



**Skwxwú7mesh
Úxwumixw**

Squamish Nation



Eshíhkw'iws Chet

We are all related

A census of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw

March 28, 2023

Data Report:
Our Territory, Lands,
and Waters

Produced by Big River Analytics
& Tiskwat Consulting

Acknowledgements

Chet kw'enmantúmi (we thank you), Skwxwú7mesh Members, for your high levels of participation in Eshíhkw'íws Chet - a census of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw.

We'd also like to thank the enumerators, who helped collect all the data for this project, for their hard work and efforts to make this project a success, Elder Vanessa Campbell for her advice and sharing her knowledge and insights, and to the Nation staff who made this work possible.

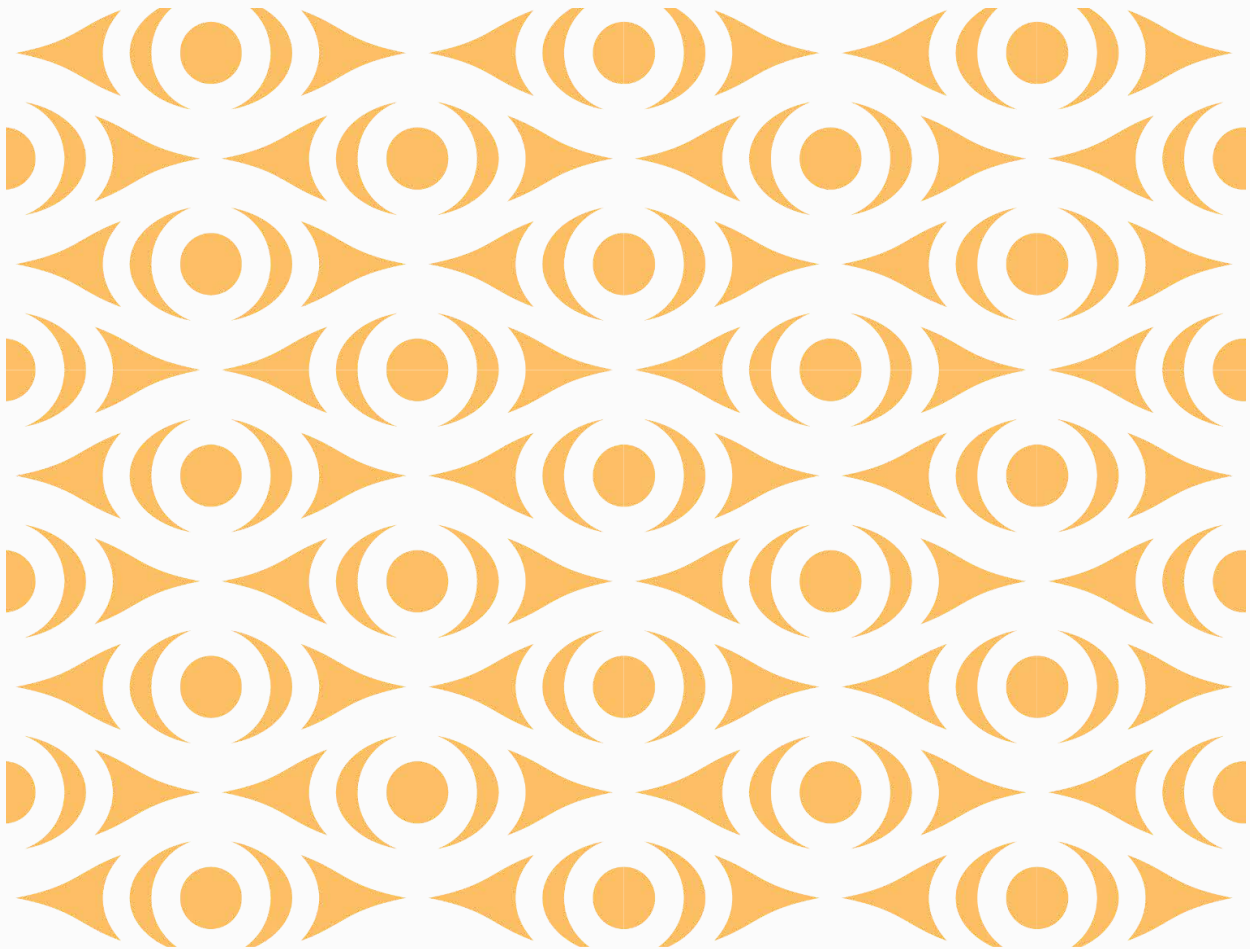


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Introduction

Skwxwú7mesh people have used data to steward territory, exercise governance, undertake planning, and assure well-being since time immemorial. This function of governance has been disrupted over the past two hundred years, and today, much of the data generated about Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw is not controlled by Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw or reflective of Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw priorities and worldviews.

Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw undertook a census to ensure the Nation and Members have quality data relevant to their lives and decisions, and to inform major planning initiatives and program design. The guiding vision was for this project to enhance self-determination, rebuild and reinforce connections between family and kin, and leave a legacy of both useful information and new skills and understanding to support Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw in years to come. The project was named Eshíhkw'íws Chet – “we are all related” – by Elder Vanessa Campbell.

*“All of us, everywhere on our Land, our families, our friends,
we are all related...”*

*it's best that we advise each other...
All Squamish people need to say something.”*

— Elder Vanessa Campbell

The result of Eshíhkw'íws Chet is a dataset representing the perspectives of roughly one in three Members: all generations are well-represented, and the voices of men, women, and gender-diverse people, Members on- and off-reserve, and Members near and far from Skwxwú7mesh Territory are all included. Use of the data is guided by a set of policies and protocols to ensure people's privacy and the protection and security of the data.

