



# OCEAN PROTECTION IN THE UNITED STATES:

## Exploring The Public's Thoughts

Americans—regardless of demographics, political party, or geographic location—care deeply about the ocean and its health. They want the government to do more to protect the ocean and ensure business activities do not harm ocean life, according to a National Marine Sanctuary Foundation survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago.

Majorities of Americans agree that many of the benefits the ocean provides are very or extremely important. Of those benefits, most (83%) say that the ocean's role in sustaining marine life and habitats is extremely or very important. Americans also recognize the critical life-sustaining services the ocean provides, such as the air we breathe and the food we eat.

Over half of Americans say that climate change is the biggest and fastest growing threat to the diversity of life in the ocean, and 53% agree that protecting and restoring ocean habitats and species would help to reduce climate change. Despite concerns over the ocean, many are unfamiliar with the threats the ocean faces and possible solutions. Only 48% say that they are very or completely familiar with the term climate change.

Those who live near or visit the ocean notice the effects of climate change on the nation's ocean. Over a third of respondents who live in coastline counties say they have personally seen the effects of climate change on the ocean and coasts, and 32% who visited the ocean since 2019 say the same. Americans worry about the impact climate change is having on ocean and ocean life. Fifty-five percent think climate change is having a major impact on habitat loss; 54% say the same about loss of ocean plants and animals.

The survey reveals that Americans overwhelmingly support policies to: (1) reduce water pollution (86%), including preventing fertilizers



Daryl Duda

### Four Things You Should Know

About the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Poll conducted by NORC

Among American adults:

- 1) Only 16% believe the health of ocean environments in the United States is good or very good.
- 2) Americans ranked the environment as one of the top five issues that the U.S. government needs to address in the next year.
- 3) A majority of Americans favor the establishment of marine protected areas in which oil and gas drilling (70%), commercial fishing (69%), or mining (65%) is not allowed.
- 4) 55% of Americans believe the federal government is not doing enough to protect the ocean, and two-thirds favor increasing federal funding for national marine sanctuaries that protect and restore United States ocean waters.

and pesticides from entering waterways (84%); (2) protect threatened and endangered marine species (85%); (3) protect marine areas that have environmental, educational, and cultural importance (82%); (4) develop a system of protected areas along the coast and in the ocean, like our National Park System (77%); (5) protect ocean habitats and wildlife that store carbon and limit climate change (77%); and (6) reduce single-use plastic pollution (76%).

When asked about marine protected areas, a majority of Americans favor the establishment of marine protected areas in which oil and gas drilling (70%), commercial fishing (69%), or mining (65%) is not allowed. Americans feel the conservation of ocean habitats and ocean wildlife is the highest priority for marine protected areas. When specifically asked about national marine sanctuaries,<sup>1</sup> 68% of Americans say the highest priorities are protecting ocean wildlife, followed by stopping uses that harm ocean life and habitat (67%), and protecting the ocean from extractive uses that damage ecosystems and species (62%) while restoring ocean habitats and recovering wildlife (62%).

Americans overwhelmingly favor increasing funding for national marine sanctuaries. Sixty-seven percent support using money that the federal government earns from energy development in the ocean to support conservation programs. Sixty-six percent support collecting fees on uses such as mining, shipping, energy development to support ocean protection and restoration. And 66% support increased federal funding for programs that protect and restore U.S. ocean waters.

NORC at the University of Chicago conducted this study, which was funded by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. The survey includes 1,086 interviews with a nationally representative sample of adults living in the United States using the AmeriSpeak Panel, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. Interviews were conducted between August 8-18, 2022, via web and phone in English and Spanish. The margin of sampling error is +-4.1 percentage points.

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<sup>1</sup> A national marine sanctuary is a federally designated area within United States waters that protects areas of the marine environment with special conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, cultural, archeological, scientific, educational, or aesthetic qualities.

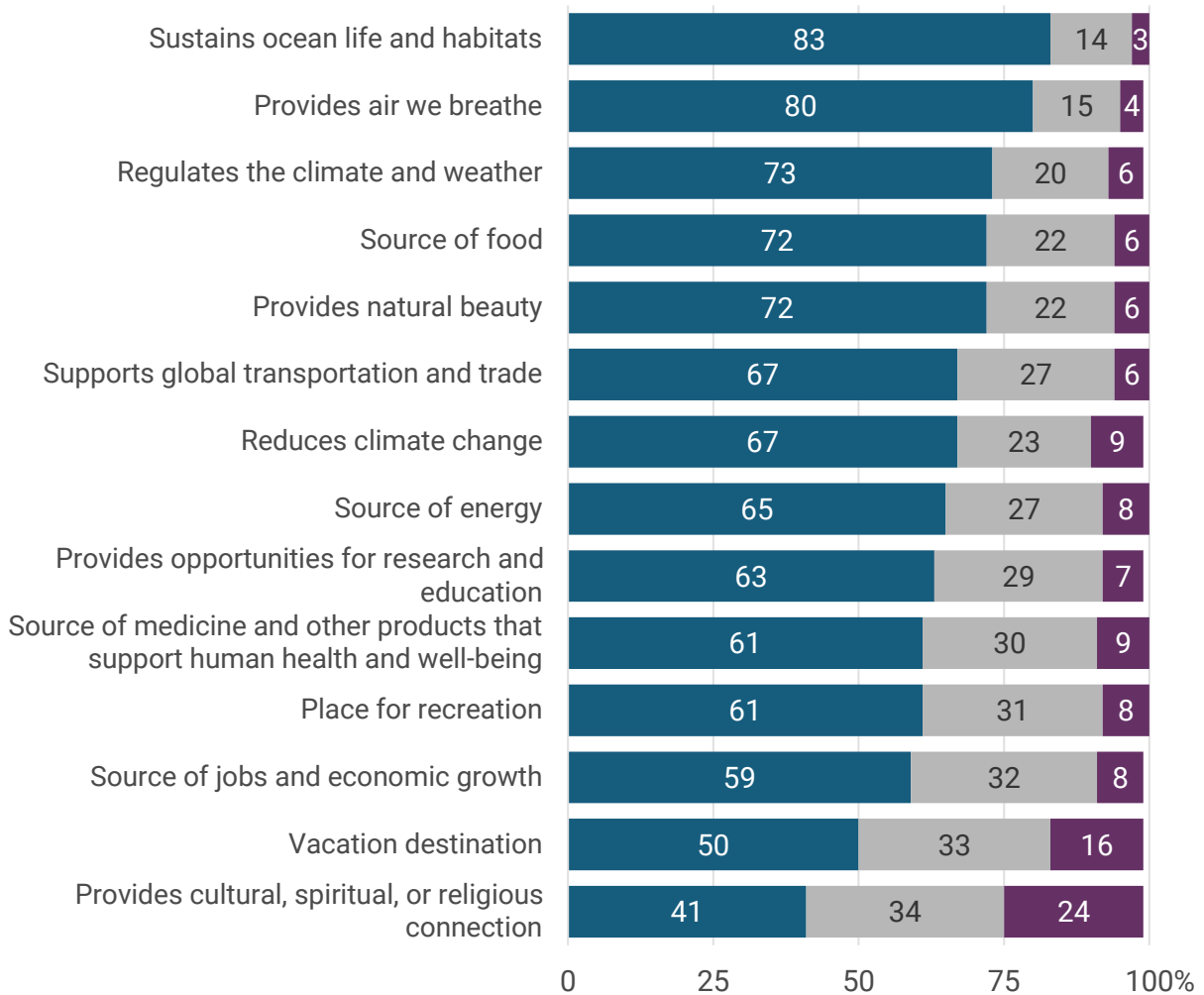
## Most Americans recognize the importance of the ocean.

A majority of Americans agree that many of the benefits the ocean provides are very or extremely important (see Figure 1). Most (83%) agree that the ocean’s role in sustaining marine life and habitats is extremely or very important. Americans also recognize the importance of services provided by the ocean, such as the air we breathe (80%) and being a source of food (72%).

**Figure 1: Americans recognize the importance of ecosystem services that the ocean provides.**

Percent of adults

■ Extremely/very important ■ Somewhat important ■ Not very important/Not important at all



**Question:** For you personally, how important are each of the following benefits of the ocean?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

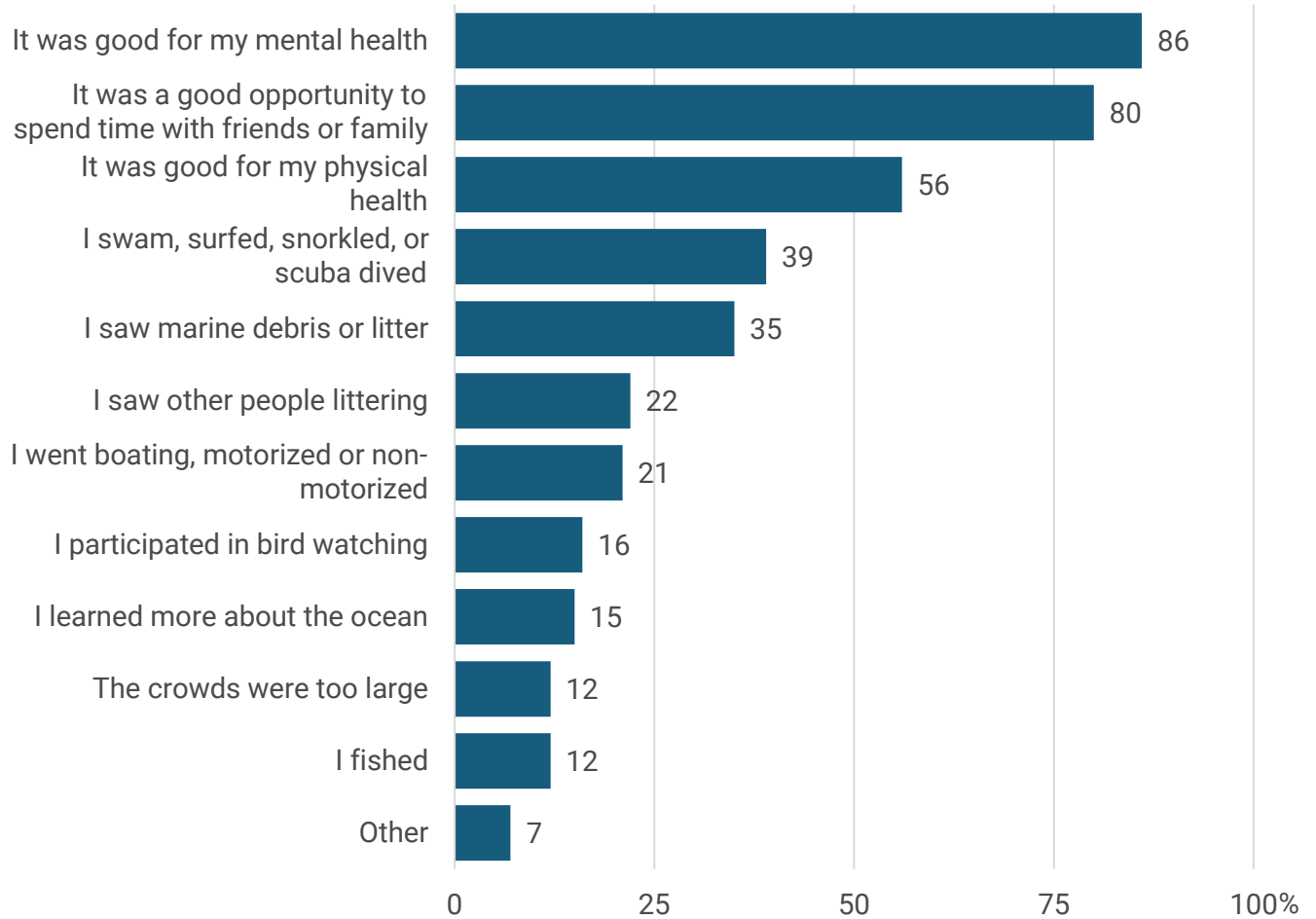


Most Americans surveyed visited the ocean in the last few years and reported positive benefits from their visit. Since January 2019, 62% of Americans surveyed visited the ocean, including the beach, seas, bays, gulfs, and estuaries.

The vast majority of those who visited the ocean report that it was good for their mental health and that it was a good opportunity to spend time with friends or family (see Figure 2). Over a third saw marine debris or litter, and 22% witnessed other people littering.

