



Update: Governing Climate Adaptation in the SF Bay Area

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CHIRRP: Centering Equity in Coastal Community Climate Resilience

To center equity in coastal climate adaptation planning by integrating earth systems science, social science, and frontline community knowledge to co-create resilient solutions for sea level rise and climate hazards across the San Francisco Bay Area.



Partner with local community-based organizations (CBOs) to enhance capacity in coastal adaptation planning



Promote equity in regional coastal adaptation planning

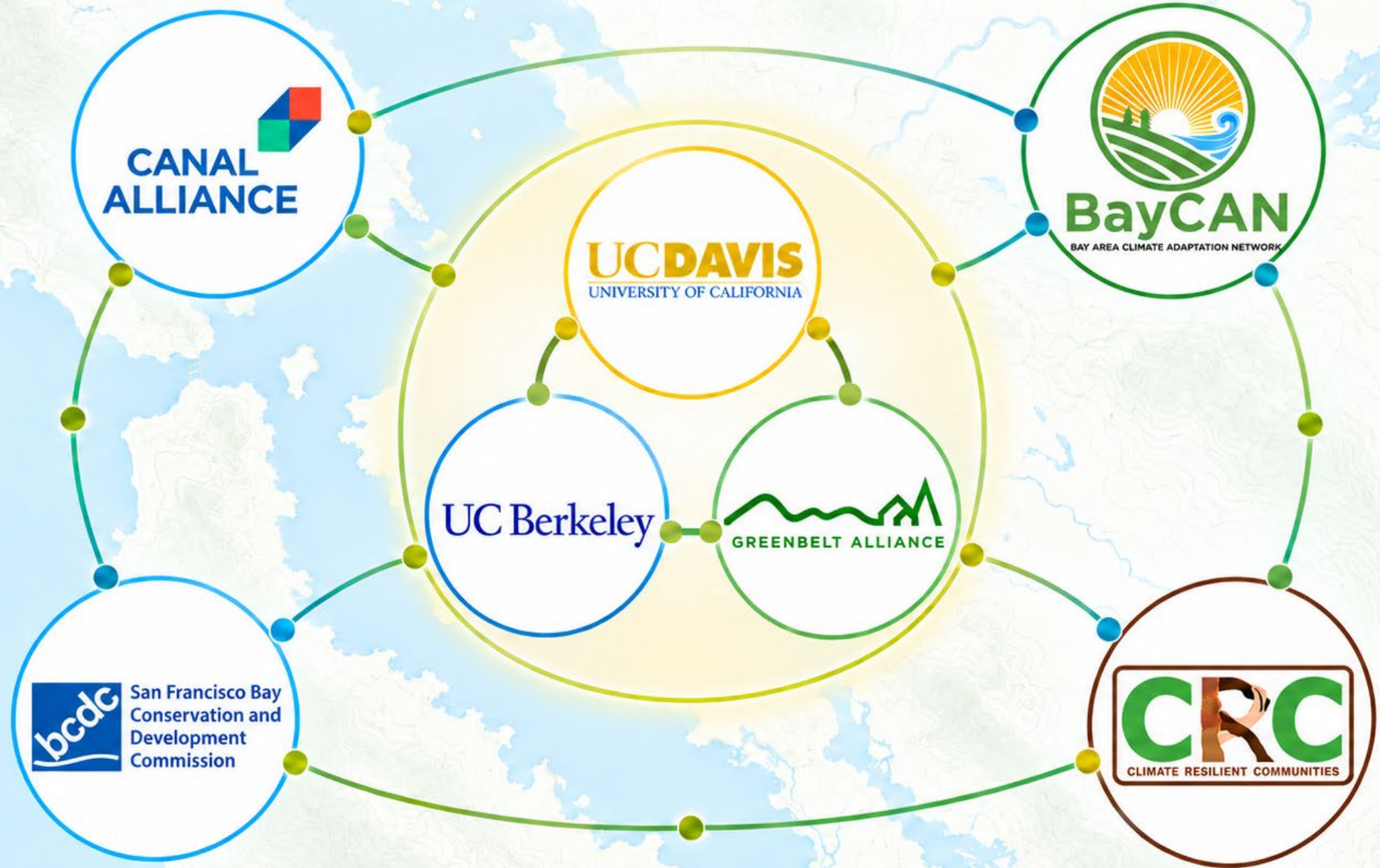


Co-produce and advance coastal adaptation science to align with local needs/knowledge



Convergence Research Model

Co-Production Network



Governance Research Components

Modeled Inundated Land Share

CoSMoS sea-level-rise scenarios; marshes and shore-adjacent lakes/ponds excluded using NWI. Area-weighted across selected tracts; tracts with no modeled inundation are included as 0%.

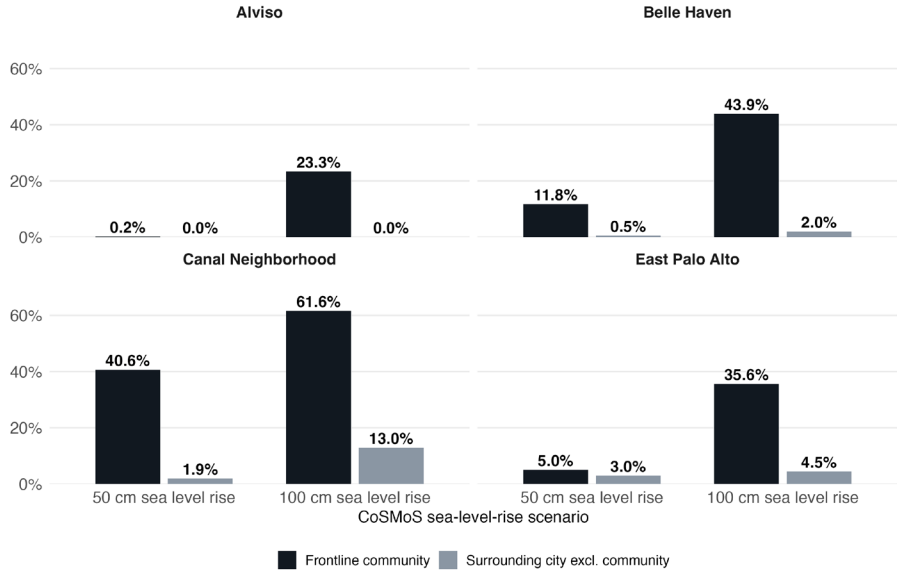
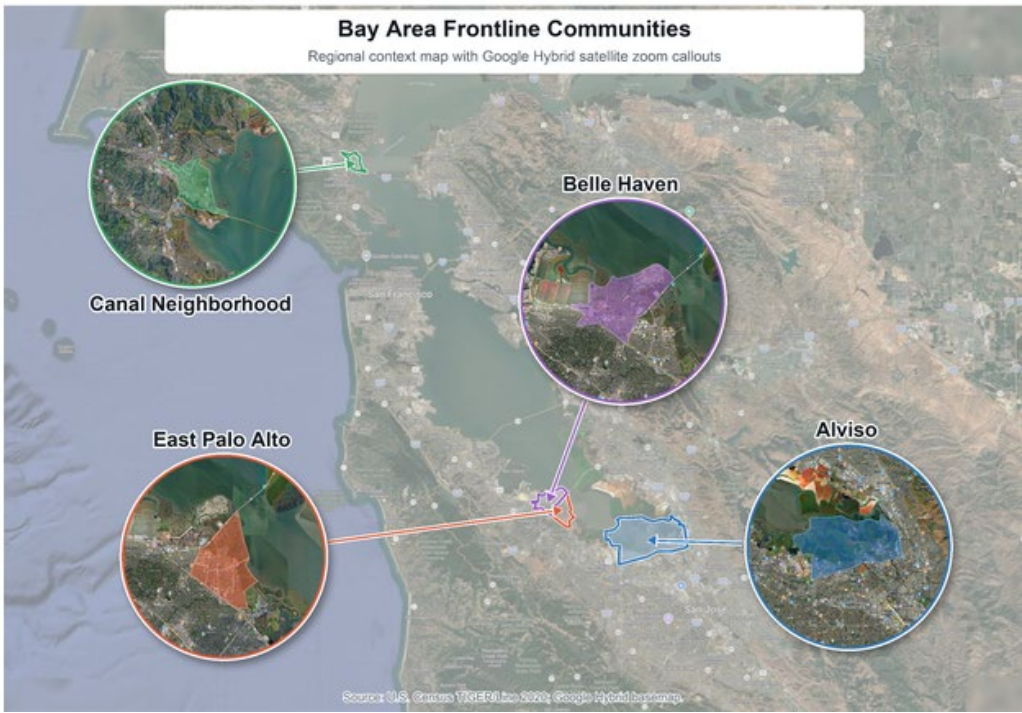


Figure 1: Geography of Frontline Community Case Studies



QUALITATIVE

69 interviews at regional and community level

QUANTITATIVE

Sea level rise governance survey, repeated the 2018 survey with updated and new questions

Resilience Pathways Report

- Executive Summary: Recommendations
- Key Concepts: Resilience, Adaptation, Community Engagement, Polycentric Governance
- Defining Frontline Communities
- Main Findings
- Conceptual Models of Resilience: Adaptation Planning, Transformative Adaptation, Social Learning

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

“For many stakeholders, especially in more underserved communities... it can be a challenge to have those neighborhoods who have much more pressing issues to have them see climate adaptation as an issue.”

Non-Governmental Organization



Case Study Recommendations

1 Community

- Develop a community-based vision for resilience
- Redefine community engagement
- Scale the model of community governance networks
- Choose partners based on shared values



2 Governance

- Accelerate collaborative governance arrangements
- Link institutions to local funding
- Engage political leadership



3 Implementation

- Expand the scope of technical assistance
- Convene regional technical communities of practice
- Prioritize adaptation projects regionally

↻ Implementation results and lessons feed back into the community vision

Governance Survey

Fielded June 15 to July 20, 2026

418

Complete responses

141

Partial responses

~20%

Response rate

~250

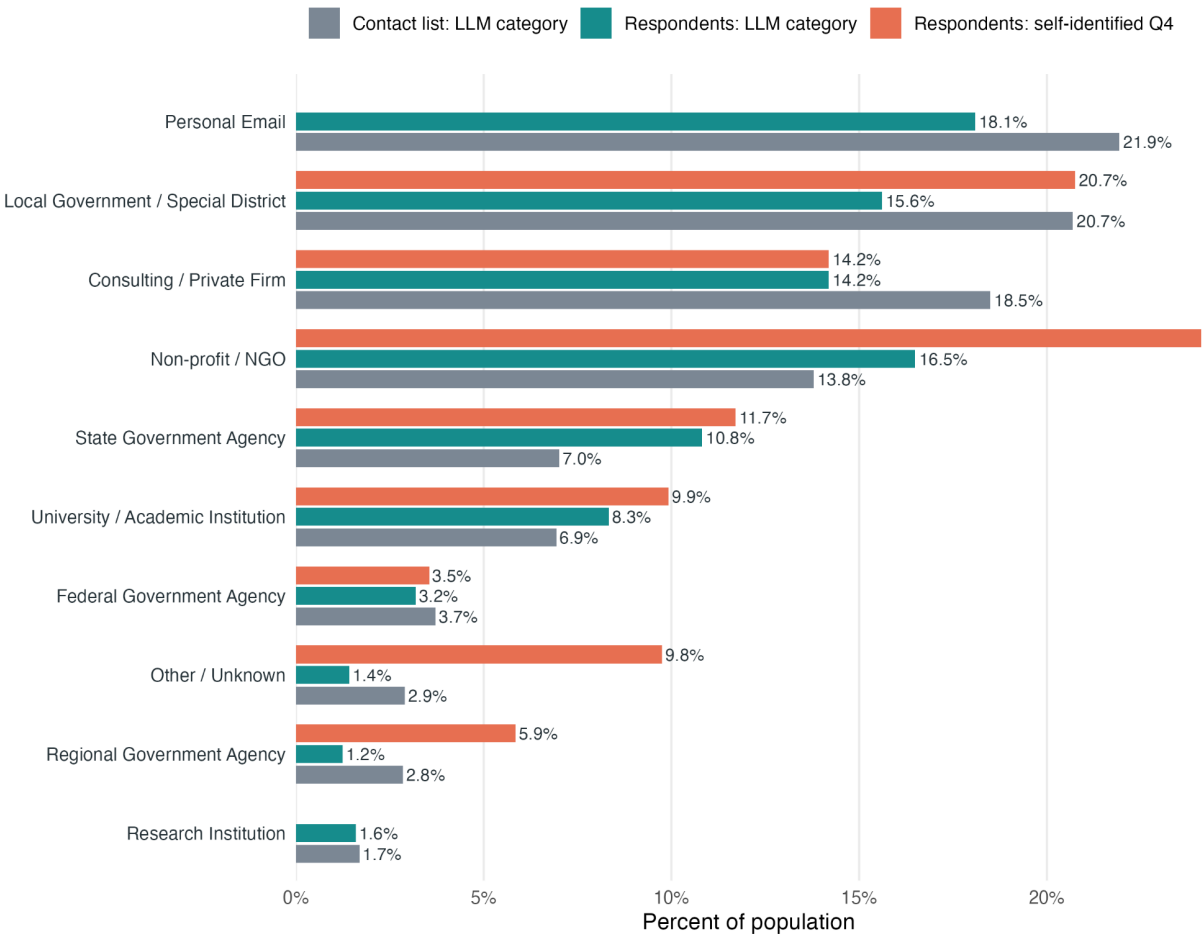
“Panel” respondents, also in 2018

- Responses representative of categories of stakeholders
- Respondents on multiple lists (core of network) more likely to respond

CAVEAT: THESE NUMBERS ARE PRELIMINARY!

Organization-type representation in the sample and responses

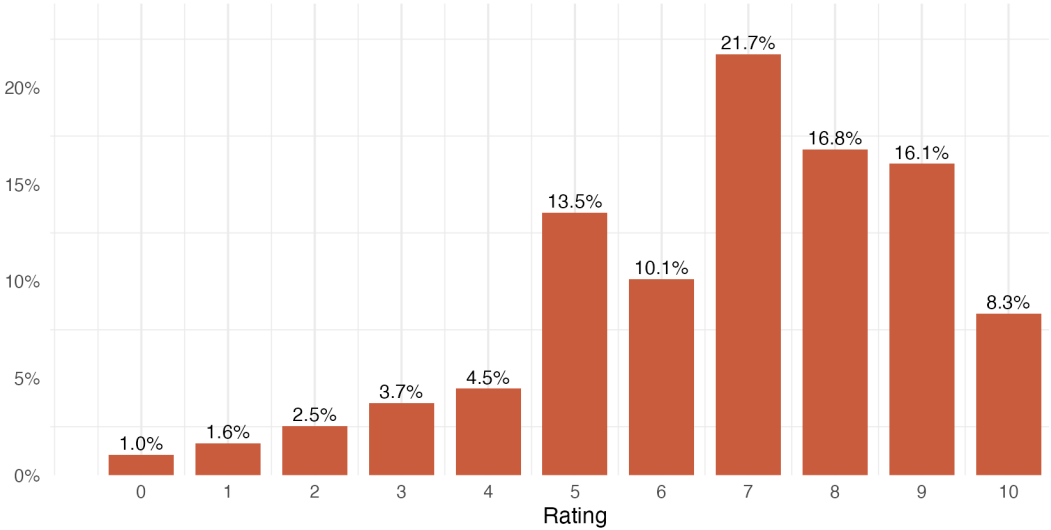
Contact list n = 3,548; eligible survey responses n = 564; Q4 answered n = 496



Increased Effort to Include Enviro Justice Stakeholders

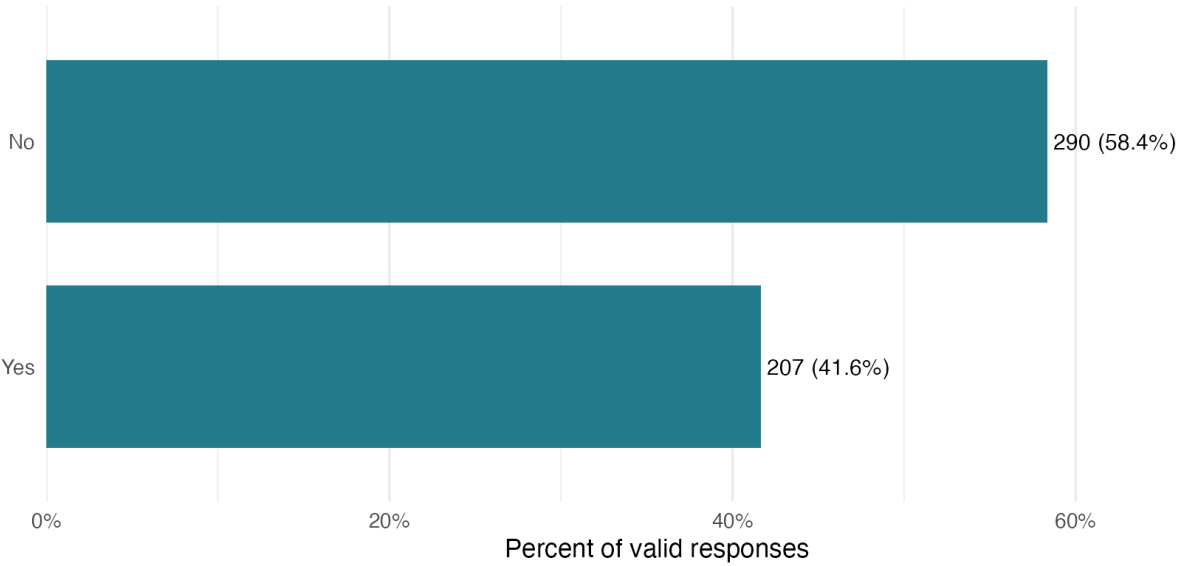
For each initiative you just mentioned, please answer the following questions:
To what extent has the process of reaching decisions in each initiative you identified been equitable for all stakeholders?

Q20a · valid n = 221
Scale: 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest). Ratings pooled across respondents' named initiatives.



Do you identify as working directly with or being part of a frontline, socially vulnerable community that is impacted by climate change?