This is one of 9 reports that summarize the data collected through Eshíhkw'íws Chet. There is one full report including all sections, and then 8 mini-reports by topic area:

- Who Did We Hear From
- Our Identity, Culture, and Language
- Our Territory, Lands, and Waters
- Our Housing
- Our Jobs, Income, and Schooling
- Our Health and Wellness
- Our Experiences of Cultural Safety
- Our Rights, Governance, and Administration

Method, Limitations, and Interpretation

Eslhíhkw'iw's Chet gathers the voices of roughly 1 in 3 Skwxwú7mesh Members. Although we tried to hear from everyone, we could not reach all Members and some Members chose not to participate. This means that some voices might be over- or under-represented. Data collection relied on a friends-and-family approach, and household heads could answer on behalf of everyone in the home. This means that we were more likely to hear from people who receive information from the Nation or whose friends and family receive information from the Nation. It also means that we heard from more female respondents than other genders, as they are more likely to be a head of their household.

To protect individuals' privacy and confidentiality, we do not report if fewer than 11 people responded a certain way to a question, or if fewer than 21 people responded to a question overall. This means that some charts, figures, and tables do not sum to 100%. Additionally, too few respondents identifying as two-spirit, non-binary, or gender identities other than male and female participated to report results for those gender identities.

Responses to questions in the census were analyzed for all respondents, as well as examined consistently by gender, location, and age, and by other groupings where relevant. Only notable differences across these population groups are reported; if there are no notable differences, summary statistics representing all respondents are presented.

The questionnaire was designed to collect a core set of data from all participants, including individuals who were represented by a household head. The remainder of the questionnaire, organized by modules on specific topics, was self-directed. This means that the response rates and demographic profiles of respondents change throughout this report depending on whether the question was part of the core questionnaire or one of the modules. The total number of respondents is reported for each figure and chart, unless it is suppressed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of respondents. Additional analysis is possible to make inferences about the characteristics of all Skwxwú7mesh Members or to make comparisons with other populations, groups, or governments, but this was not the purpose of this particular report.

Finally, data collection was targeted towards Members and any individuals living on-reserve. If a non-Member living on-reserve was living in a household with Skwxwú7mesh Members, they could participate in the whole survey. If a non-Member living on-reserve did not have any Skwxwú7mesh Members living in their household, we collected basic demographic information and information about renters and tenants on their property, but they are otherwise not included in the analysis in this report.

See the full report *Honouring Members' Voices: Data Report from the 2022 Skwxwú7mesh Census* for a more detailed description of method.

Our Territory, Lands, and Waters

Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw and Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh people have a long-standing and sacred responsibility to their territory, lands, and waters, which cover more than 670,000 hectares. Eshíhkw'íws Chet respondents were asked about the activities they undertake, relationships they hold, and priorities they see for Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh-ullh temíxw (Squamish territory). Because the land is sacred and interconnected with familial and cultural relationships and ancestral knowledge, the information in this section is reported at a high level. This helps protect sacred knowledge and ensure it is not shared in ways that might work against the interests of people, families, and the Nation.

Key Findings

People value the land and its relationship to Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh culture and spirituality. They want to spend more time on the land for these purposes, especially for learning, harvesting, and cultural/spiritual practices. It is critical to respondents that the environment is restored, maintained, and protected.