**Figure 2: Americans think the ocean is good for their mental health, though a third saw debris or litter during their visit.**

Percent of adults who visited the ocean since January 2019



**Question:** Which of the following statements about your time spent at the ocean is true?

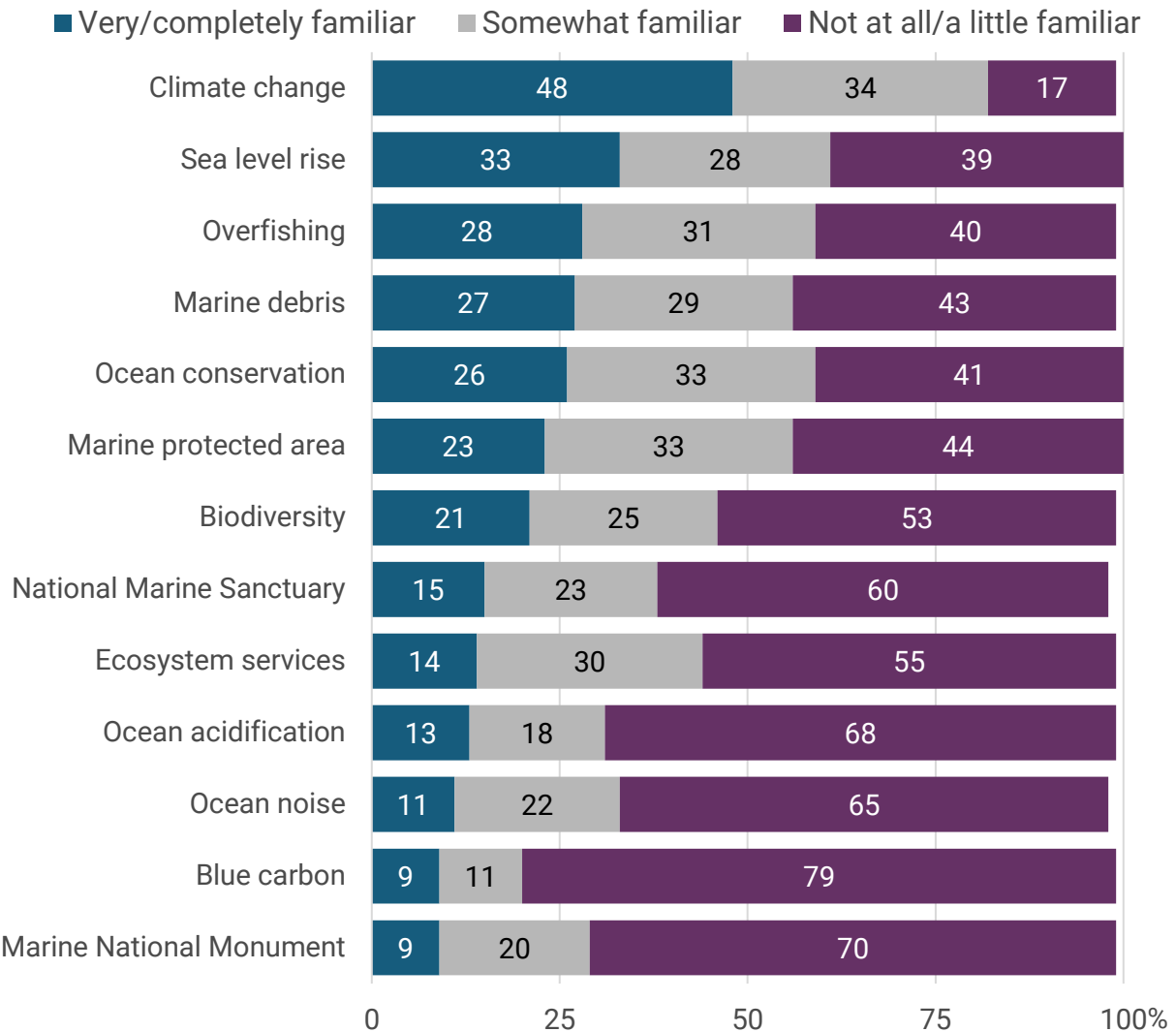
**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



Most Americans are unfamiliar with environmental terms describing threats the ocean faces. Many Americans are unfamiliar with ocean terminology describing many of the threats the ocean faces and their possible solutions (see Figure 3). Only 48% say they are very or completely familiar with the term climate change. Even fewer are familiar with concepts like overfishing (28%), biodiversity (21%), and ocean acidification (13%).

**Figure 3: Many Americans are unfamiliar with ocean terminology.**

Percent of adults



**Question:** Please indicate how familiar you are with each of the following terms:

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



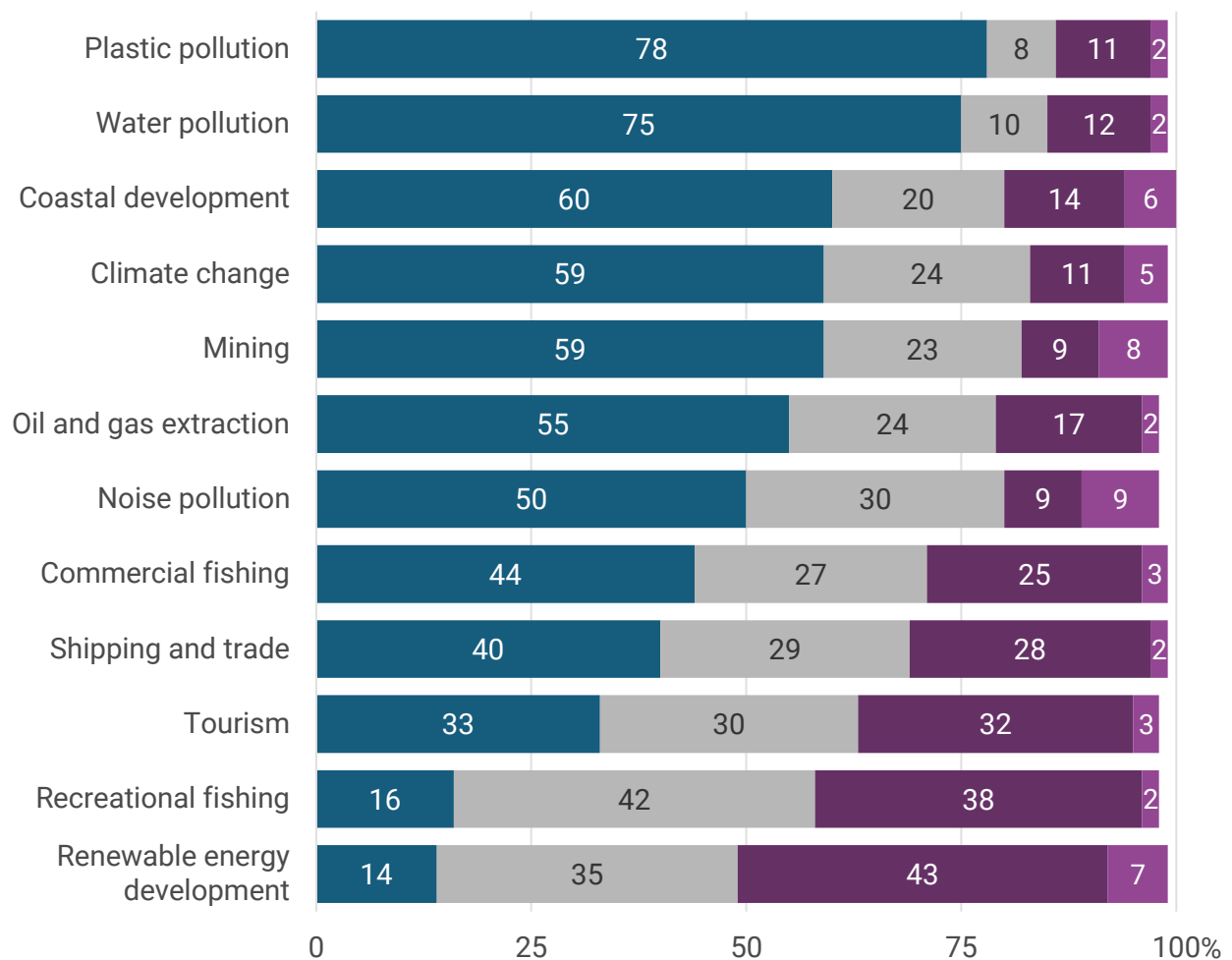
## The public is aware of the damaging impacts climate change has on the ocean.

When it comes to threats that ocean life and habitats face, Americans largely agree that plastic pollution and water pollution have a negative impact on the ocean (78% and 75%, respectively). Fewer, though still a majority, believe the same about coastal development (60%), climate change (59%), mining (59%), and oil and gas extraction (55%). Opinion is more split on renewable energy development, recreational fishing, and tourism (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4: The public recognizes the negative effects of pollution on the ocean but is less aware of the impacts of climate change.**

Percent of adults

■ Somewhat/very negative ■ Neither positive nor negative ■ Very/somewhat positive ■ Not sure



**Question:** Overall, do each of the following have a positive, negative, or neither positive nor negative impact on ocean life and habitats?

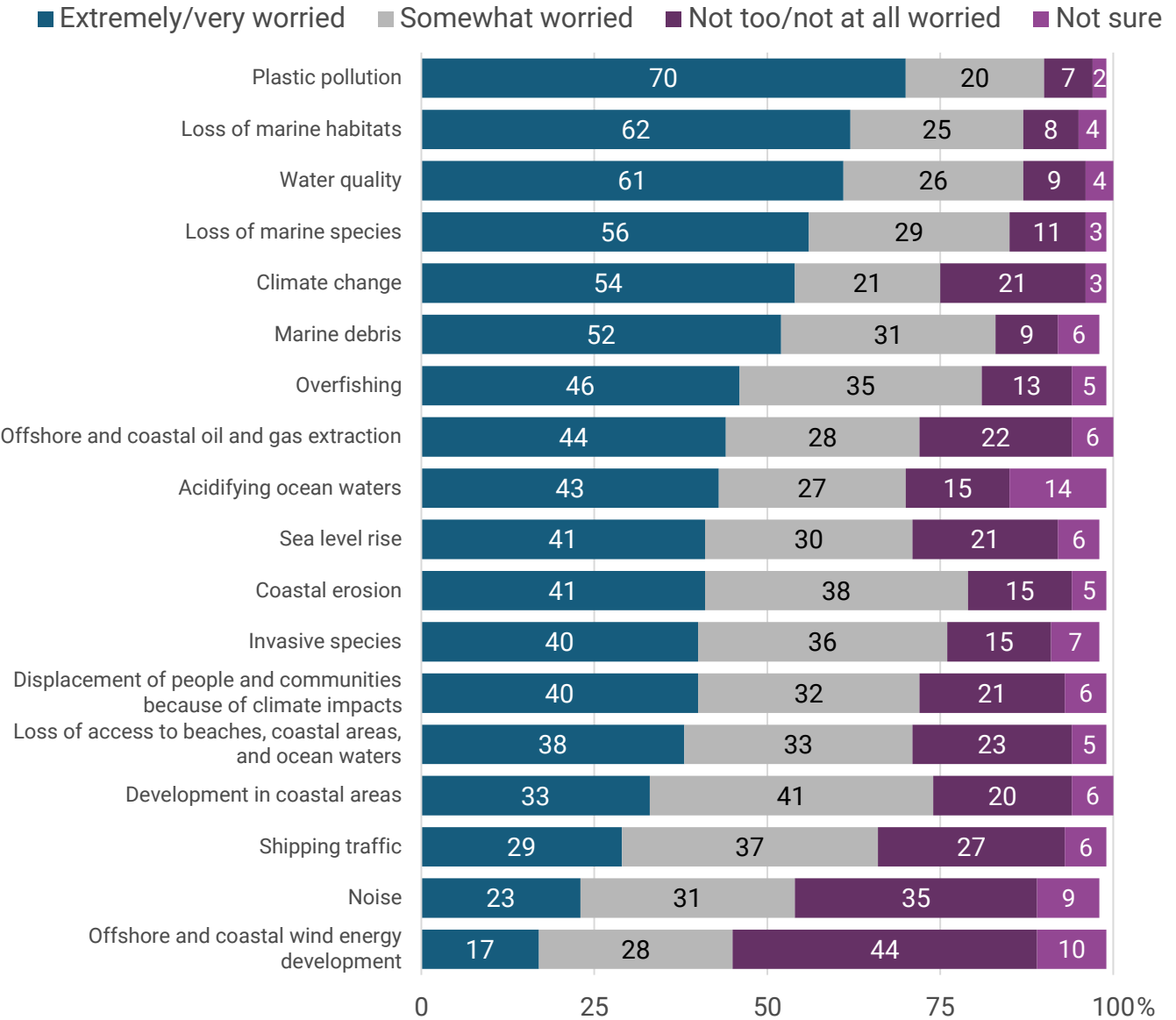
**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



A majority of Americans are extremely or very worried about plastic pollution (70%), water quality (61%), loss of marine habitats and species (62% and 56% respectively), climate change (54%), and marine debris (52%) as they pertain to the ocean and coastal communities. Fewer are extremely or very worried about noise (23%) or offshore wind energy development (17%).

