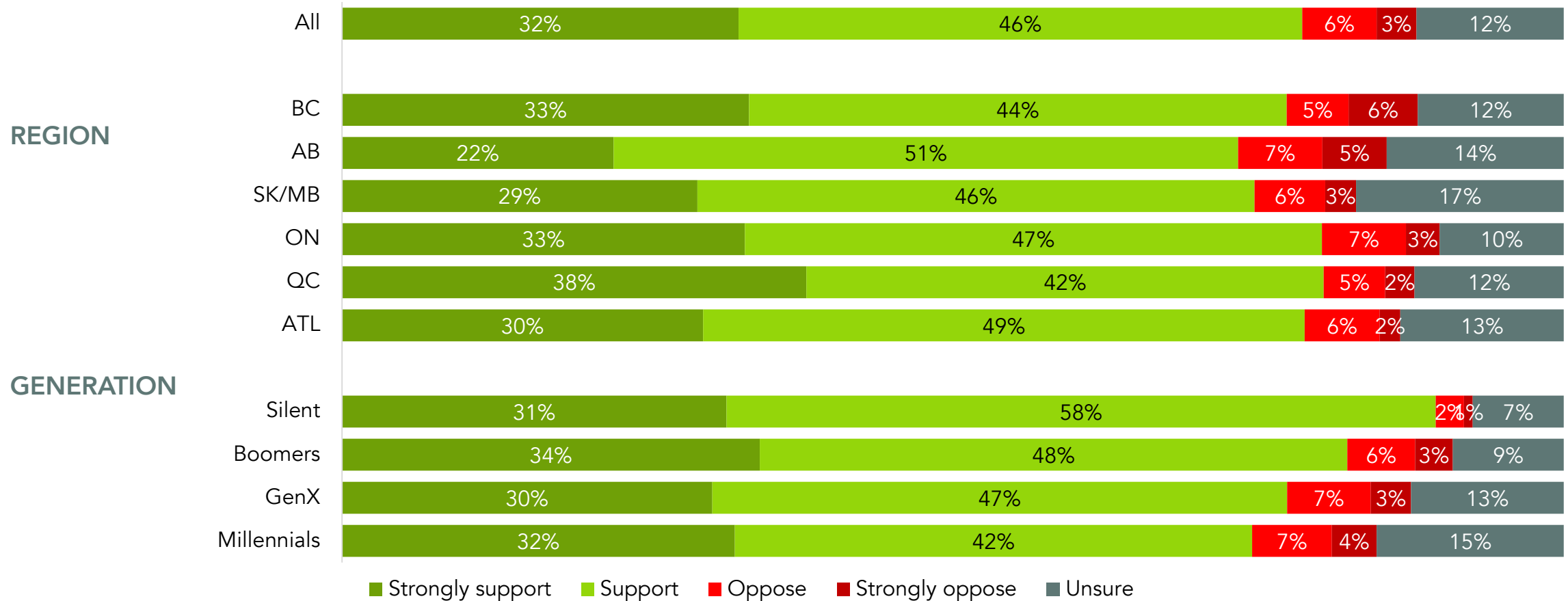


Almost eight in ten Canadians either strongly support or support a federal program to support the creation of Indigenous Protected Areas.

Several Indigenous communities are creating Indigenous Protected Areas to conserve lands and wildlife in partnership with federal, provincial, or territorial governments.

Indigenous Protected Areas often have a joint designation as a national park, provincial park or national wildlife area. In October, for instance, the Dehcho First Nations and Government of Canada designated the Edézhíe Dehcho Protected Area/National Wildlife Area to conserve 14,000 square kilometres boreal forest west of Yellowknife. Would you support or oppose a federal program to support the creation of Indigenous Protected Areas?