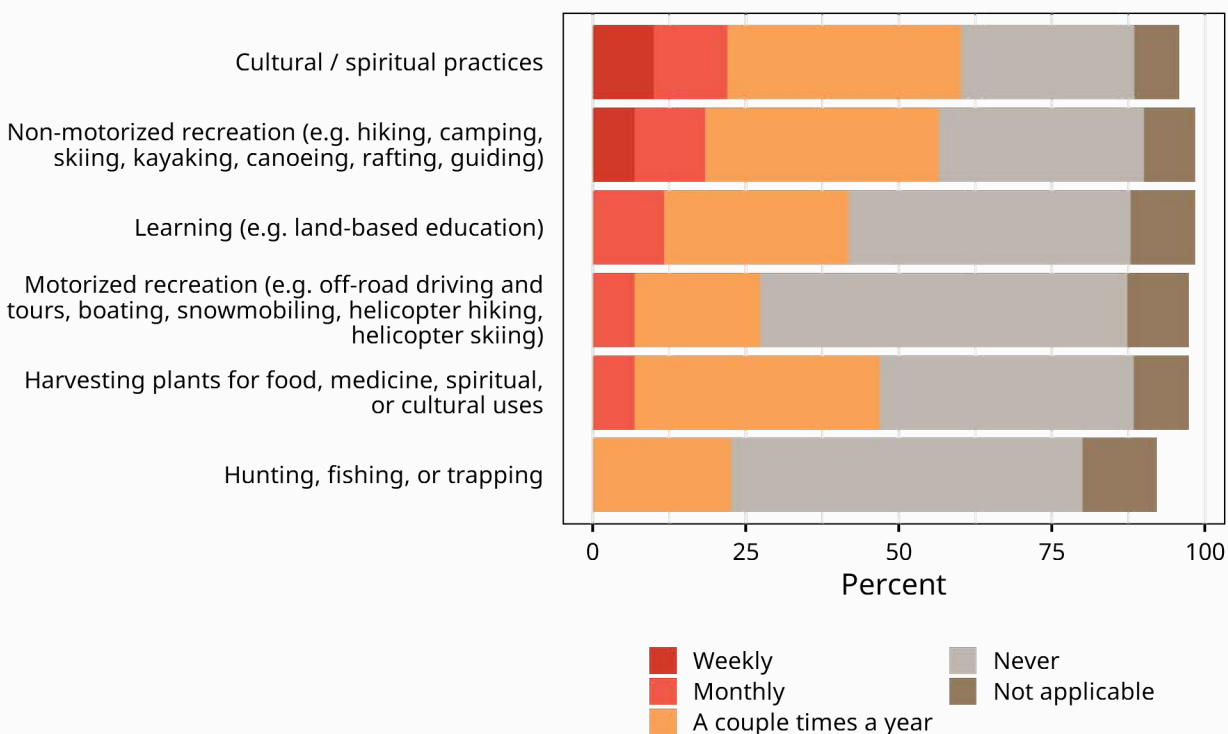


Activities on Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh-ullh Temíxw

Respondents were asked to identify the locations across Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh-ullh temíxw that are most important to them, where they undertake activities, where they wish they could spend more time, and which should be managed differently by Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw. Across all of these questions, Eshíhkw'íws Chet respondents emphasize the importance of the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Valley, the North Shore, Whistler, and Gibsons.

Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents are able to spend time on Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh-ullh temíxw doing some form of cultural, recreational, or harvesting activity in the past year. Of these activities, respondents engaged in cultural and spiritual practices and non-motorized recreation the most frequently: 22% of respondents report being able to do cultural/spiritual activities and 18% report being able to do non-motorized recreation at least once a month in the last year (Figure TLW.1). Fewer than one quarter of respondents report being able to spend time harvesting and undertaking cultural, spiritual, or recreational activities on the land more than a couple of times in the last year.

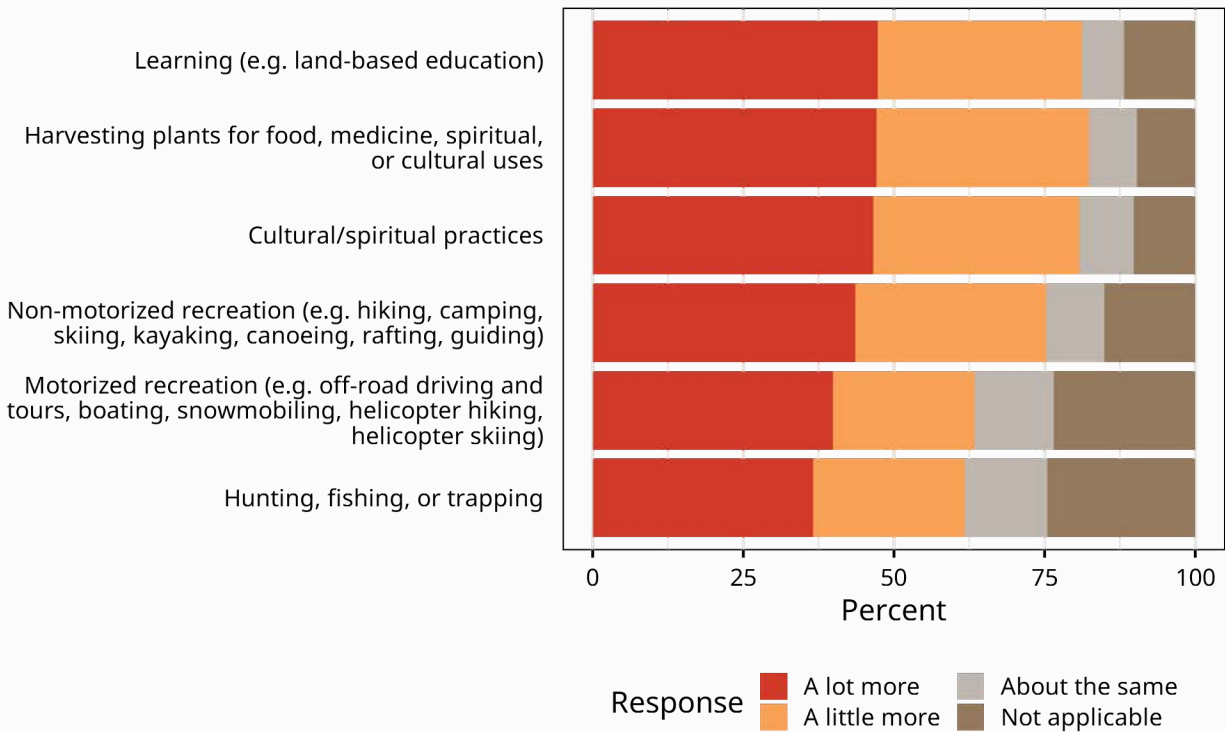
Figure TLW.1: Time Spent on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh-ullh Temíxw in Last 12 Months, by Activity



Note: Question: “In the last 12 months, how often have you been out on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh-ullh temíxw (Squamish Territory) for any of the following...” This question had 192 respondents. Some “Weekly” and “Monthly” responses have been suppressed due to low response rates.

Respondents wish they could spend more time on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh-ullh temíxw undertaking cultural, recreational, and harvesting activities and most respondents wish they could do at least a little more of each type of activity (Figure TLW.2). The top land-based activities that respondents wish they could do a lot more of on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh-ullh temíxw are learning (47%), harvesting plants (47%), and cultural/spiritual practices (47%).