### Figure 5: Pollution, loss of habitats and species, climate change, and water quality worry Americans the most.

Percent of adults



**Question:** How worried are you about each of the following as it relates to the ocean and coastal communities?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



## While coastal residents are more likely to have seen the impacts of climate change, a majority of Americans are worried about its impact.

Only 26% of Americans say they have personally seen the effects of climate change on the ocean and coasts. About half say they have not seen such effects, and 23% are unsure. However, those who live in coastline counties are more likely to report seeing the effects of climate change, compared to those who do not live in coastline counties (37% vs. 21%). Familiarity with climate change is also associated with seeing the impacts of climate change on the ocean. Among those who are completely or very familiar with the term climate change, 34% have seen climate change impacts on the ocean, compared to just 19% of those who are somewhat familiar and 14% of those who are not at all or a little familiar.

Partisanship is also a factor. Thirty-eight percent of Democrats say they have seen the effects of climate change on the ocean, compared to 22% of independents and 11% of Republicans.

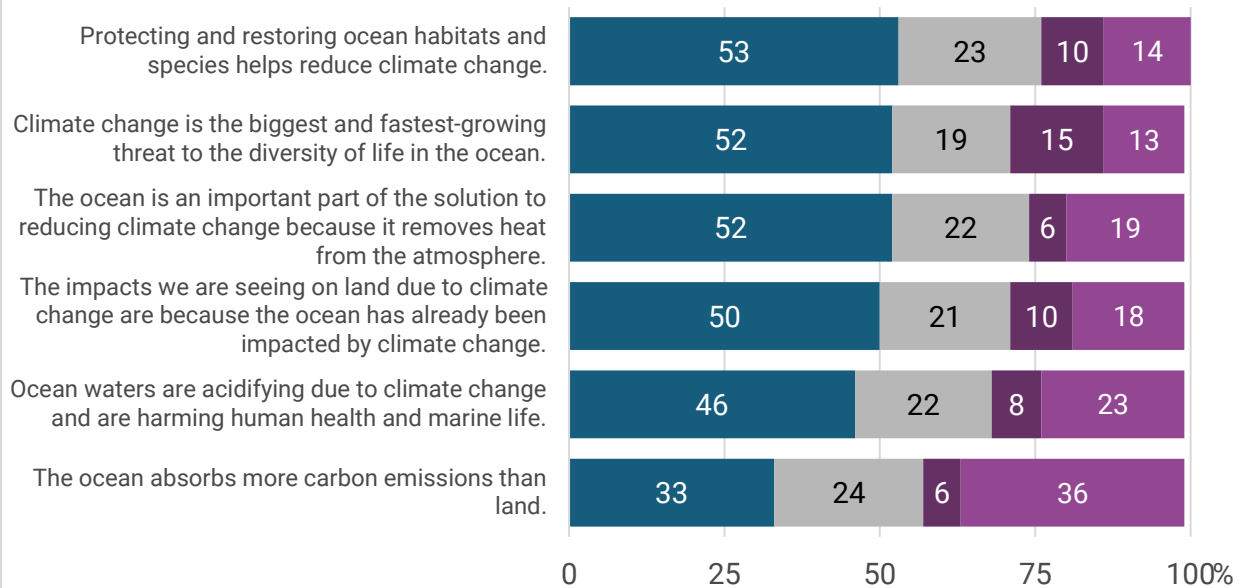
Though fewer Americans are sure they have personally seen the effects of climate change on the ocean, over half believe that climate change is the biggest and fastest growing threat to the diversity of life in the ocean, as Figure 6 demonstrates. Fifty-three percent agree that protecting and restoring ocean habitats and species helps reduce climate change.

The majority of Americans see the ocean as an important part of the solution to reducing climate change because it removes heat from the atmosphere, but less than half understand that the ocean absorbs more carbon emissions than land and that climate change impacts in the ocean are acidifying waters and harming human health and marine life.

**Figure 6: Over half of the public believes climate change is the biggest threat to diversity of life in the ocean.**

Percent of adults

■ Strongly/somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Strongly/somewhat disagree ■ Not sure



**Question:** Would you say that you agree, disagree, or neither agree nor disagree with the following statements?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



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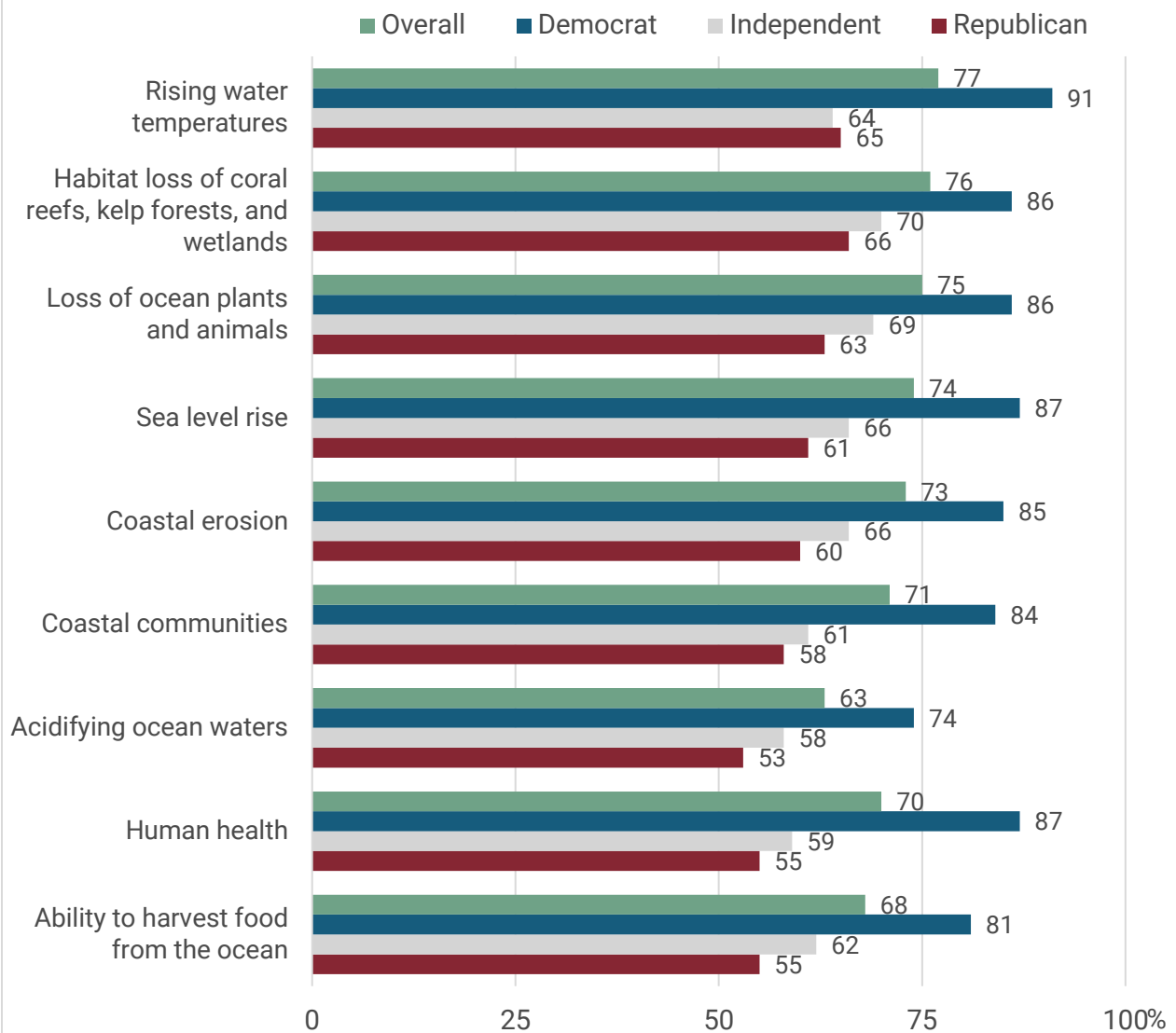


Americans worry about the impact climate change is having on the ocean and ocean life. Seventy-six percent think climate change is having an impact on habitat loss, and 74% say the same about loss of ocean plants and animals (see Figure 7).

A majority of Democrats, Republicans, and independents believe climate change is impacting various aspects of ocean and human health. However, Democrats are more likely than independents and Republicans to believe climate change and its impacts are having a major impact on various aspects of ocean health.

**Figure 7: Majority of Democrats and Republicans believe climate change is impacting the ocean, coastal communities, and human health.**

Percent of adults who say climate change has an impact on each



**Question:** Is climate change having a major impact, a minor impact, or no impact on each of the following?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

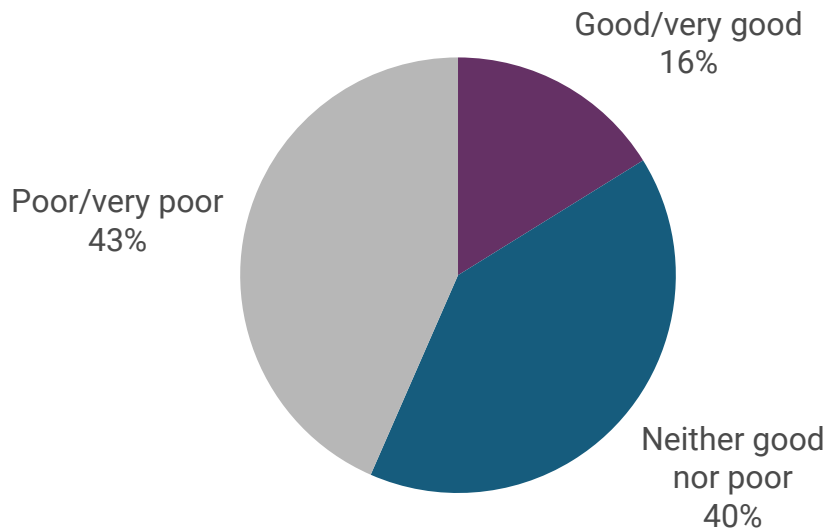


## Americans are concerned about the state of the environment and want government and businesses to act.

More Americans rate the health of ocean environments in the United States as poor or very poor (43%), compared to those who rate it good or very good (16%). Another 40% rate the health of ocean environments as neither good nor poor.

**Figure 8: Over 4 in 10 Americans say the health of U.S. ocean waters is poor or very poor.**

Percent of adults



**Question:** In general, would you rank the health of ocean environments in the United States as poor, good, or neither good nor poor?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.