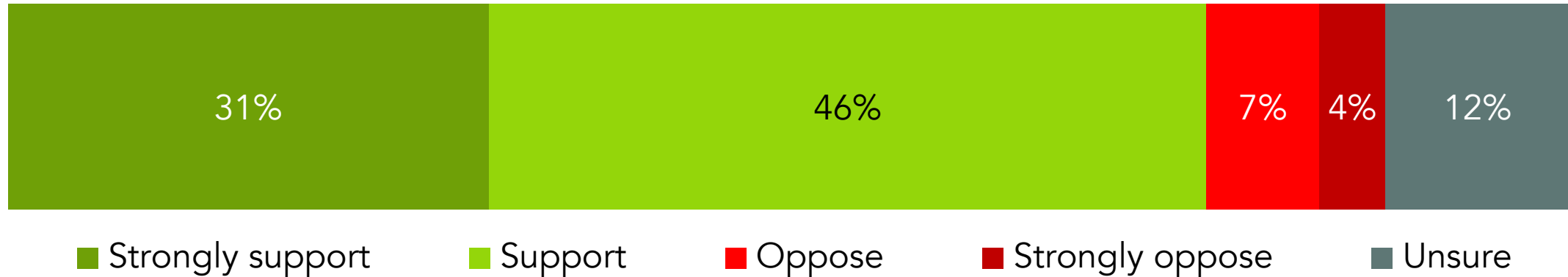
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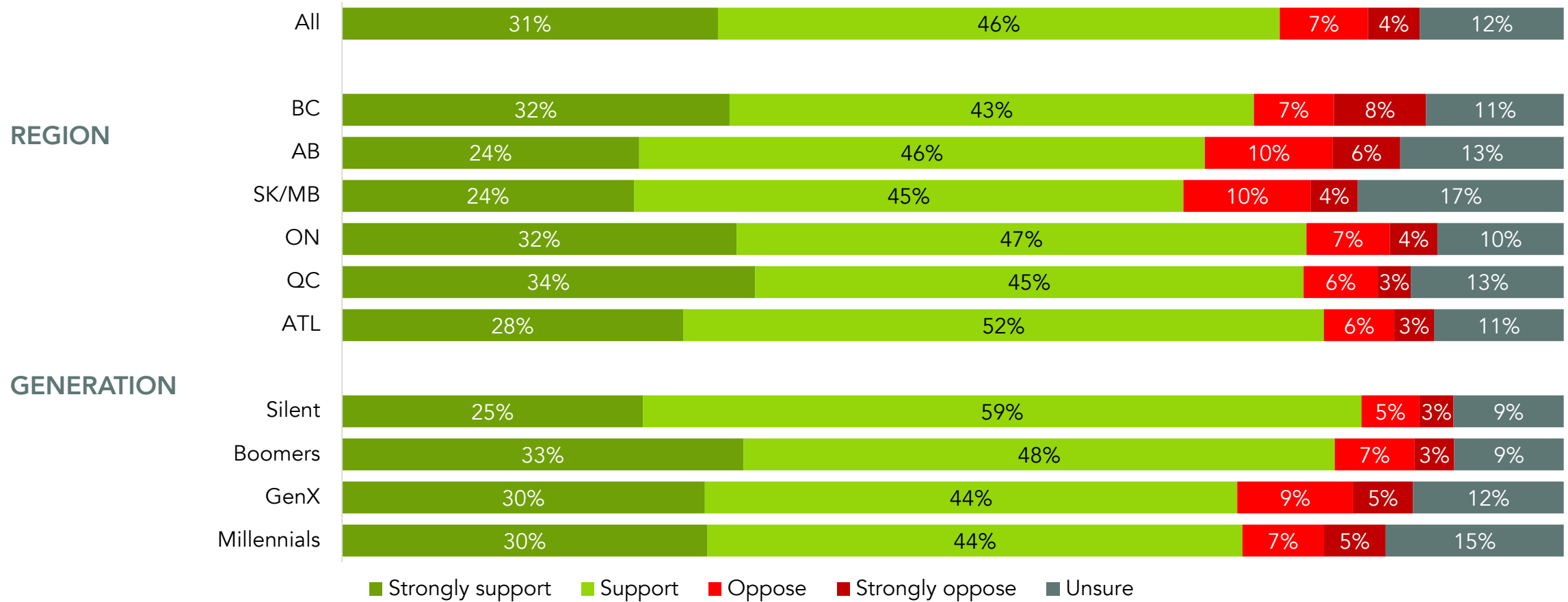
LONG-TERM FEDERAL FUNDING FOR INDIGENOUS GUARDIANS PROGRAMS



Almost eight in ten Canadians either strongly support or support long-term federal funding for Indigenous Guardian programs. Support crosses all regions of the country.

Some of these protected lands are managed by Indigenous Guardians—local people trained in science and traditional knowledge who test water quality, monitor caribou, salmon and other animals, and interpret cultural sites for visitors. Would you support or oppose long-term federal funding for Indigenous Guardians programs?

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ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF GOVERNMENT PARTNERING WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Researchers looking at two Indigenous Guardians programs in the NWT found that they currently generate \$2.50 in social, economic, cultural, and environmental value for every \$1 invested. With further investment, researchers estimate the programs could generate more value.