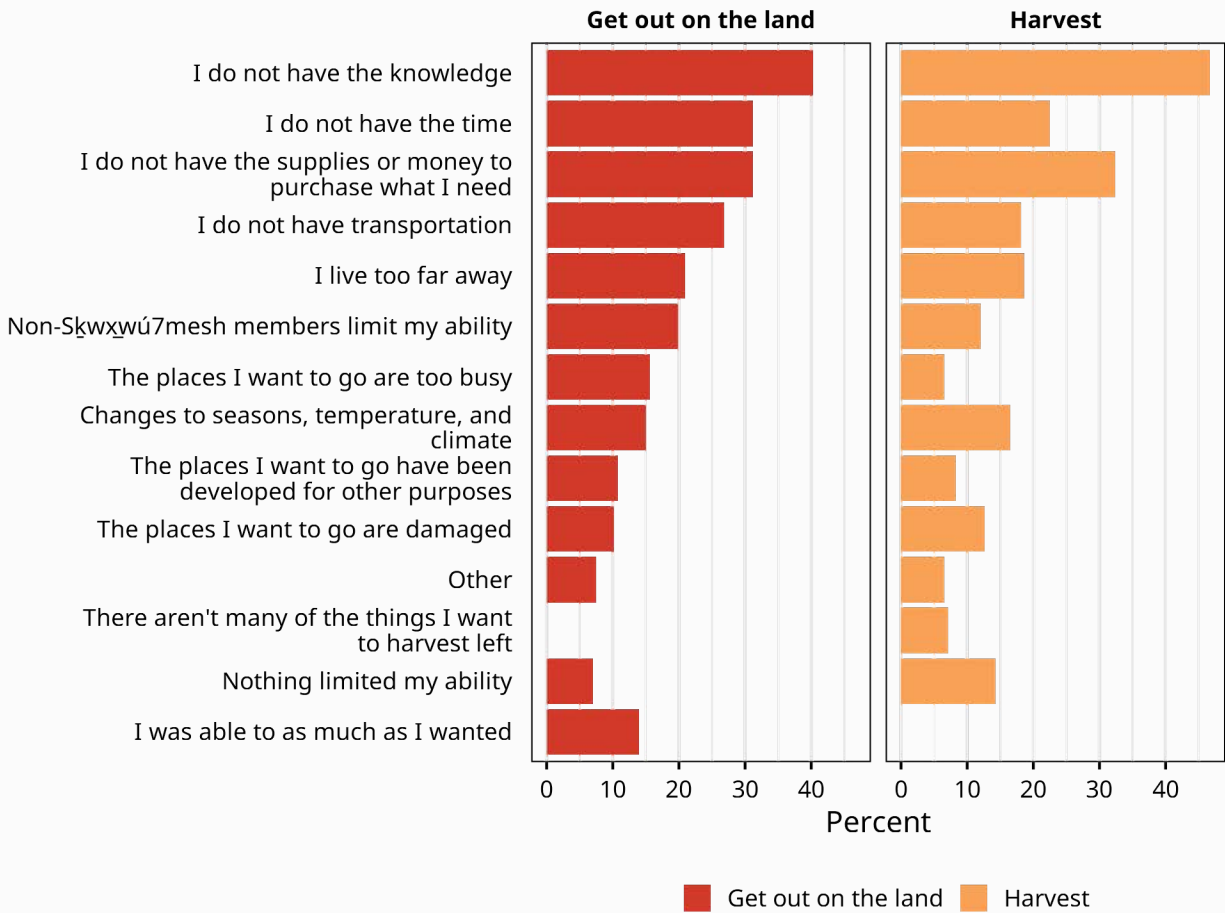
Figure TLW.2: Desire for More Time on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh-ullh Temíxw, by Activity



Note: Question: “In the last 12 months, do you wish you could have done more of the following on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh-ullh temíxw (Squamish Territory ...)” This question had 190 respondents.

Only 14% of respondents report being able to get out on the land as much as they want and 7% report that nothing limits their ability to get out on the land. A slightly higher share (14%) of respondents report that nothing limits their ability to harvest on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh-ullh temíxw (Figure TLW.3). The most commonly identified reasons for respondents not getting out on the land or harvesting as much as they would like to include not having the knowledge (40% get out on the land, 47% harvest), not having the supplies or money to purchase what they need (31% get out on the land, 32% harvest), and not having the time (31% get out on the land, 23% harvest).