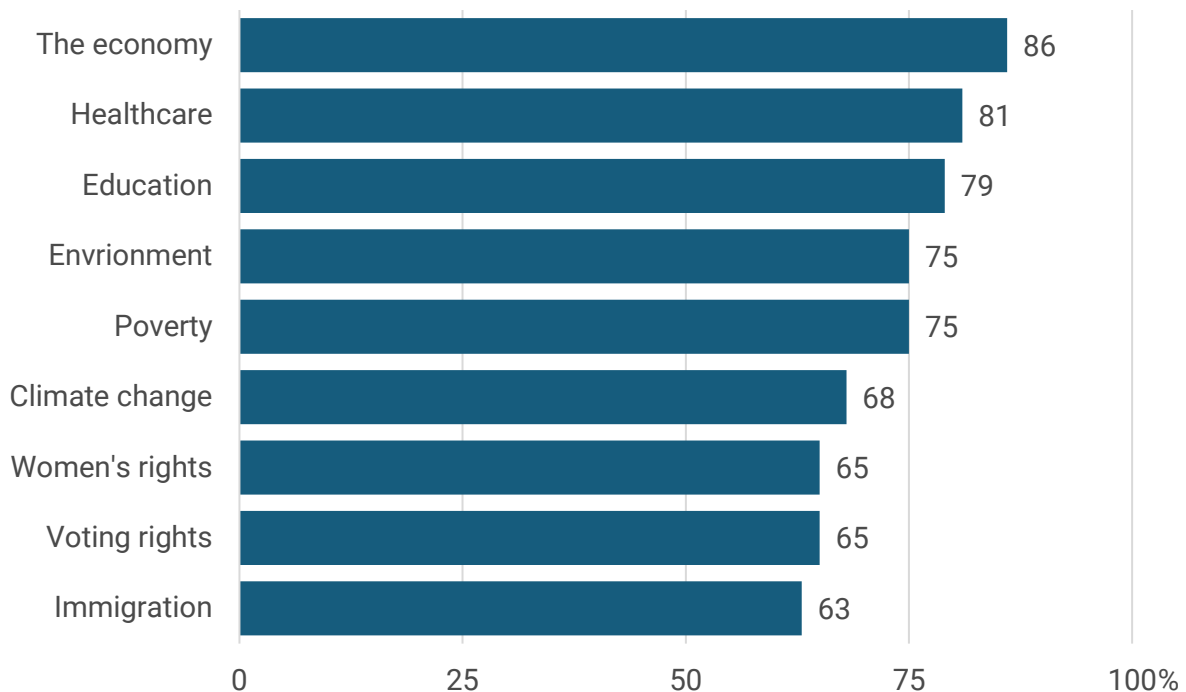


Given the perception of ocean health, three-quarters of Americans say it is very or extremely important that the U.S. government address the environment, and 68% say the same for climate change (see Figure 9). Ninety percent of those who think the health of U.S. oceans are poor or very poor say it is extremely or very important for the government to address the environment, compared to 66% of people who think our ocean health is neither good nor poor and 60% of those who think ocean health is good or very good.

While differences exist across party lines, majorities of Democrats (90%), independents (75%), and Republicans (55%) think it is very or extremely important that the U.S. addresses the environment in the next year.

### Figure 9: Majorities of Americans want the government to address the environment and climate change.

Percent of adults who say very or extremely important



**Question:** In the next year, how important is it that the U.S. government acts to address each of the following?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.



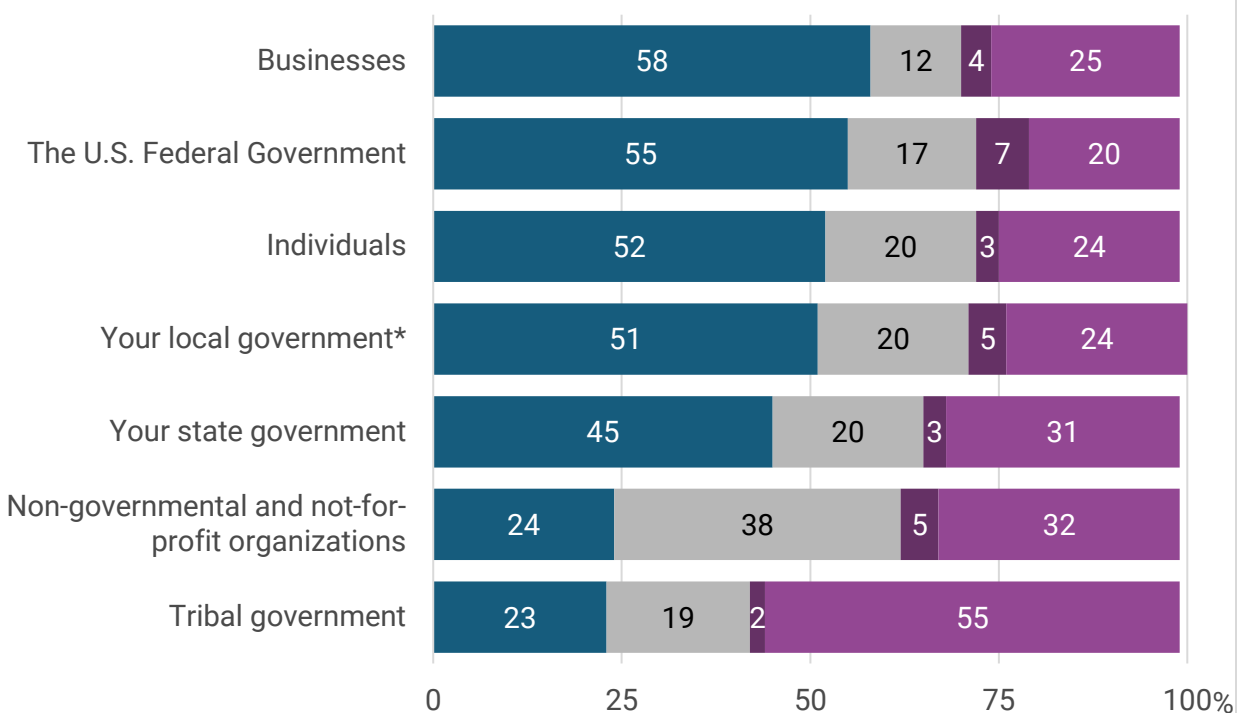
## The government is not doing enough to protect the ocean, majorities say.

Most Americans think that all levels of government, businesses, and individuals are not doing enough to protect the ocean, as demonstrated in Figure 10. About half of Americans believe the federal government and their state government are not doing enough to protect the ocean. Among those who reside in coastline communities, 51% say their local government are also not doing enough, while just 20% say it is doing the right amount. Most Americans agree that businesses are not doing enough (58%). Nonprofits and non-governmental organizations are the only groups that more Americans believe are doing enough (38%) instead of too little (24%).

**Figure 10: Most Americans think government entities, businesses, and individuals aren't doing enough to protect the ocean.**

Percent of adults

■ Too little   ■ About the right amount   ■ Too much   ■ I don't know



**Question:** Are each of the following groups doing too much, too little, or about the right amount to protect the ocean?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.

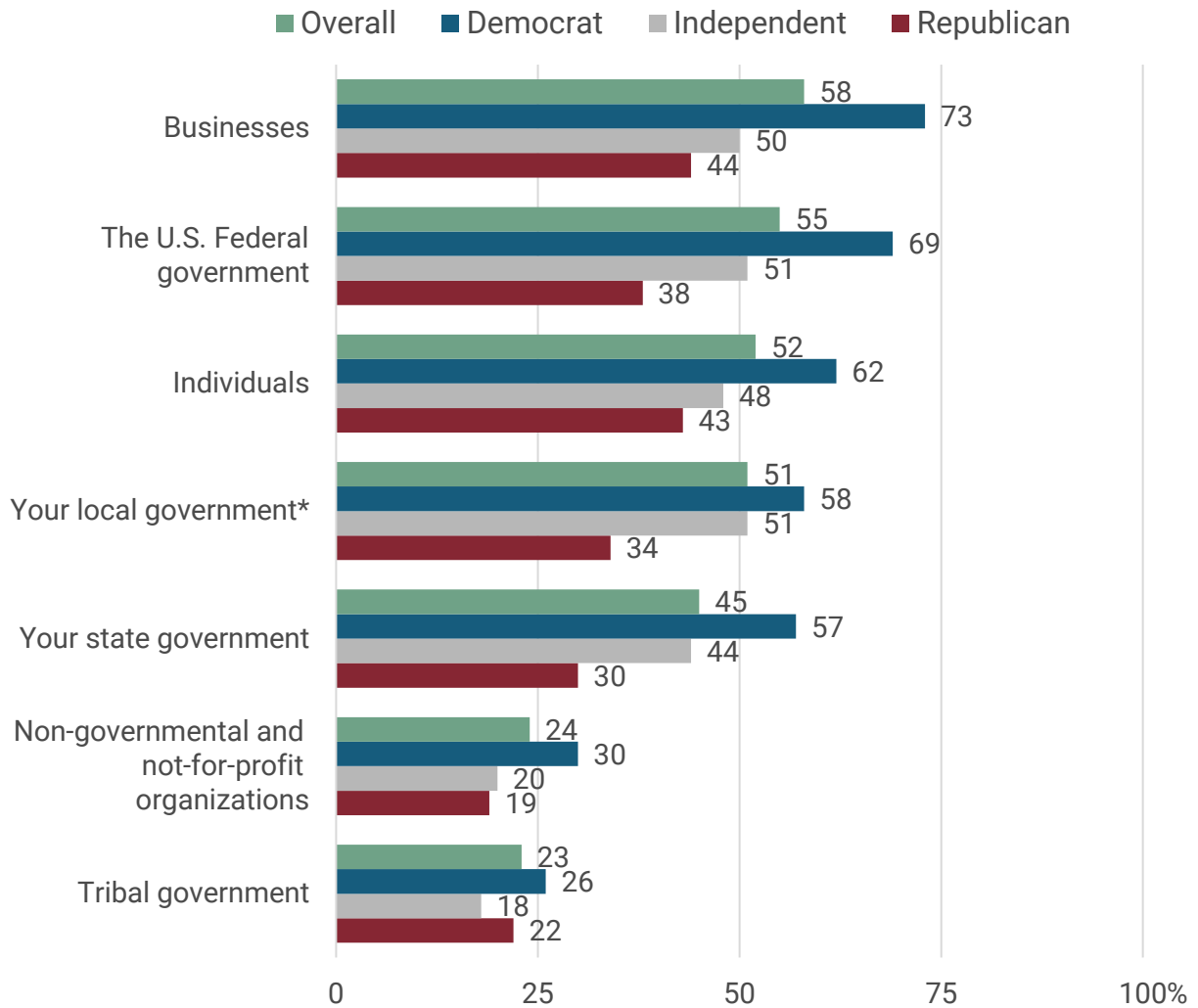
\*Asked if respondent lives in a coastline county (N=485)



Looking at these figures by political party, Democrats are more likely than independents and Republicans to say businesses, the federal government, individuals, and their state government are doing too little to protect the ocean.

**Figure 11: Democrats are more likely to believe businesses, individuals, the federal government, and their state governments are not doing enough to protect the ocean.**

Percent of adults who say each is doing too little to protect the ocean



**Question:** Are each of the following doing too much, too little, or about the right amount to protect the ocean?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.

\*Asked if respondent lives in a coastline county (N=485)



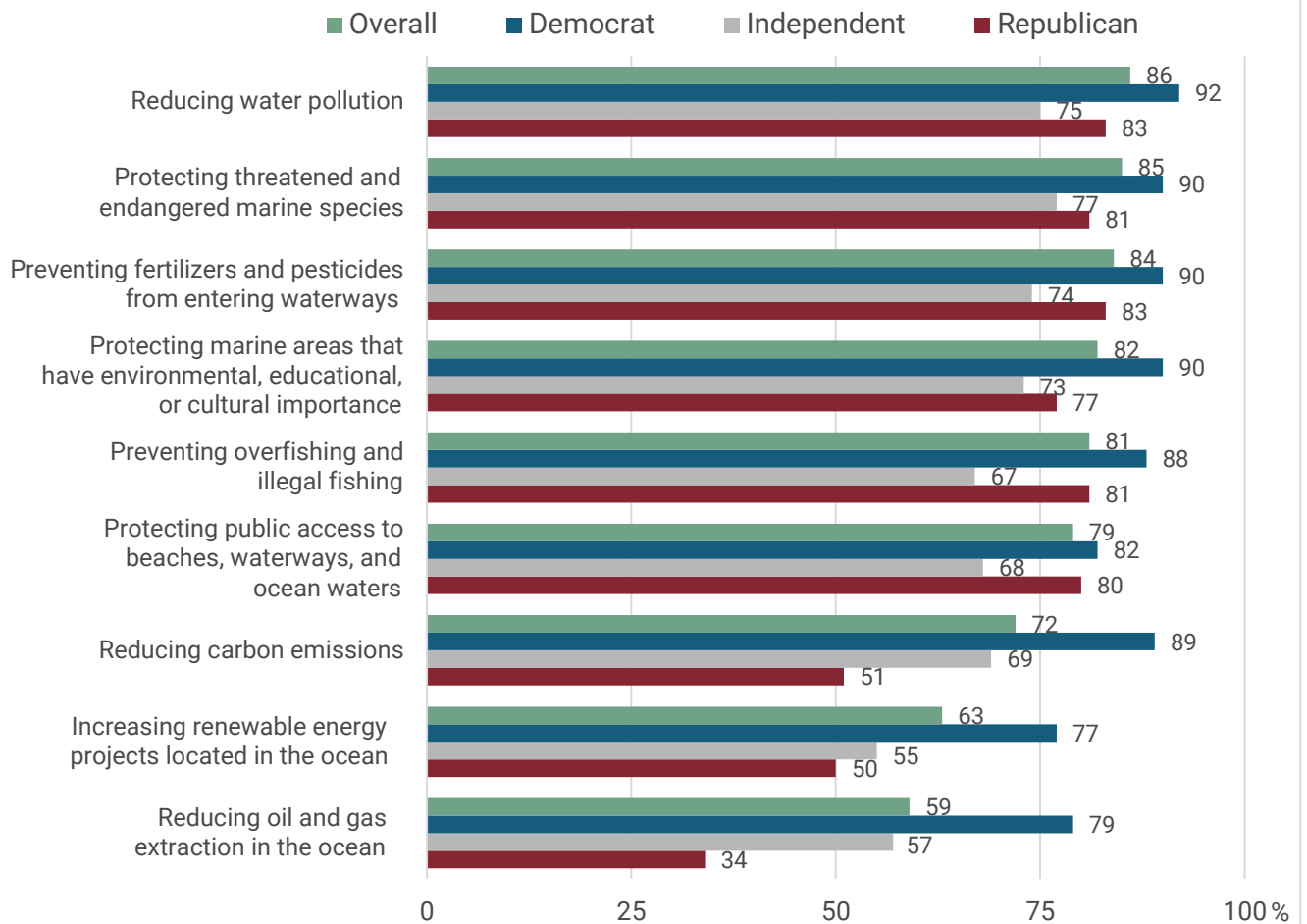
## Broad support exists for a variety of environmental protection measures, but some policies remain divisive.

Large majorities support government action aimed at protecting the ocean and marine environments within the U.S. Most of the public, regardless of party persuasion, supports policies focused on reducing water pollution (86%), protecting endangered species (85%), and preventing pesticides from entering waterways (84%). Majorities across both parties also favor protecting marine areas with environmental, educational, and cultural importance (82%), preventing overfishing (81%), and protecting public access to beaches (79%).

Americans fall into party lines in their support for other policies, such as reducing carbon emissions, increasing renewable energy projects, and reducing oil and gas extraction in the ocean, with Democrats more likely to favor these initiatives. However, it is notable that at least half of Republicans would support government action aimed at reducing carbon emissions and increasing renewable energy projects in the ocean (see Figure 12).

**Figure 12: A majority of Republicans and Democrats favor government action to protect U.S. ocean waters.**

Percent of adults who strongly or somewhat favor



**Question:** When it comes to policy surrounding U.S. ocean waters, do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose each of the following government actions?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.



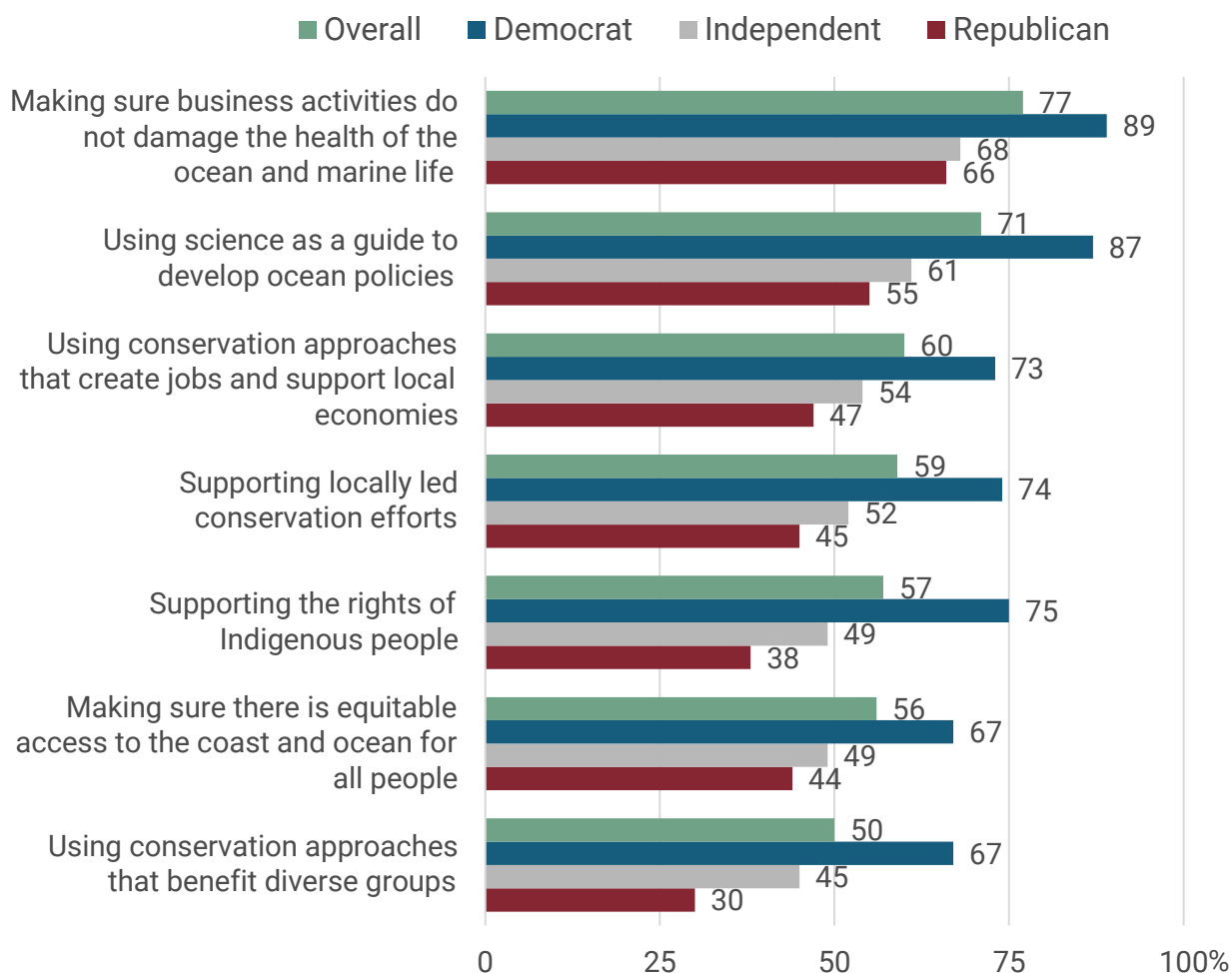
## 7 in 10 adults believe that science should be a guide to develop ocean conservation policies.

When it comes to implementing ocean conservation policy, most Americans agree that assuring business activities like energy development, mining, and fishing do not damage the health of the ocean and marine life is very or extremely important (77%). Seven in 10 also believe that science should be used as a guide to develop ocean conservation policies.

However, there are differences across the political spectrum when it comes to the importance of some conservation initiatives. Democrats are more likely than independents and Republicans to say that that supporting the rights of indigenous people, prioritizing locally led conservation efforts, or using approaches that benefit diverse groups are important when it comes to ocean conservation (see Figure 13).

**Figure 13: Over three quarters of Americans want to ensure business activities don't harm ocean life.**

Percent of adults who say each is extremely or very important



**Question:** Are each of the following important or not important when it comes to ocean conservation?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.

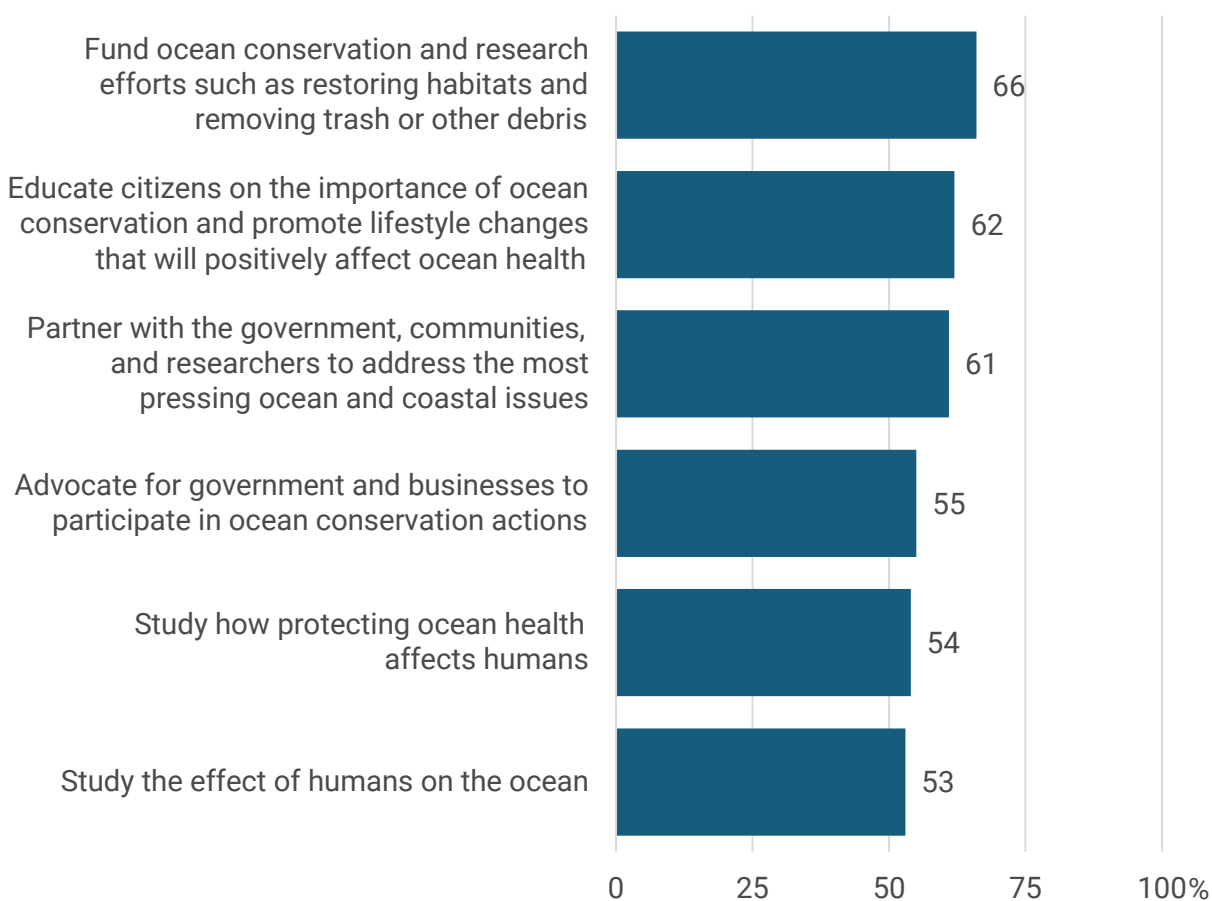


## Americans want nonprofits to lead efforts to educate the public on ocean conservation and help start the cleanup of marine environments.

Most Americans think it is important for nonprofits to pursue a wide array of approaches to promote ocean conservation. Two-thirds of the public believe that nonprofits' funding of ocean conservation and research efforts, such as restoring habitats and removing trash and debris, is very or extremely important. Six in 10 Americans also say it is important for nonprofits to focus on educating citizens about ocean conservation and lifestyle changes and to partner with governments, communities, and researchers to address coastal issues (see Figure 14).

### Figure 14: Two-thirds of U.S. adults want nonprofits to restore ocean habitats and remove marine debris.

Percent of adults who say very or extremely important



**Question:** How important are each of the following for not-for-profit organizations to do to promote ocean conservation?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.



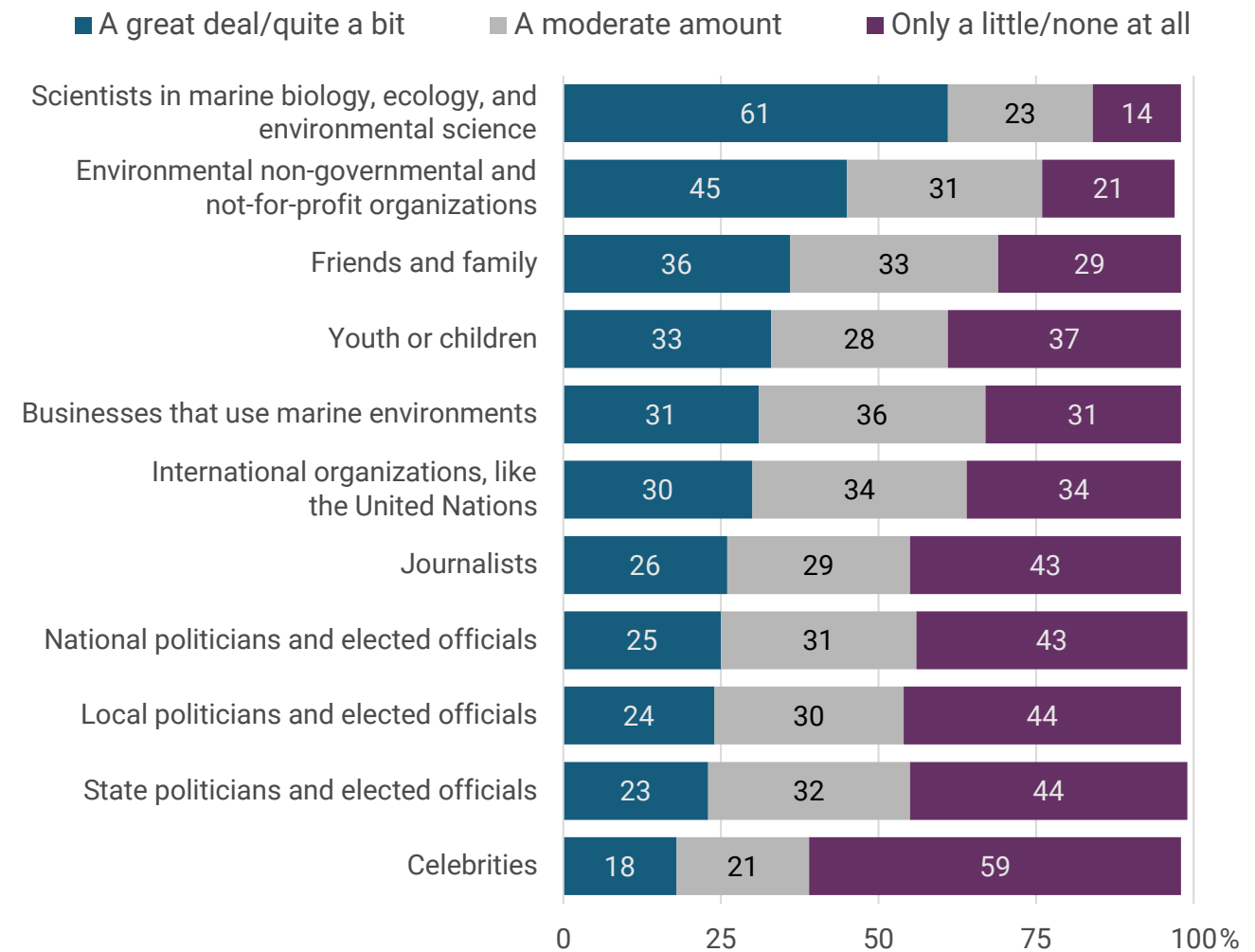


## Americans are more open to conservation if evidence shows damage to the ocean could become permanent.

A majority of Americans believe scientists in marine biology, ecology, or environmental science will have the most influence when deciding to support conservation efforts (61%). This is followed by environmental non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations (45%) and friends and family (36%). Americans are least persuaded by international organizations, such as the United Nations (30%), journalists (26%), and politicians (25% national, 24% local, and 23% state).

**Figure 15: Americans say scientists and NGOs are most likely to influence their opinions on conservation efforts.**

Percent of adults



**Question:** How much of an impact would each of the following groups have in convincing you to support increasing conservation efforts of marine environments?

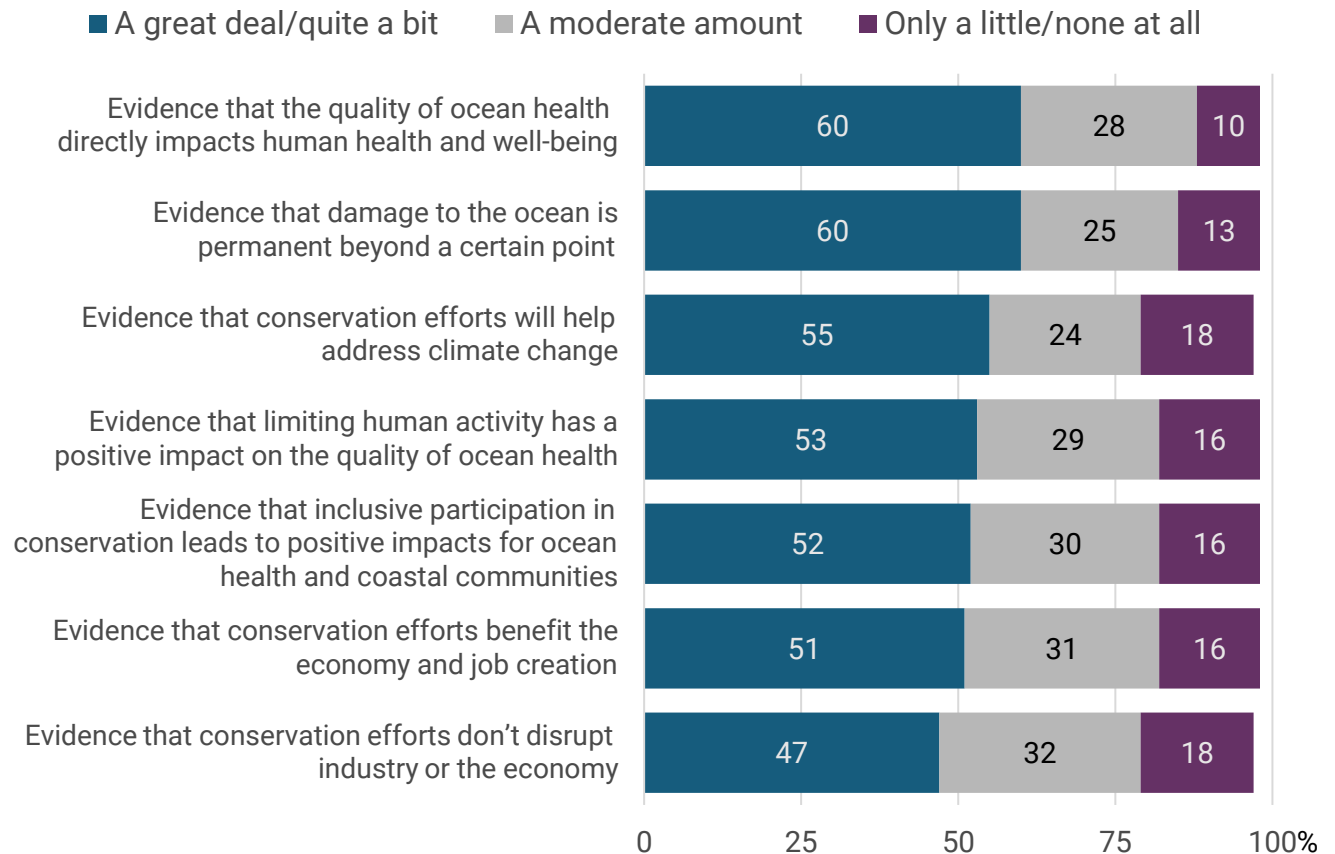
**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.



Americans also report that they find certain types of evidence more convincing than others when it comes to increasing their support for ocean conservation. Six in 10 say that evidence that the health of oceans directly impacts human health or that damage to the ocean is permanent beyond a certain point would impact their support quite a bit or a great deal. Notably, only 47% say evidence that conservation efforts don't disrupt industry or the economy would impact their support quite a bit or a great deal (see Figure 16).

**Figure 16: Americans are more likely to support conservation efforts if damage to ocean health is permanent and impacts human health.**

Percent of adults



**Question:** How much of an impact would each of the following types of evidence have in convincing you to support increasing ocean conservation efforts?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and over nationwide.



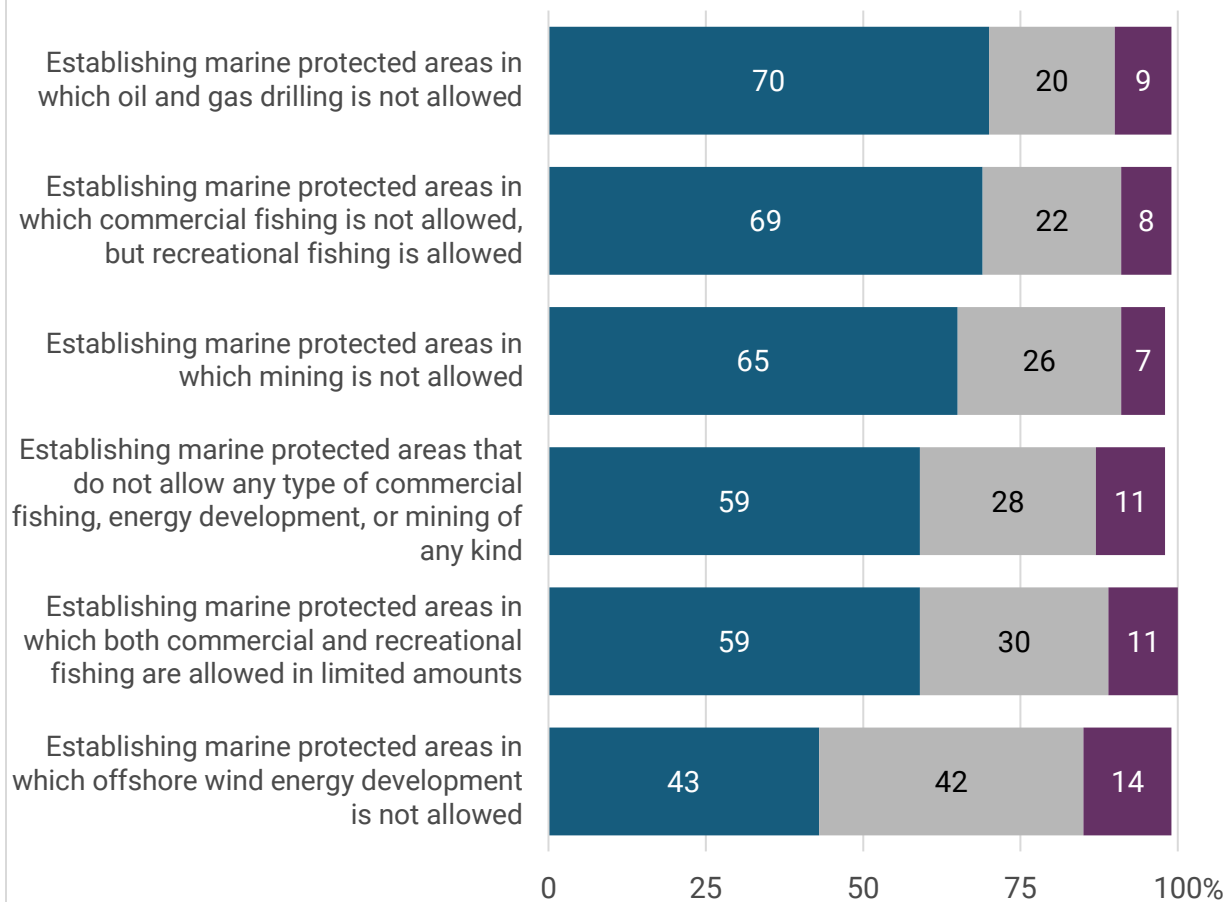
## There is broad public support for the creation of marine protected areas and national marine sanctuary initiatives.

A majority of Americans favor the creation of marine protected areas that restrict oil and gas drilling (70%), commercial fishing (69%), and mining (65%). Fifty-nine percent favor establishing marine protected areas that limit all of these activities, as Figure 17 demonstrates. Support for these initiatives is not contingent on geographic location in the United States either—those who live inland are just as likely to favor the establishment of these marine protected areas as those who live in coastline counties.

**Figure 17: 7 in 10 favor marine protected areas in which oil and gas drilling is not allowed.**

Percent of adults

■ Strongly/somewhat favor ■ Neither favor nor oppose ■ Strongly/somewhat oppose



**Question:** Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose each of the following policy initiatives regarding the ocean?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



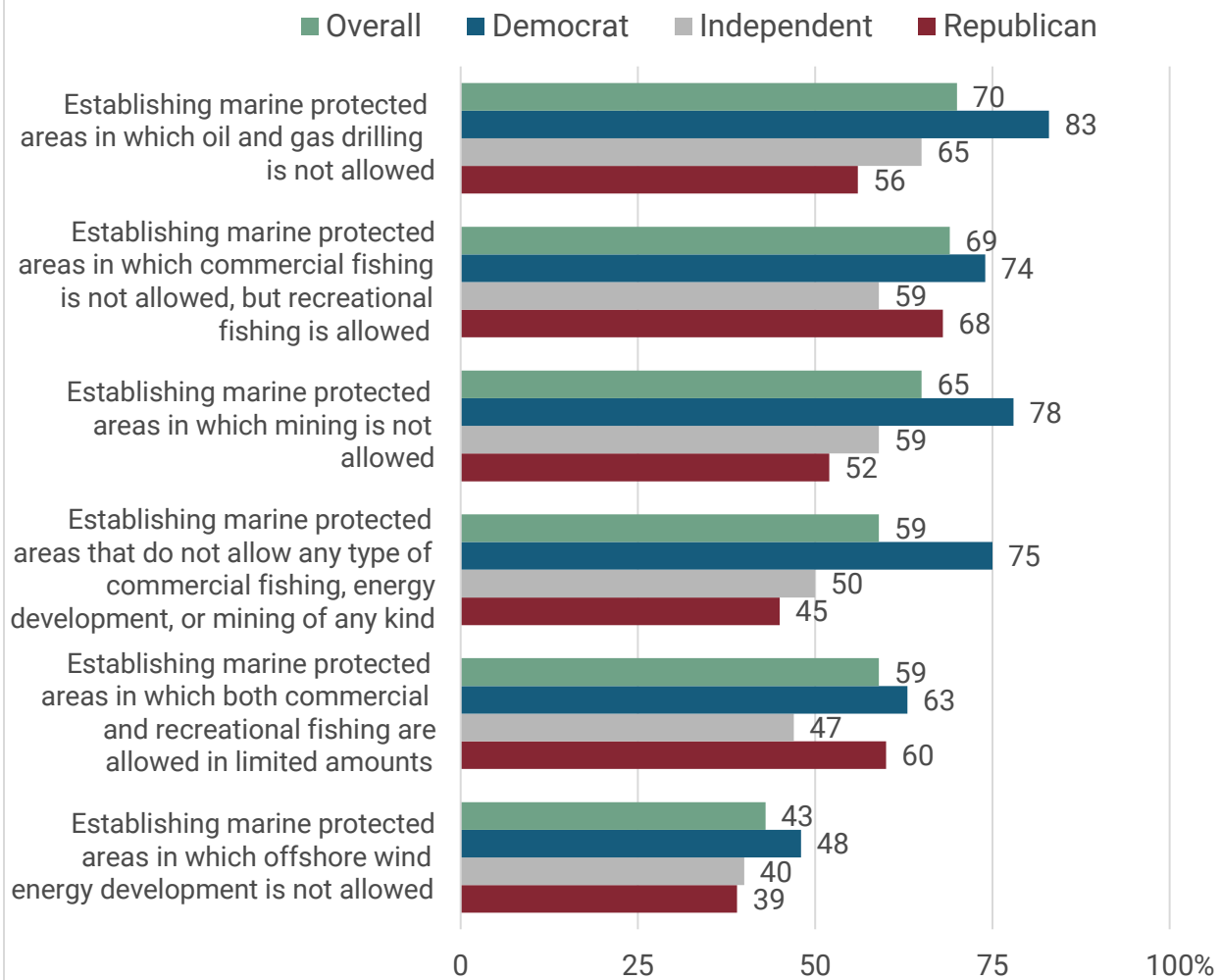
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When looking at support for establishing marine protected areas by political party, Democrats are more likely to support those that would restrict oil and gas drilling and mining. Democrats are also more likely to support marine protected areas that limit all commercial activity. However, it is notable that still a majority of Republicans and independents favor the creation of some of the proposed marine protected areas, such as those that limit oil and gas drilling and commercial fishing (Figure 18).

**Figure 18: While Democrats are more likely to favor the creation of certain types of marine protected areas, a majority of Republicans and independents also support some initiatives.**

Percent of adults who strongly or somewhat favor each



**Question:** Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose each of the following policy initiatives regarding the ocean?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

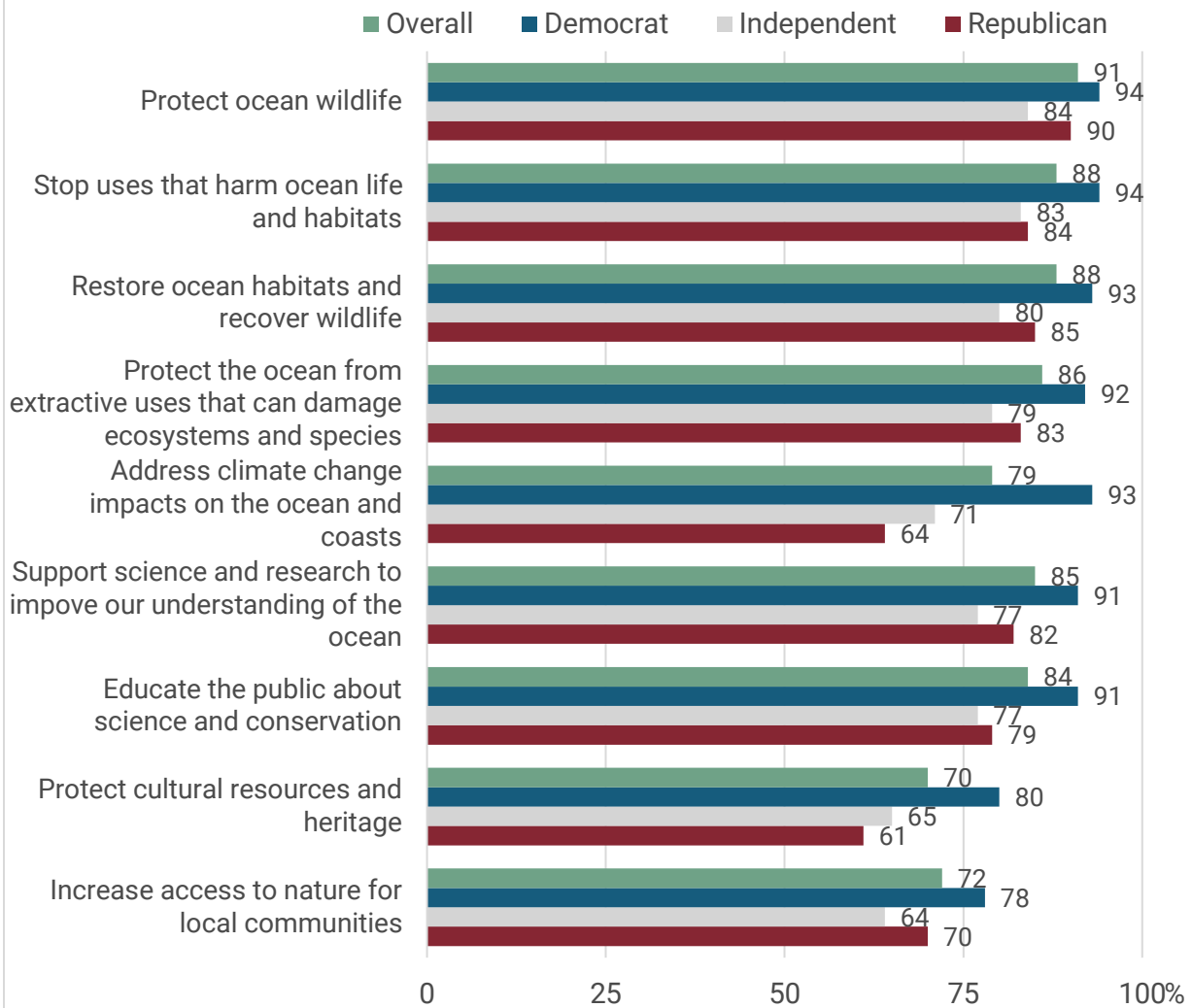


When it comes to the creation of federally designated national marine sanctuaries, most Americans say protecting ocean wildlife (68%), stopping uses that harm ocean life and habitats (67%), and restoring ocean habitats (62%) are high priorities, as Figure 19 demonstrates. Indeed, for each of the items asked, a majority of Americans say each is either a high or medium priority.

There is some variation in support amongst political parties, as Democrats are more likely to place these national marine sanctuary initiatives as high priorities. Still, a majority of Republicans and independents also say these initiatives should be either high or medium priorities for the national marine sanctuary system.

**Figure 19: Majority of Democrats and Republicans prioritize national marine sanctuary system initiatives.**

Percent of adults who say high or medium priority for each



**Question:** Should each of the following goals be a high priority, medium priority, low priority or not a priority for the National Marine Sanctuary System to achieve?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.

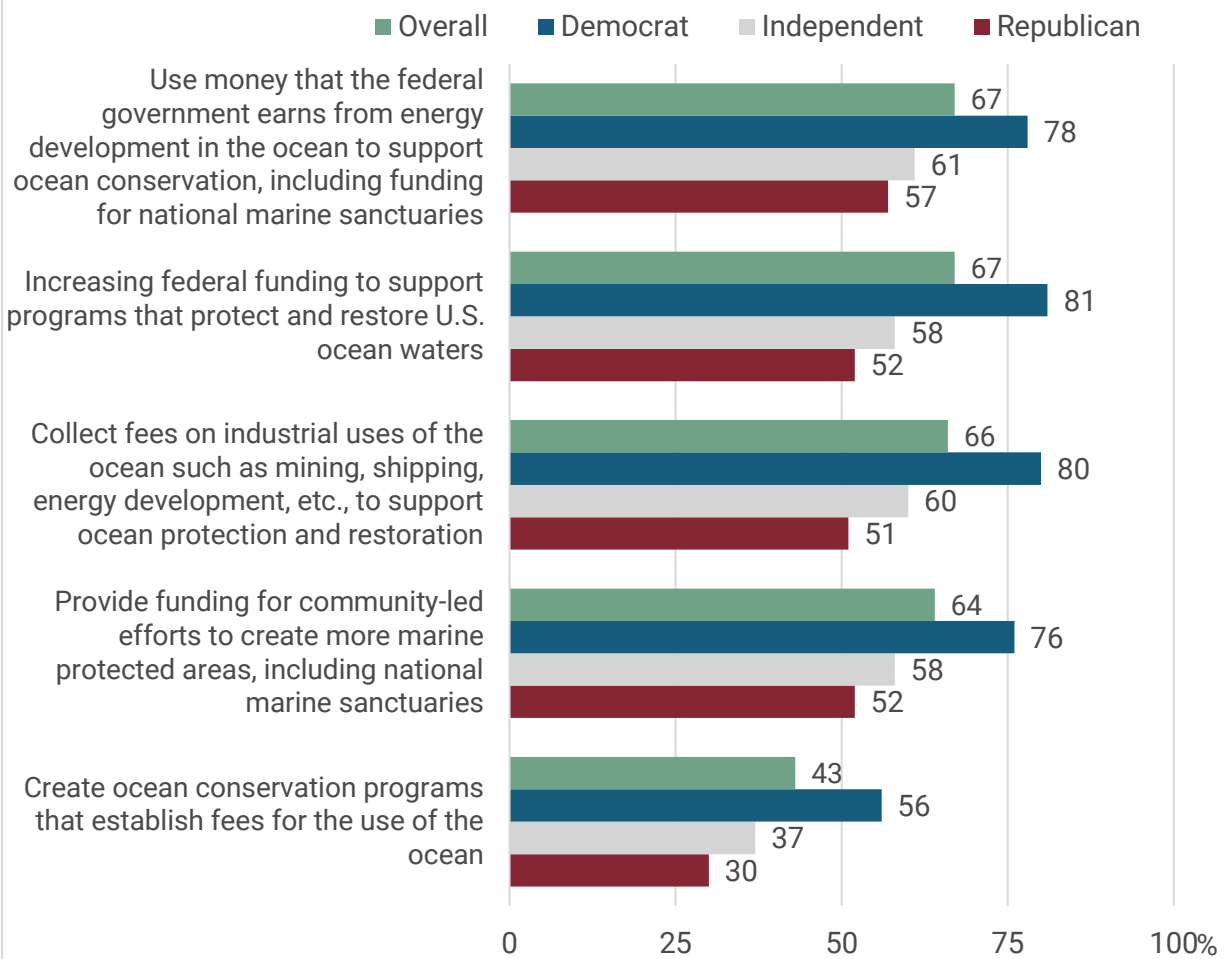


Two-thirds of Americans (67%) favor increasing federal funding to support programs that protect and restore United States ocean waters as well as using money that the government earns from energy development in the ocean to fund conservation programs. The public also broadly supports collecting fees on industrial uses of the ocean (66%). Fewer favor programs that establish fees for the use of the ocean (See Figure 20).

Americans fall along party lines in their support for funding national marine sanctuaries, with Democrats more likely to favor these initiatives. However, it is still notable that at least half of Republicans and independents favor using money the government earns from energy development for ocean conservation, increasing federal funding for ocean restoration programs, collecting fees on industrial uses of the ocean, and providing funding for community-led marine protected area efforts.

**Figure 20: There is broad public support for increasing federal funding and collecting fees on industrial uses of the ocean.**

Percent of adults who strongly or somewhat favor each



**Question:** Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose each of the following as it relates to national marine sanctuaries?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



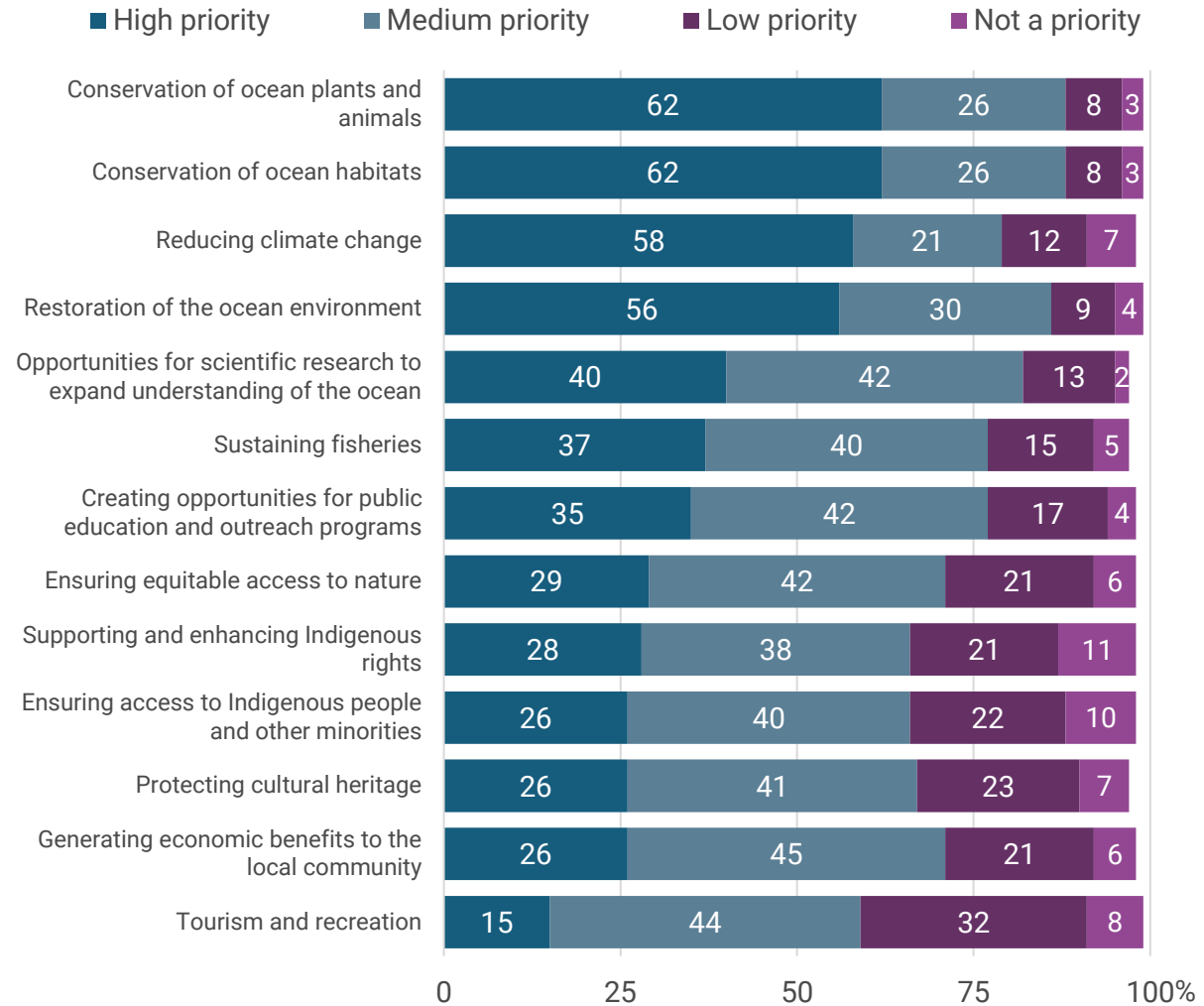
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Foundation**



When asked what initiatives marine protected areas should prioritize, conservation of ocean plants, animals, and habitats; reducing climate change; and restoration of the ocean environment top the public’s list of high priorities. Notably, Americans are not as likely to prioritize generating economic benefits to local communities. This also does not vary amongst those who live in coastal communities—26% of those living in U.S. coastal counties and 26% of those who do not live in coastal counties say stimulating the local economy should be a high priority for marine protected areas (See Figure 21).

**Figure 21: Over half of the public thinks restoration of ocean environments should be a high priority for marine protected areas.**

Percent of adults



**Question:** Should each of the following goals be a high priority, a medium priority, low priority or not a priority for marine protected areas?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



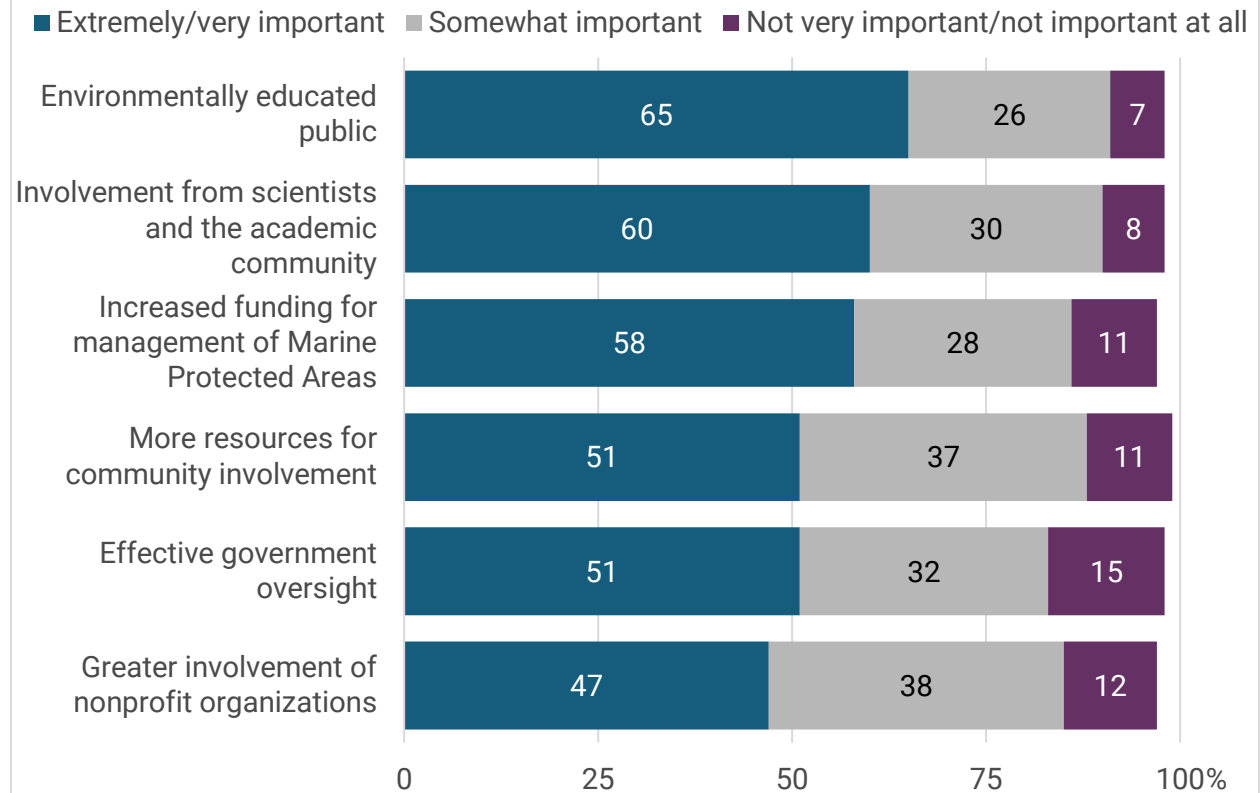
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Marine Sanctuary  
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When it comes to managing marine protected areas, 65% of Americans think it is extremely or very important for the public to be educated about the environment, as seen in Figure 22. Six in 10 also find it extremely or very important for scientists and the academic community to be involved as well as increasing funding for the management of marine protected areas.

### Figure 22: 6 in 10 find it important for scientists to be involved in the management of marine protected areas.

Percent of adults



**Question:** How important are each of the following when it comes to managing marine protected areas?

**Source:** Poll for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago from August 8-18, 2022, with 1,086 adults age 18 and older nationwide.



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## Methodology

This survey, funded by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. Data were collected using AmeriSpeak®, NORC's probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97 percent of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings.

Interviews for this survey were conducted between August 8 and 18, 2022, with adults age 18 or older representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,086 completed the survey – 1,061 via the web and 25 via telephone. Panel members were invited by email or by phone from an NORC telephone interviewer. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents were offered a small monetary incentive for completing the survey. The final stage completion rate is 20.6 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 20.3 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 78.4 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 3.3 percent. The overall margin of sampling error for the AmeriSpeak sample is +/-4.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of error may be higher for subgroups.

In addition, respondents who live in coastline counties were sampled at a higher rate than their proportion of the population for reasons of analysis. The overall margin of sampling error for the 485 completed interviews with respondents who live in coastline counties is +/- 6.7 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level including the design effect. The overall margin of sampling error for the 601 completed interviews with respondents who do not live in coastline counties is +/- 5.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level including the design effect.

Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured error in this or any other survey.

Quality assurance checks were conducted to ensure data quality. In total, 51 interviews were removed for nonresponse to at least 50% of the questions asked of them, for completing the survey in less than one-third of the median interview time for the full sample, or for straight-lining all grid questions asked of them. These interviews were excluded from the data prior to weighting.

Once the sample has been selected and fielded, and all the study data have been collected and made final, a raking process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any survey nonresponse as well as any non-coverage or under and oversampling resulting from the study specific sample design.

Poststratification variables included age, gender, census division, race/ethnicity, education, and residency within a U.S. coastal county. Weighting variables were obtained from the 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. The weighted data reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over.

For additional information about the AmeriSpeak Panel methodology is available at: <https://amerispeak.norc.org/us/en/amerispeak/about-amerispeak/panel-design.html>.

For more information, email [info@norc.org](mailto:info@norc.org).

## About NORC at the University of Chicago

NORC at the University of Chicago is an independent research institution that delivers reliable data and rigorous analysis to guide critical programmatic, business, and policy decisions. Since 1941, NORC has conducted groundbreaking studies, created and applied innovative methods and tools, and advanced principles of scientific integrity and collaboration. Today, government, corporate and nonprofit clients around the world partner with NORC to transform increasingly complex information into useful knowledge.

NORC conducts research in five main areas: Economics; Markets, and the Workforce; Education, Training and Learning; Global Development; Health and Well-Being; and Society, Media and Public Affairs.

## About the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is the national nonprofit partner for the National Marine Sanctuary System and a leading voice for U.S. protected waters. Founded in 2000 by America's most influential ocean conservation leaders, the Foundation works with communities and raises awareness of and support for national marine sanctuaries and their vital role in ensuring a healthy ocean and Great Lakes. The Foundation promotes citizen science, research, conservation, education, and community engagement to protect marine species and habitats, safeguard places of cultural significance, and conserve the country's maritime history and heritage.