Supporting indigenous-led conservation and stewardship is an effective way for Canada to honour its international commitments to conserve ecologically sensitive land.

Many groups including Indigenous groups, environmental organizations, scientists, and industry leaders support the initiative.

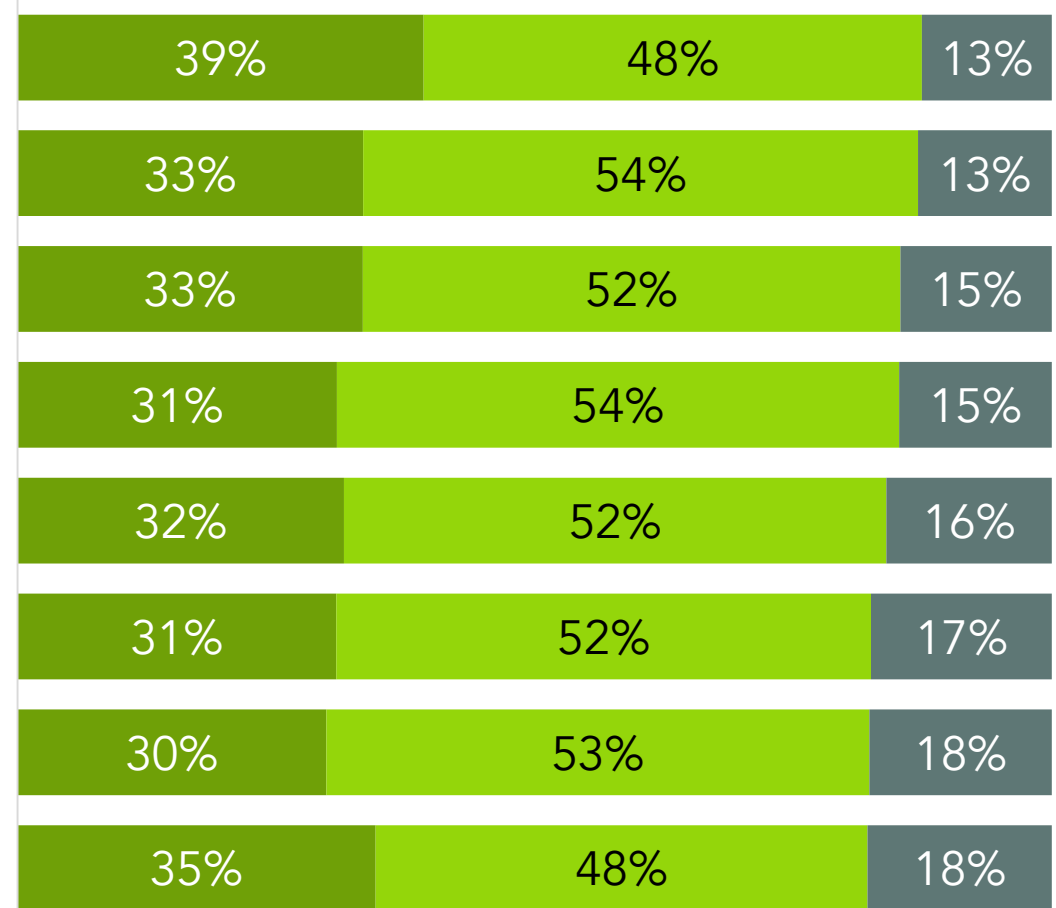
Australia established a similar program where nearly half of protected lands are managed successfully by "Indigenous Rangers", the Australian equivalent of Indigenous Guardians.

When indigenous communities are empowered to protect and manage ecologically sensitive lands, they can also benefit economically from the increased tourism generated in those areas.

Honouring Indigenous aspirations for the land is an essential element of Reconciliation.