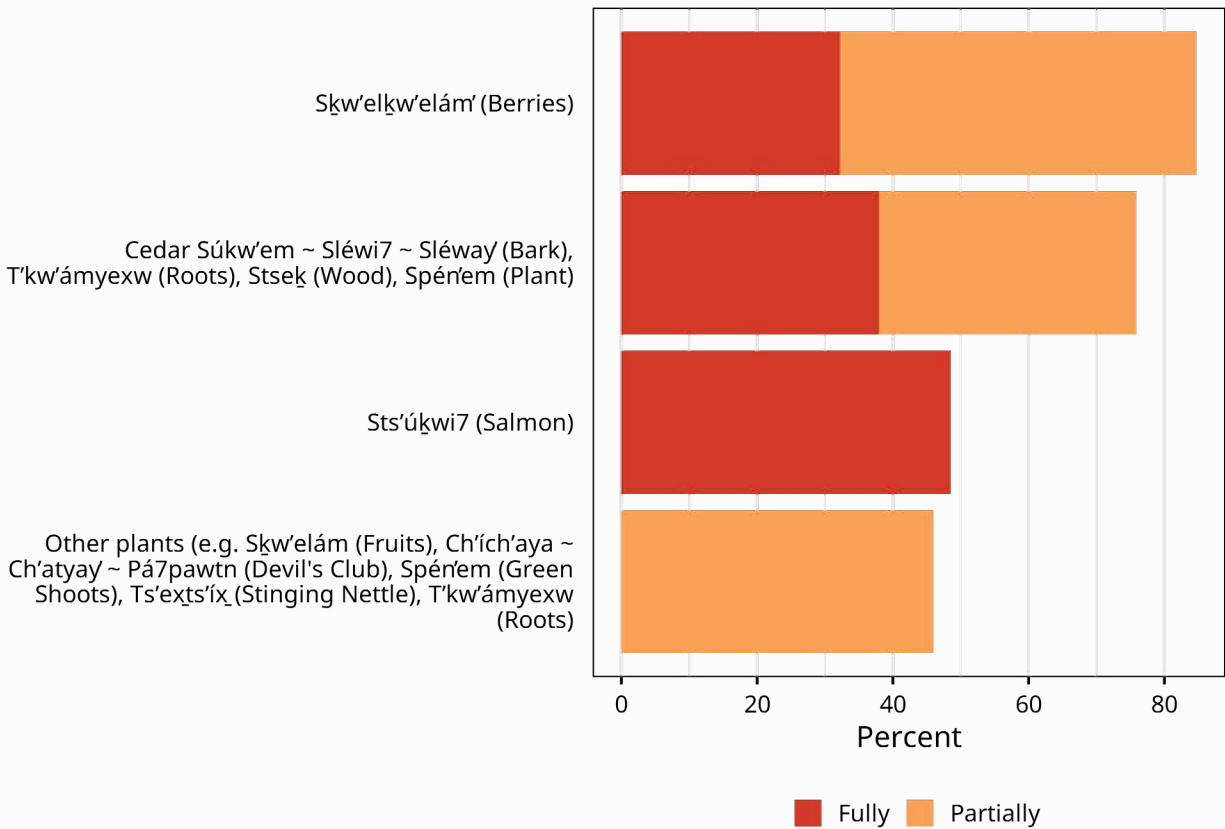
Figure TLW.3: Factors Limiting Ability to Get out on the Land and Harvest in Last 12 Months



Note: Question: “Have any of the following factors limited your ability to be out on the land as much as you would have liked in the last 12 months? Please select all that apply.” This question had 182 respondents.

For those respondents who have been able to harvest plants, animals, or fish in the last 12 months, the availability of resources is often insufficient to meet their needs. The top resources where respondents are able to fully or partially meet their needs are Skw̓'elkw̓'elám̓ (Berries) (85%), followed by Súkw̓'em (cedar including bark, roots, wood, and plant) (76%), Sts'úkw̓i7 (Salmon) (73%), and other plants (71%) (Figure TLW.4).

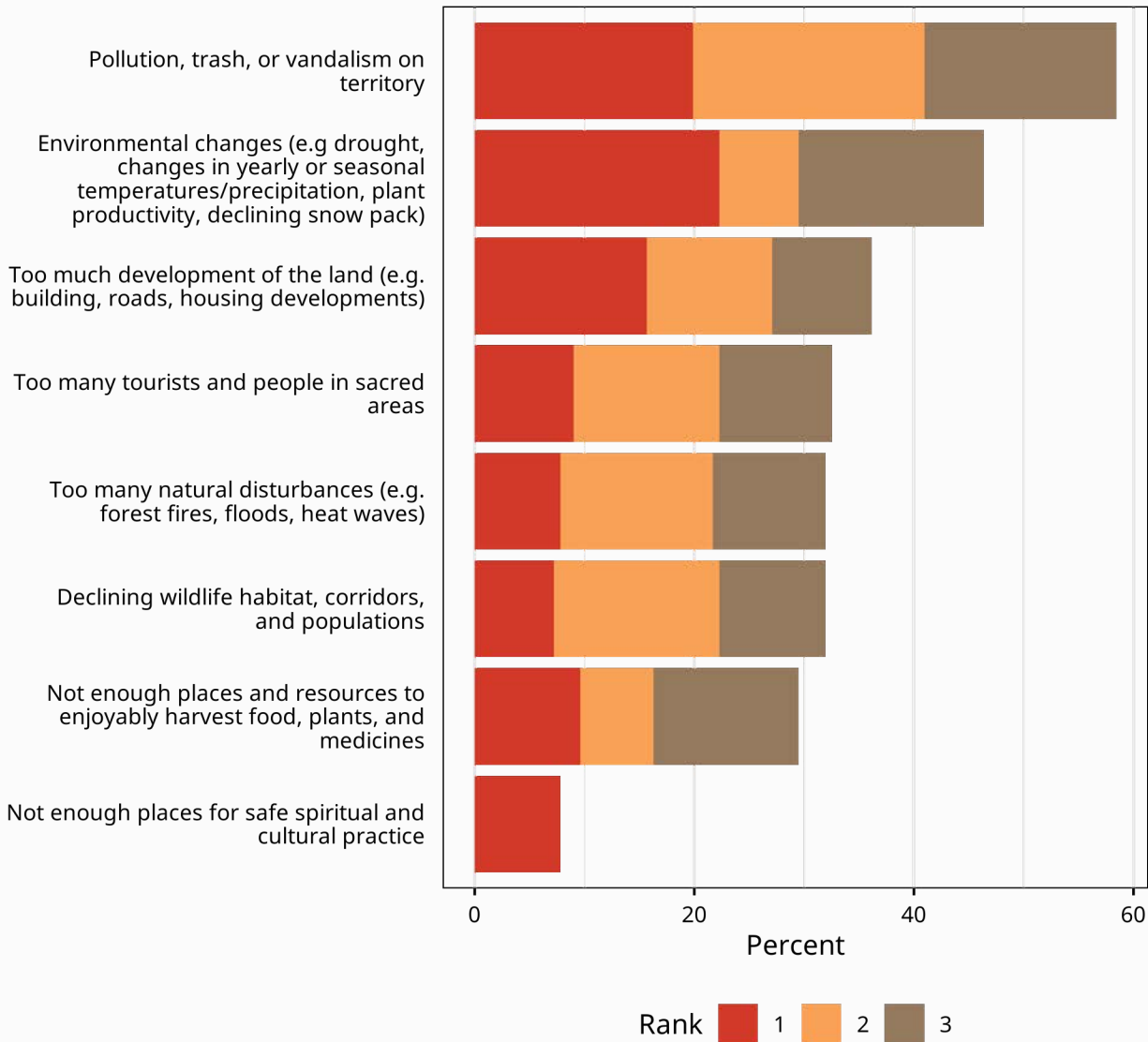
Figure TLW.4: Availability of Resources Among Individuals who Harvested in Last 12 Months