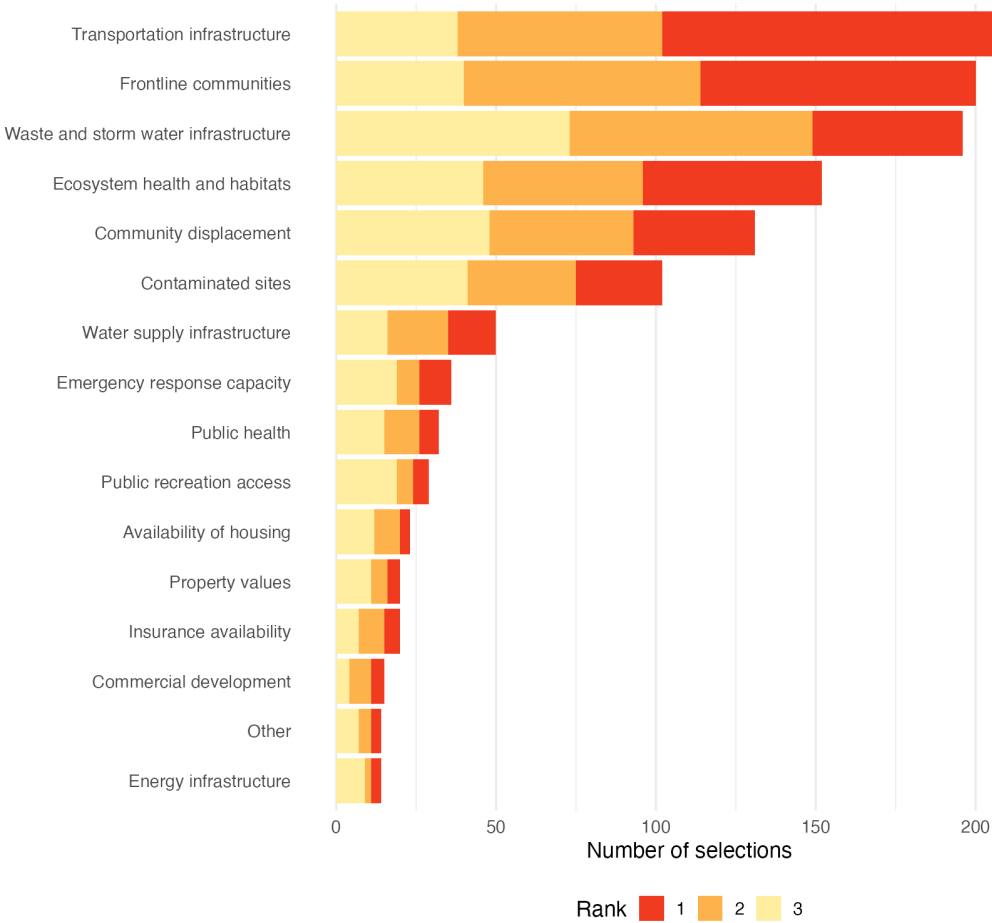
Q5 · valid n = 497



Near-Term Impacts on Critical Infrastructure and Communities

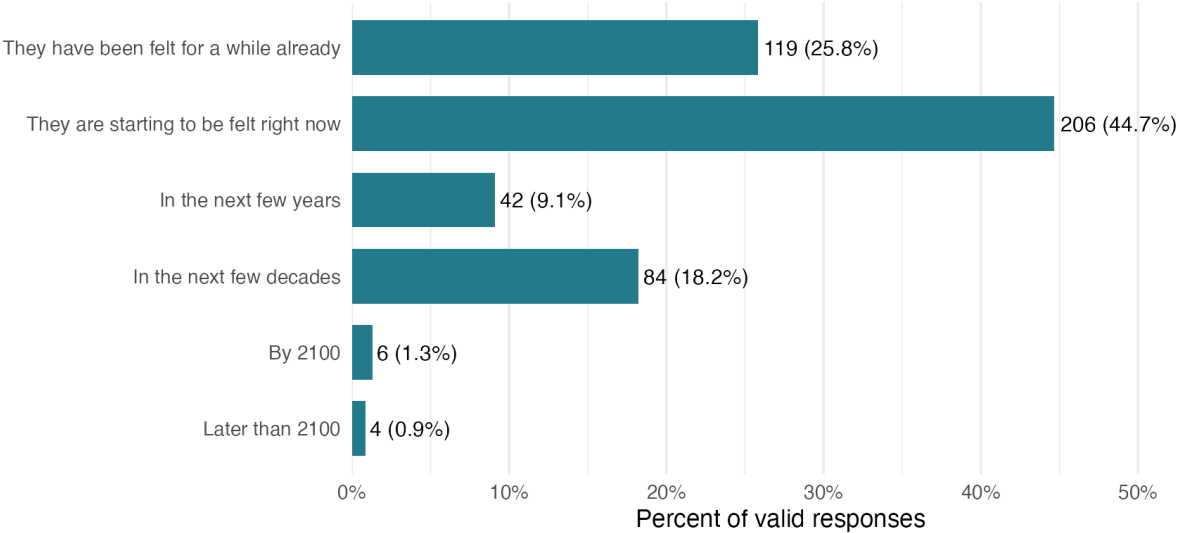
Sea level rise may affect infrastructure, natural habitats, and communities. From the list below, please pick the top three items or sectors that you are most worried will be negatively impacted by sea level rise

Q12 · valid n = 431



How soon do you think the visible impacts of sea level rise (e.g. flooding and associated disruptions) will be felt in the Bay Area?

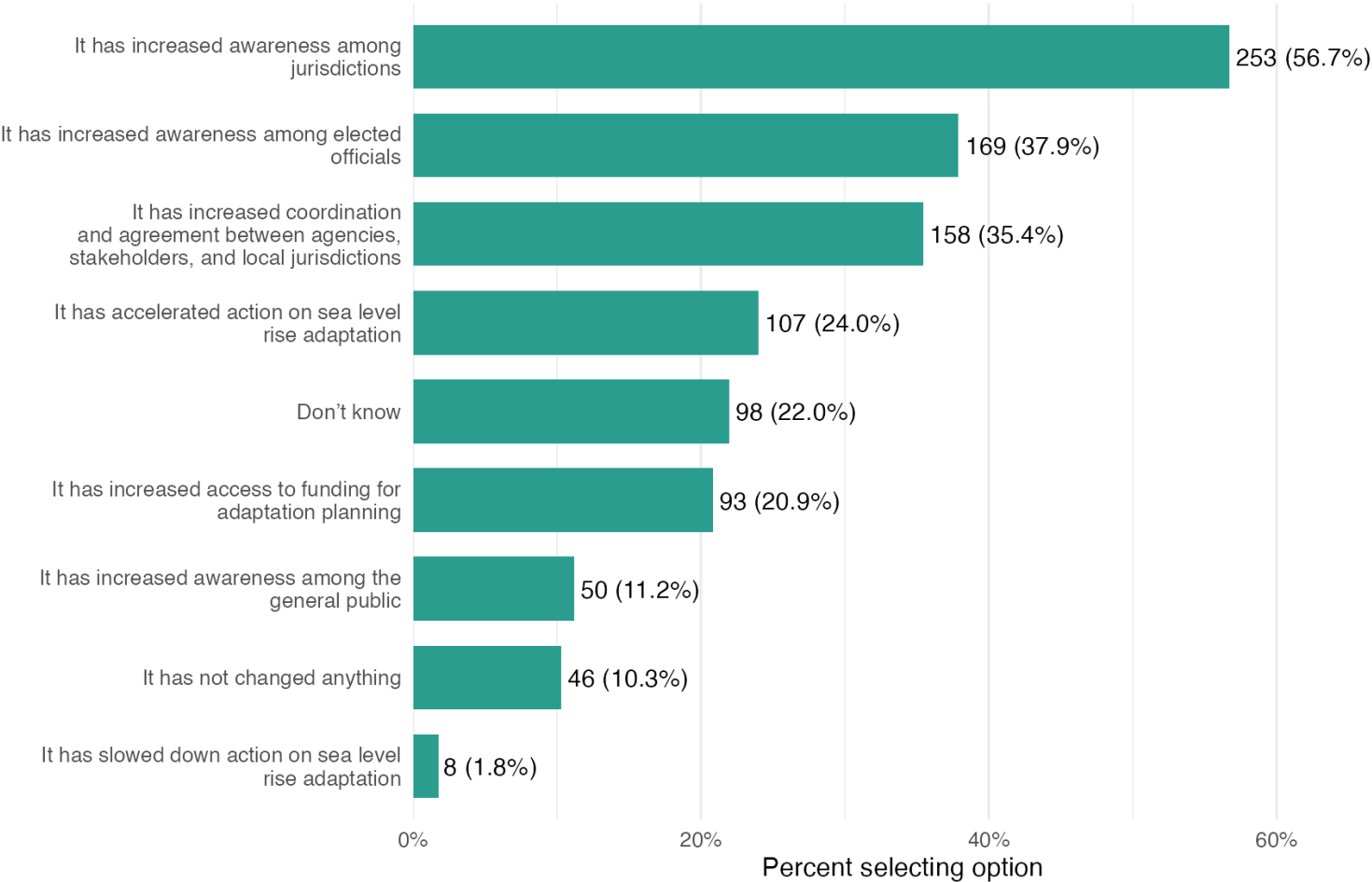
Q11 · valid n = 461



Impact of Regional Shoreline Adaptation Planning

In 2023, the California State Legislature passed SB 272: Sea Level Rise Planning and Adaptation, which requires local governments to develop sea level rise plans by 2034, following the guidelines in the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission’s Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan (RSAP). In your opinion, has RSAP changed awareness and action around sea level rise adaptation in the Bay Area? (select all that apply)

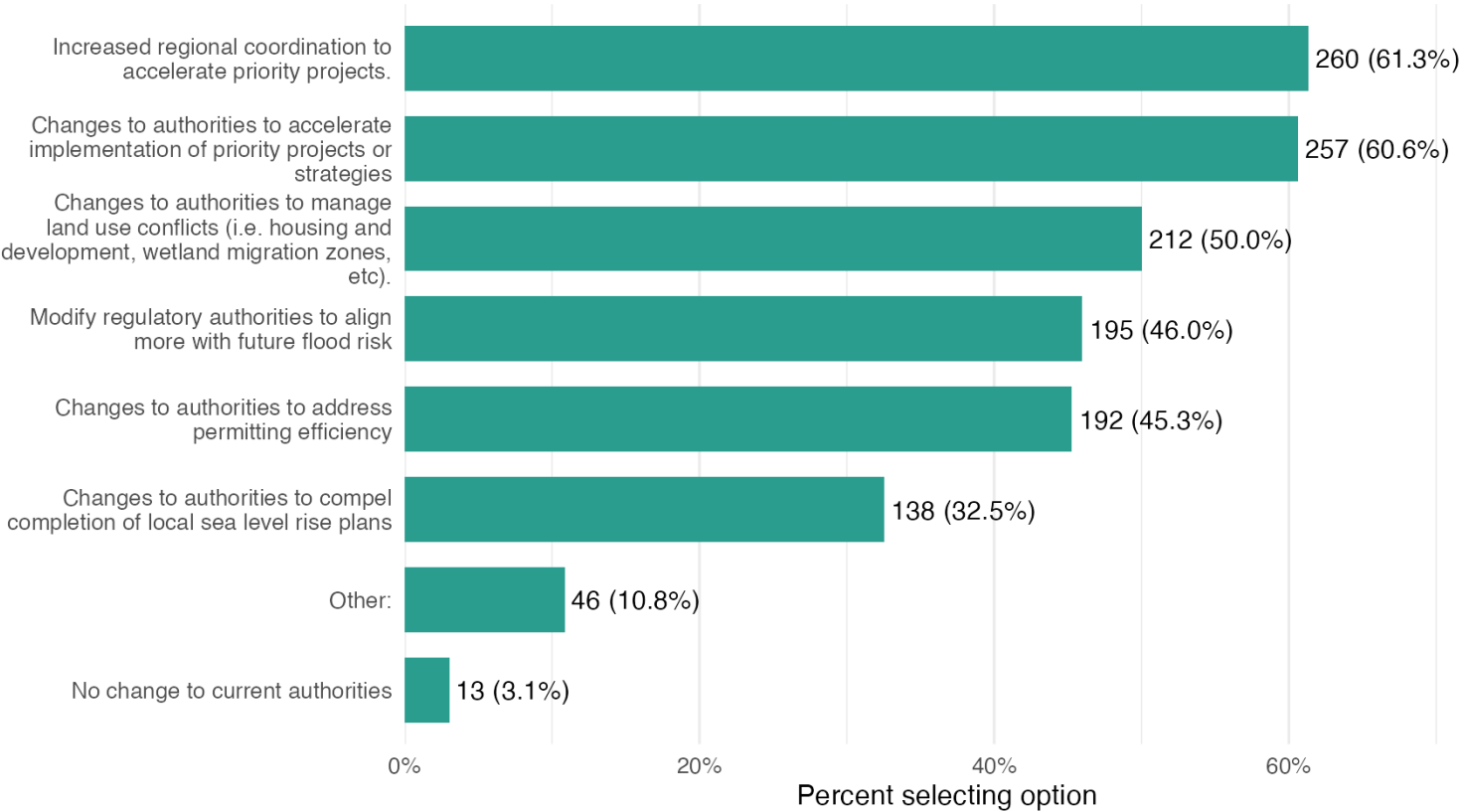
Q14 · valid n = 446



Governance Preferences

There is an ongoing discussion regarding potential changes to government authority to improve sea level rise adaptation. In your view, which changes could be effective for improving sea level rise adaptation? (select all that apply)

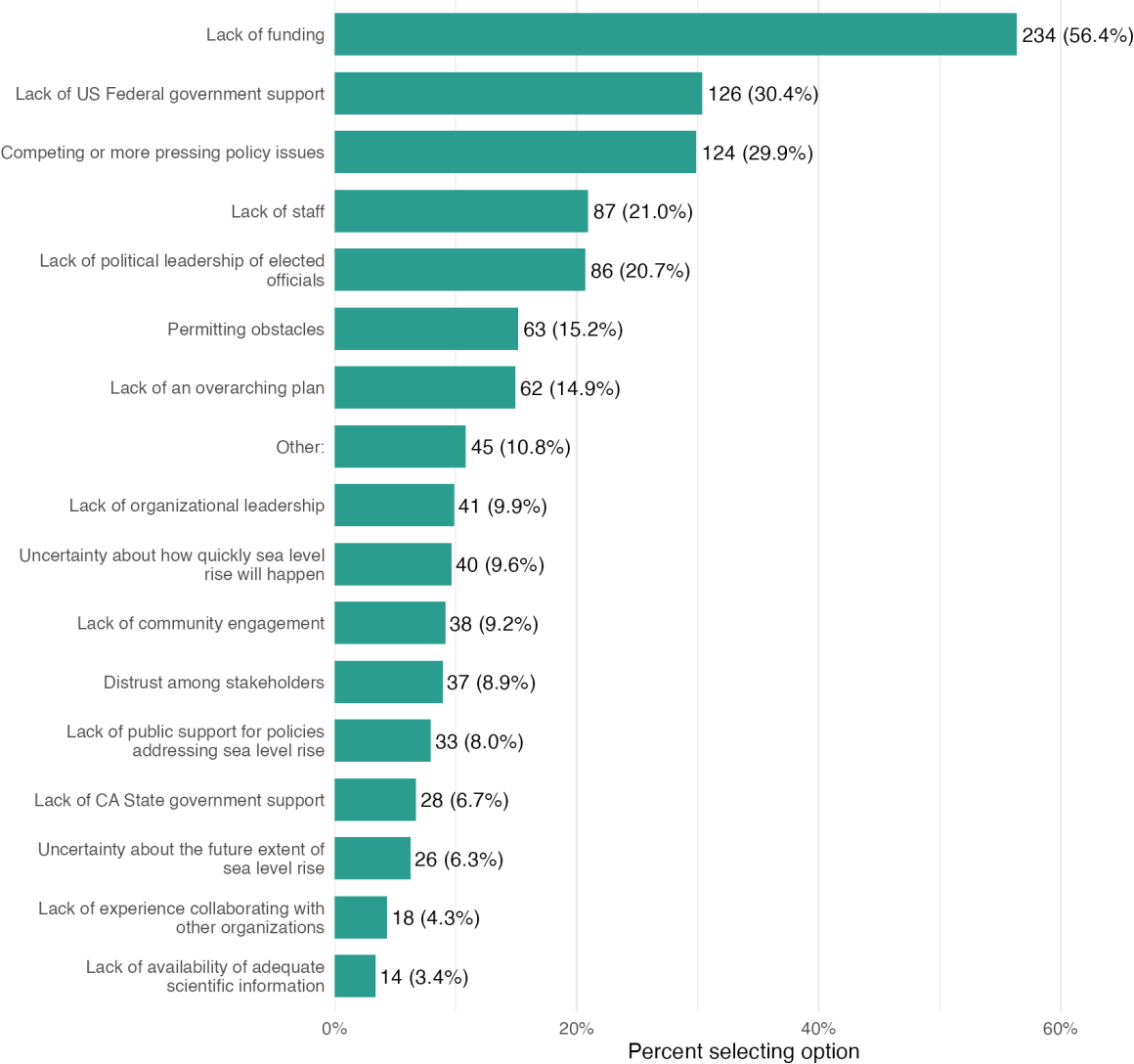
Q17 · valid n = 424



Governance Barriers

In the past year, which of the following have represented barriers to your collaborative work on sea level rise in the Bay Area? (Please choose the three most important)

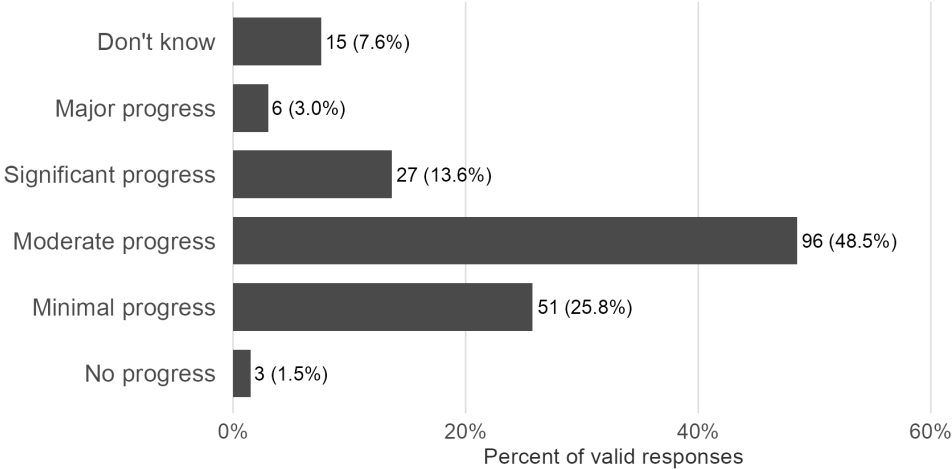
Q18 · valid n = 415



Incrementalism in Action: Ten Years of “Moderate” Progress

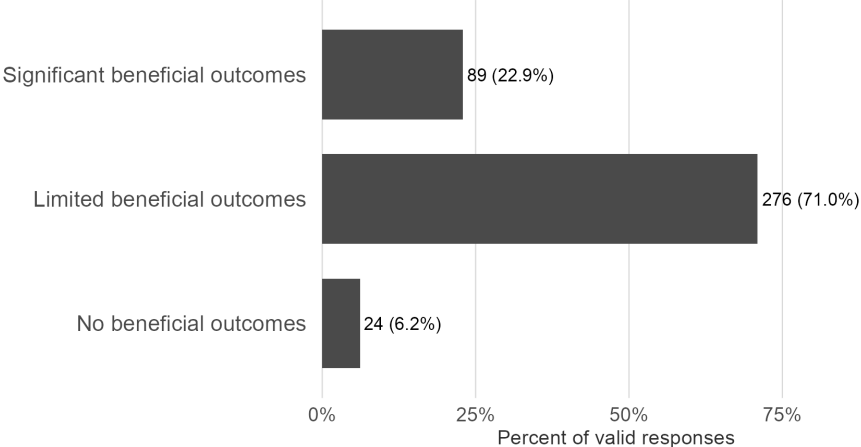
Overall, how much progress has the Bay Area made on SLR adaptation over the past 10 years?

Q23 · valid n = 198

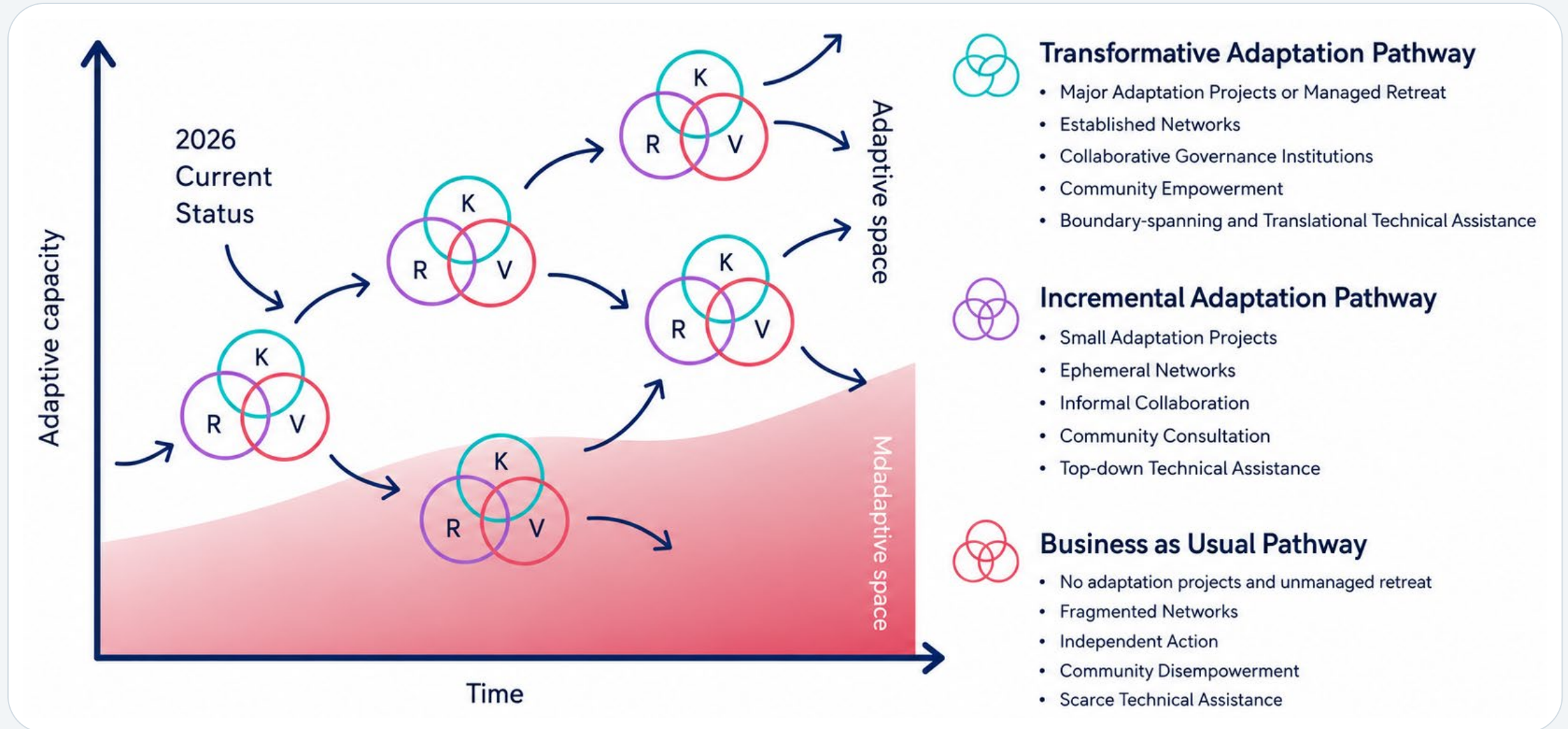


To what extent have the collaborative activities you identified in the previous question produced beneficial outcomes with respect to sea level rise adaptation?

Q16 · valid n = 389



Can we move the SF Bay into a more resilient pathway?



Some Preliminary Conclusions

1

Bay Area has incrementally moved along planning adaptation cycle

2

Important improvements in procedural equity

3

Funding is major barrier, exacerbated by Trump Admin

4

RSAP is now on the radar, but collaboration needs work

5

Some taste for exerting more authority for project implementation

6

A range of actionable recommendations for centering equity in climate adaptation governance