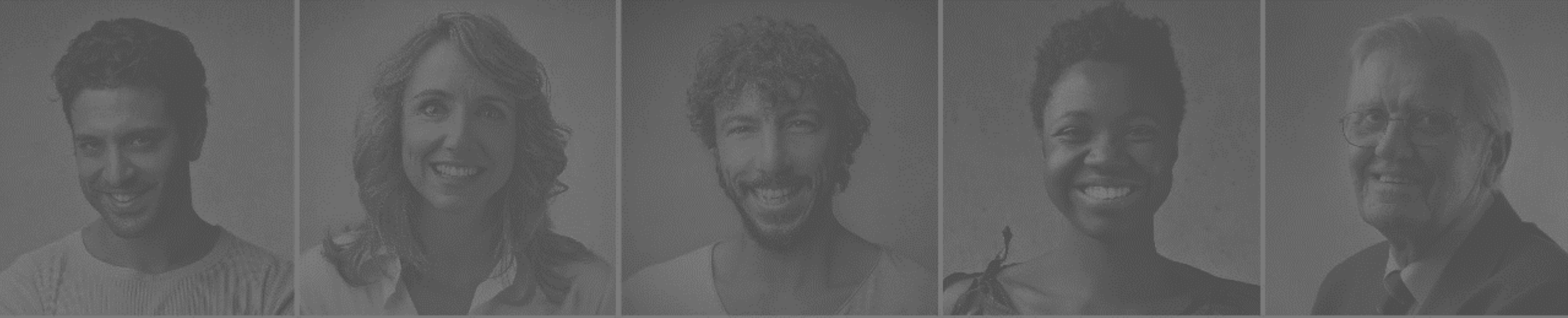
By having clear conservation plans, the government will create more certainty for those who want to develop natural resources like mining and forestry in government-owned land.

Indigenous people who live in and close to the boreal region know best the impact of climate change and how to manage and protect the lands.

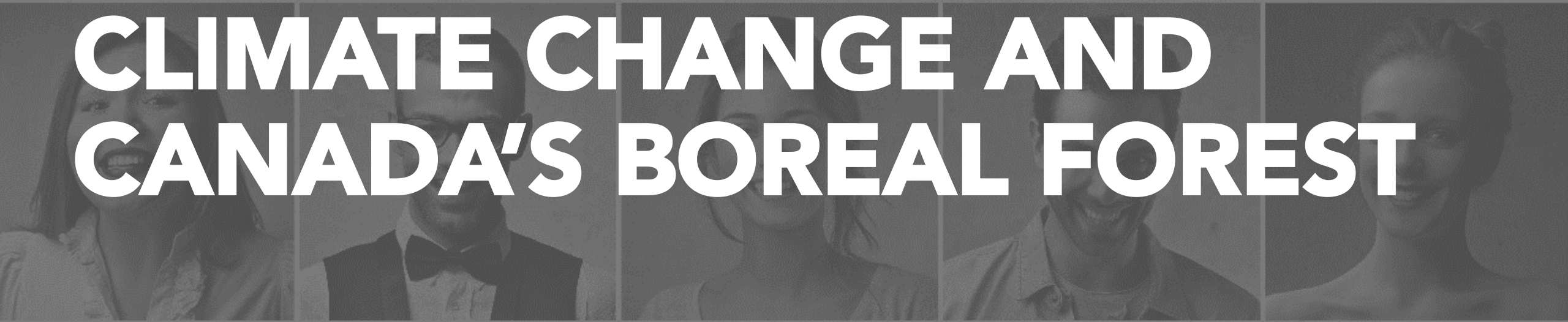


■ A very strong argument ■ A good argument ■ Don't think it's a good argument

Below are some arguments in favour of government partnering with Indigenous communities to create Indigenous Protected Areas to conserve lands and wildlife in Canada. For each, tell us whether you think it is a very strong argument, a good argument, or if you don't think it's a good argument.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND CANADA'S BOREAL FOREST



KEY FINDINGS

When told that scientists have shown the boreal region play a major role in capturing and storing carbon dioxide, almost all say it is a good idea to protect and conserve more of Canada's boreal region.

Overall, a clear majority (57%) think it is a very good idea.

GIVEN IT'S ROLE IN CARBON CAPTURE AND STORE, IS IT A GOOD OR POOR IDEA TO CONSERVE MORE OF CANADA'S BOREAL REGION?