Note: Question: "In the past 12 months, did the availability of each resource meet your needs?" This question had 183 respondents. Suppressed responses: "Not at all" and "Not applicable".

The top three concerns respondents have for Skwxwú7mesh-ullh temíxw are pollution, trash, or vandalism (58%); environmental changes (46%); and too much development (36%) (Figure TLW.5).

Figure TLW.5: Top Concerns on Skwxwú7mesh-ullh Temíxw

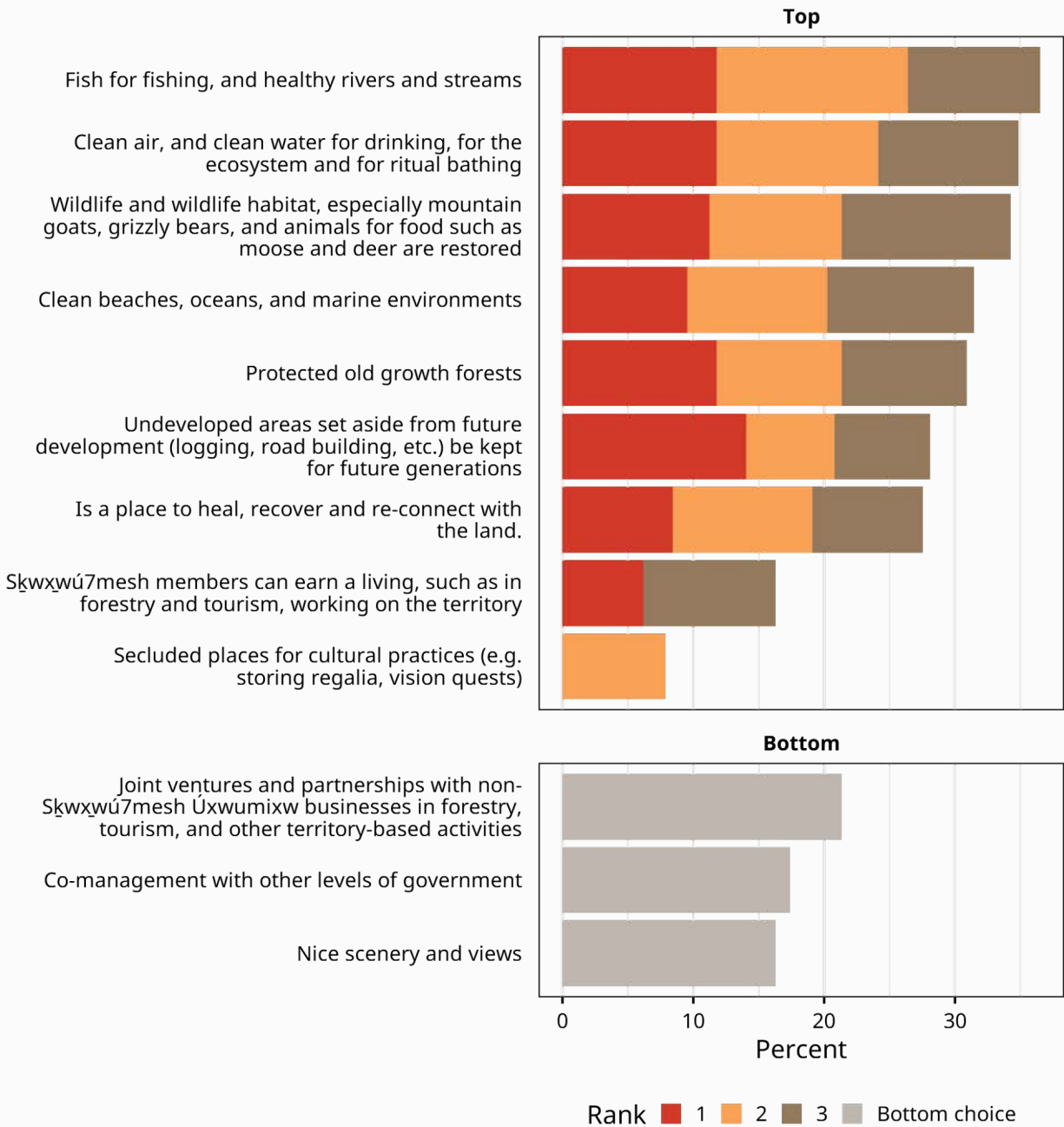


Note: Question: “What are your top 3 concerns when it comes to Skwxwú7mesh-ullh Temíxw (Squamish Territory)?” This question had 166 respondents. Some second and third rankings have been suppressed due to low response rates.

Priorities for the Future

Respondents’ top priorities for the future of Skwxwú7mesh-ullh temíxw are fairly evenly distributed – few stand out as being more or less important than others. However, priorities related to healthy environments – clean ecosystems, protected areas, and healthy habitats – consistently rank highly. The least important priorities are more definitive: joint ventures and partnerships with non-Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumíxw businesses in forestry, tourism, and other territory-based activities (21%); co-management with other levels of government (17%); and nice scenery and views (16%) all consistently rank as respondents’ bottom choices (Figure TLW.6).

Figure TLW.6: Top Priorities for Future of Skwxwú7mesh-ullh Temíxw

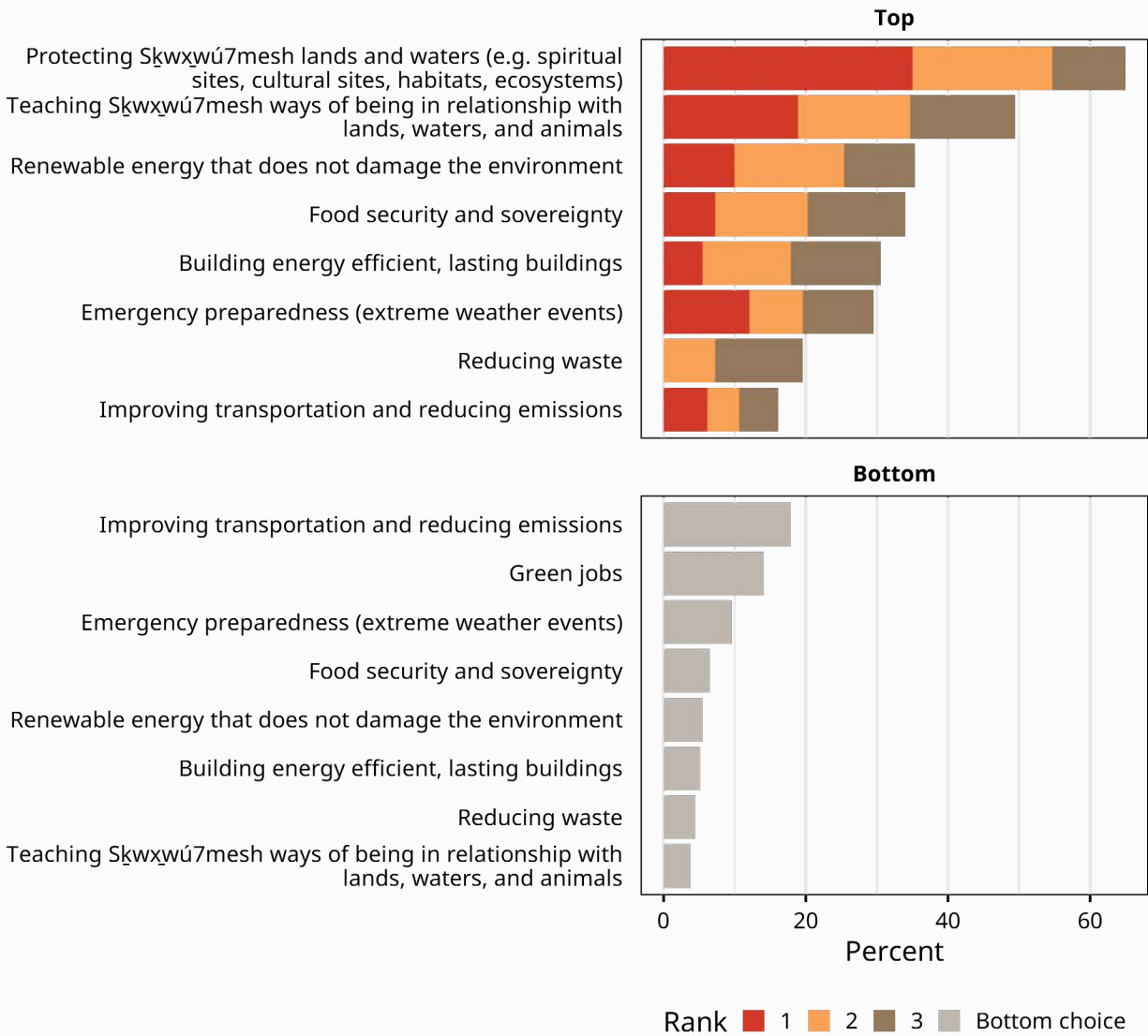


Note: Question: “What are your top 3 priorities for the future of Skwxwú7mesh-ullh temíxw (Squamish Territory)?” This question had 178 respondents.

The most important priority for respondents regarding environmental sustainability is protecting Skwxwú7mesh lands and waters – 65% of respondents rank this in their top three priorities, and fewer than 4% identify it as their bottom choice (Figure TLW.7). The next-highest-ranked priorities include teaching Skwxwú7mesh ways of being in relationship with lands, waters, and animals (49%); and renewable energy that does not damage the environment (35%). Improving

transportation and reducing emissions (18%); green jobs (14%); and emergency preparedness (10%) are identified by the highest share of respondents as their bottom choices. However, a higher percentage of respondents report emergency preparedness (30%) and improving transportation and reducing emissions (16%) among their top three priorities than green jobs (5%).

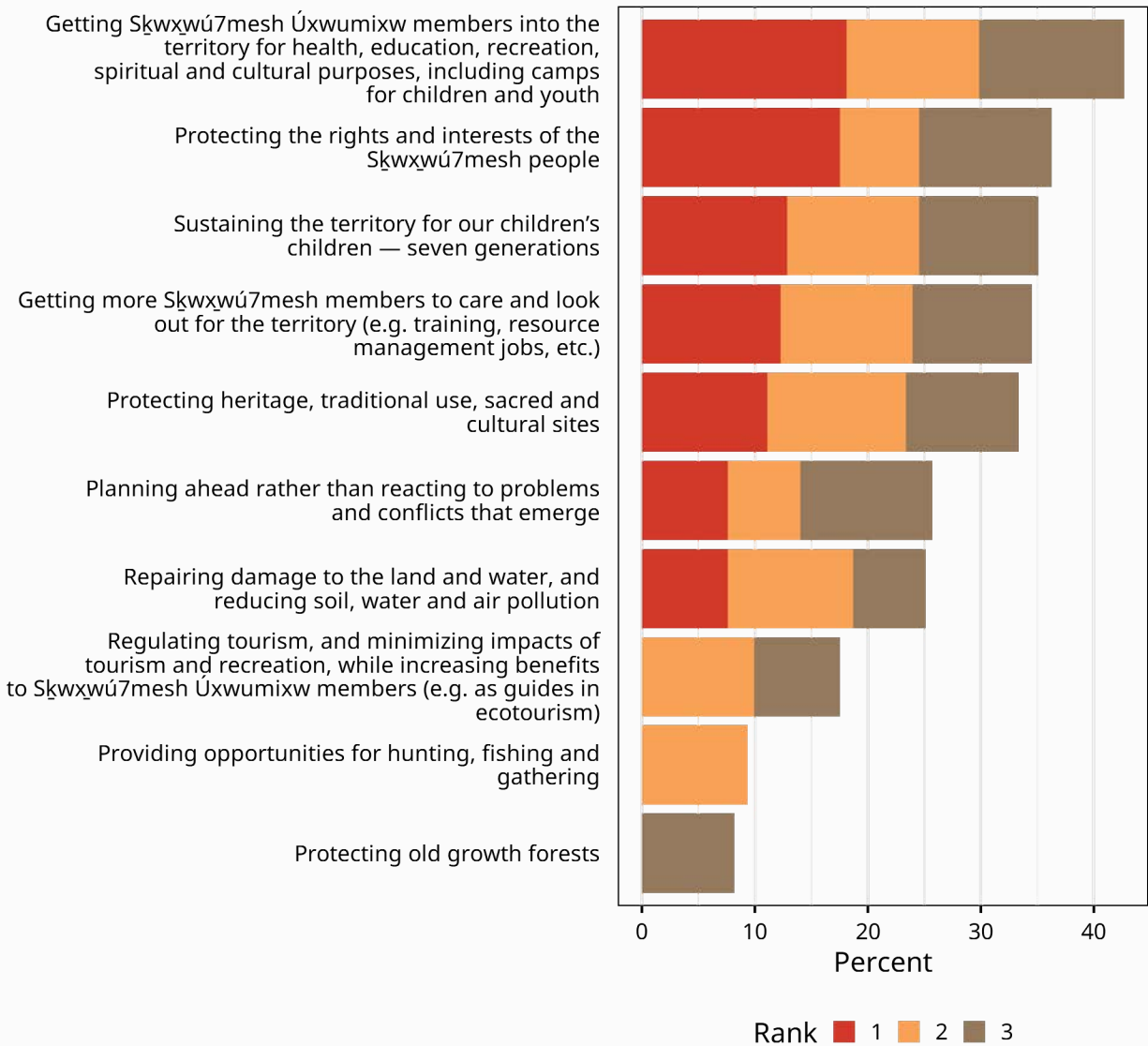
Figure TLW.7: Top Priorities for Environmental Sustainability



Note: Question: "What are your priorities for environmental sustainability?" This question had 291 respondents.

In terms of the management of Skwxwú7mesh-ullh temíxw, respondents report that Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumíxw should prioritize getting Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumíxw members into the territory for health, education, recreation, spiritual and cultural purposes, including camps for children and youth (43%); protecting the rights and interests of the Skwxwú7mesh people (36%); and sustaining the territory for our children’s children — seven generations (35%) (Figure TLW.8).

Figure TLW.8: Top Priorities for Management of Skwxwú7mesh-ullh Temíxw



Note: Question: “What do you think Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumíxw (Squamish Nation) should be doing more of when it comes to the management of Skwxwú7mesh-ullh temíxw (Squamish Territory)?” This question had 171 respondents. Some rankings have been suppressed due to low response rates.