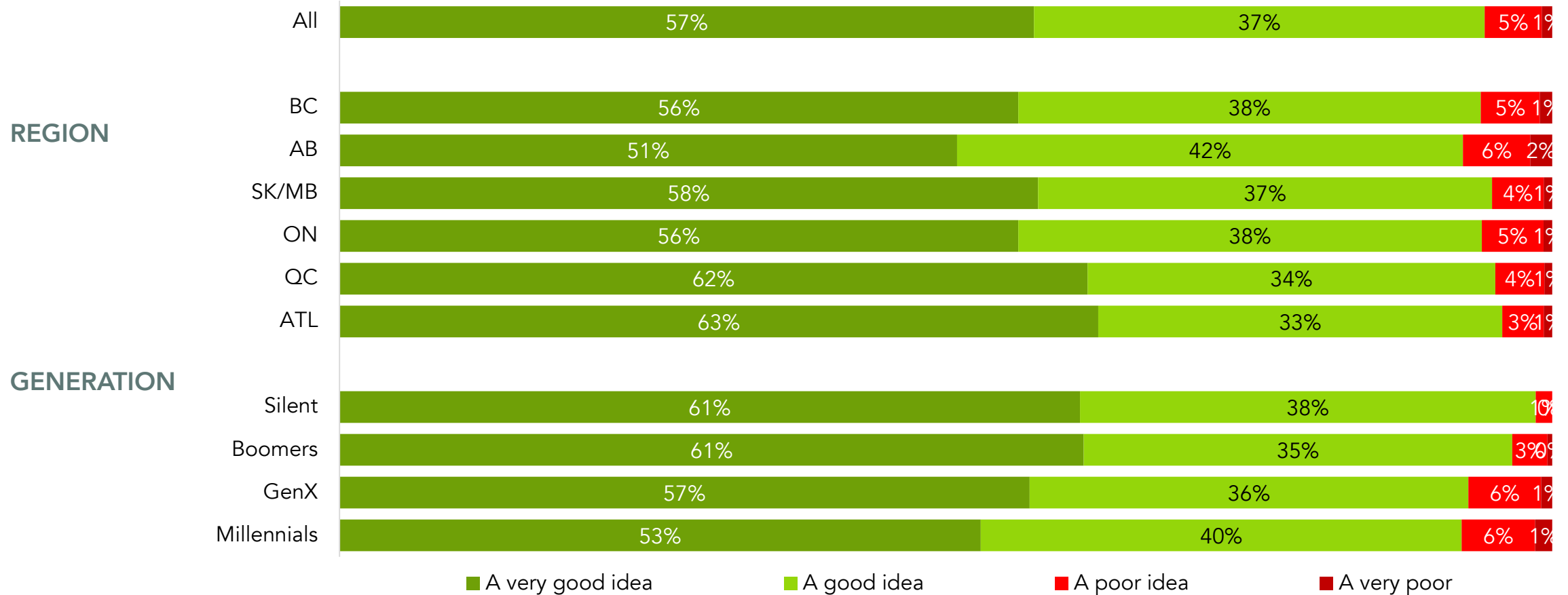


When told that scientists have shown the boreal region play a major role in capturing and storing carbon dioxide, almost all say it is a good idea to protect and conserve more of Canada's boreal region.

Scientists have shown that the trees, wetlands, and peatlands in Canada's boreal region play a major role in capturing and storing carbon dioxide.

Given this information, do you think it's a very good idea, good idea, poor idea, or very poor idea to protect and conserve more of Canada's boreal region?

GIVEN IT'S ROLE IN CARBON CAPTURE AND STORE, IS IT A GOOD OR POOR IDEA TO CONSERVE MORE OF CANADA'S BOREAL REGION?



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CONCLUSION

The survey conducted for the International Boreal Conservation Campaign demonstrates broad public support for increased conservation of natural spaces and the boreal forest.

In principle, almost all Canadians support more conservation. They see conservation as an important tool in fighting climate change and when introduced to the Indigenous Guardian program, a large majority support the program and think the federal government should fund it. Additionally, there is also large support Indigenous protected areas. They see the upside to allowing Indigenous people manage the lands they know so well.

Ultimately, in an opinion environment in which a growing number of Canadians are concerned about climate change and wildlife protection, conserving the boreal forest is a policy that finds wide appeal – among all regions and across generations.

DATA STORYLINE

CANADIANS SUPPORT PROTECTING AND CONSERVING NATURAL SPACES AND WANT THEIR POLITICAL LEADERS TO DO MORE. MOST WANT CANADA TO BE A WORLD LEADER.

THEY ALSO SUPPORT EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S LEADERSHIP IN BOTH CREATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS.

THEY RECOGNIZE CONSERVING MORE NATURAL LANDS IS A WAY TO DEAL WITH CLIMATE CHANGE.

WHEN TOLD THAT BOREAL FORESTS ARE IMPORTANT TO DEALING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE, ALMOST ALL THINK MORE CONSERVATION IS A GOOD IDEA.

CONSERVATION IS A WINNING POLITICAL CHOICE. IT FINDS BROAD SUPPORT, UNITES CANADIANS ON BOTH CLIMATE ACTION AND INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION.