



Kelp Restoration and Management Plan

Community Working Group

Monday, April 27, 2026
12:00pm - 4:00pm PST



Zoom Considerations and Reminders

- Meeting is being recorded and closed-captions are available
- Technical difficulties viewing the screen share
 - Contact Priya at priya@strategicearth.com or 530-219-1525, or send a message in the chat
- Unmuting: To speak
 - Click the microphone on the bottom-left of your screen
 - Use the chat box at the bottom of the screen to ask for help
- Chat Function
 - Troubleshooting and clarifying questions



Zoom Considerations and Reminders (cont'd)

- Renaming: To help identify yourself and other participants
 - Click “Participants” in meeting controls
 - Locate your name and click “More” and choose “Rename”
 - Enter your full name (first and last) and any identifying sector(s)
- Closed Captioning: To turn on subtitles
 - Click “CC” in meeting controls
- Gallery View: To see more than one speaker
 - Click “View” in upper right corner, and select “Gallery View”



Meeting Agreements

- Be present
- Be prepared to discuss agenda items constructively
- Share if you need to leave early
- Approach discussions from a place of diversity and inclusion
- Focus discussions on strategies and solutions that move conversations forward
- Listen for understanding and seek clarification
- Identify any personal/professional conflicts of interest
- Do not work at cross-interests with the group's goals and objectives
- Personal attacks will not be tolerated
- Take space, make space



Introductions: Project Team



Photos by Kristen Elsmore, CDFW

- **California Department of Fish & Wildlife:** Kristen Elsmore, Rebecca Flores Miller, Adam Frimodig, Kirsten Ramey, Shelby Kawana
- **Ocean Protection Council:** Pike Spector
- **Strategic Earth Consulting:** Rachelle Fisher, Priya Shukla, Teresa Romero



Introductions: CWG & SAC Members

Please share:

- Your Name
- Affiliation/Sector
- Region (North, Central, or South Coast)
- Connection/Expertise (Giant, Bull, Both)
- Intention for today's meeting



Photo by Kristen Elsmore, CDFW



Photo by Rachelle Fisher, Strategic Earth



Meeting Goals & Outcomes

Today's Goals



- Discuss and vote on the suite of recommendations to inform the development of the Kelp Restoration and Management Plan (KRMP).
- Identify next steps for the CWG and receive updates on the broader KRMP process and timeline.

Today's Intended Outcomes



- Final CWG-supported recommendations for CDFW and OPC to consider
- Clearly document consensus, support levels, and any differing perspectives





Meeting Agenda



Photo by Shelby Kawana, CDFW

- Welcome, Introductions, and Community Building
- KRMP CWG Updates
- Synthesis of Where We Have Been
- Action: Deliberation on Recommendations and Voting
- Next Steps and Looking Ahead



KRMP Timeline



Science Advisory
Committee

Tribal
Consultation

Community Working
Group



2023-2026

Recommendations informing the KRMP



On the Ground
Research

2025 - 2026

KRMP Drafting, CEQA,
and Finalization

2027 - 2028

Peer Review,
Regulatory Process, and
Implementation





KRMP Process Updates

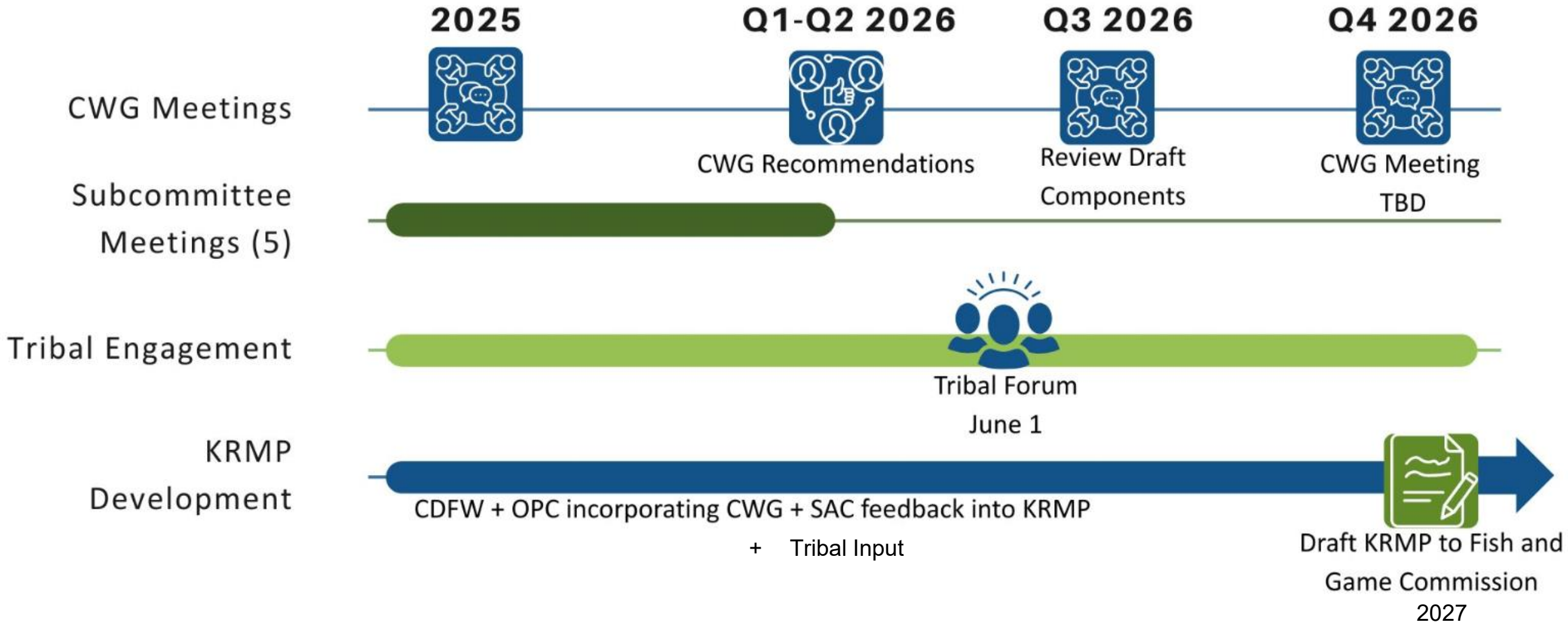
- Science Advisory Committee
 - Meetings in
 - 2025: Aug & Nov
 - 2026: Jan, Feb, Mar, & Apr
 - Upcoming Meetings: Jun, Aug, Sep, & Oct 2026
 - Science Webinar Nov 2025
- Fish and Game Commission
 - Marine Resources Committee (MRC) Update November 2025
 - Tribal Committee Update April 2026
 - Upcoming: July 2026 MRC Meeting



Photo by Kristen Elsmore, CDFW



Where CWG Has Been + Where It's Headed





Tribal Recommendations



CWG Tribal Subcommittee develops draft recommendations



**Tribal Forum:
Review Draft Recommendations**



**CWG Tribal Subcommittee:
Final Recommendations & Share with
Full CWG**

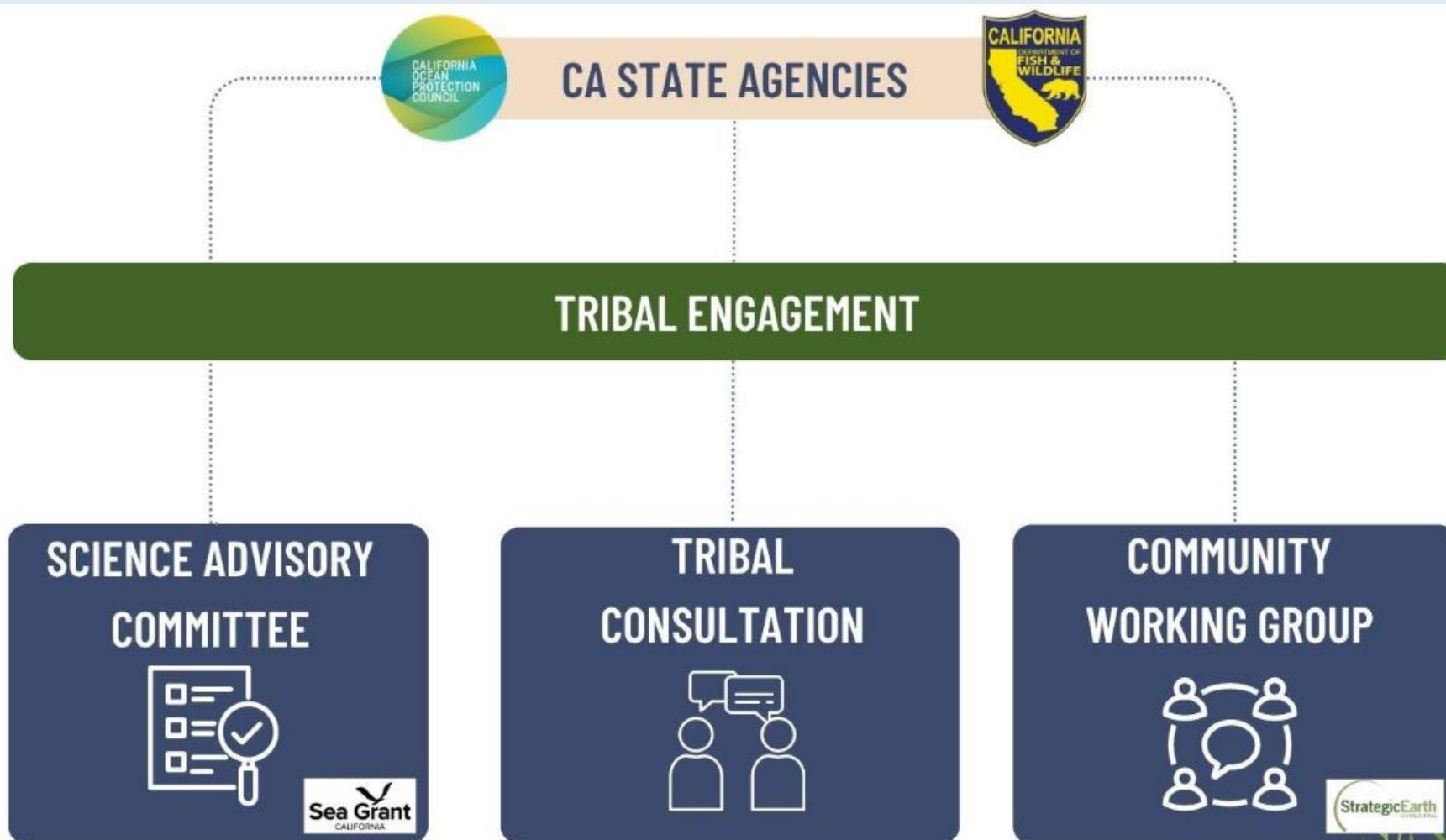


**CDFW + OPC consider CWG Tribal
Recommendations, SAC Tribal Input, &
Formal Consultation**





How is the KRMP being developed?

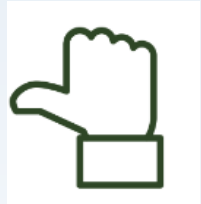




Voting Process



I think this proposal is the best choice of the options available to us.



I can accept the proposal although I do not necessarily support it. (straw polls only)



I do not agree

Abstention: Infeasible to weigh in on.

2/3 of those present 14 thumbs up* = “consensus recommendation” (*Dependent on # of ppl voting.)

2+ votes= Minority recommendation



Sharing Results

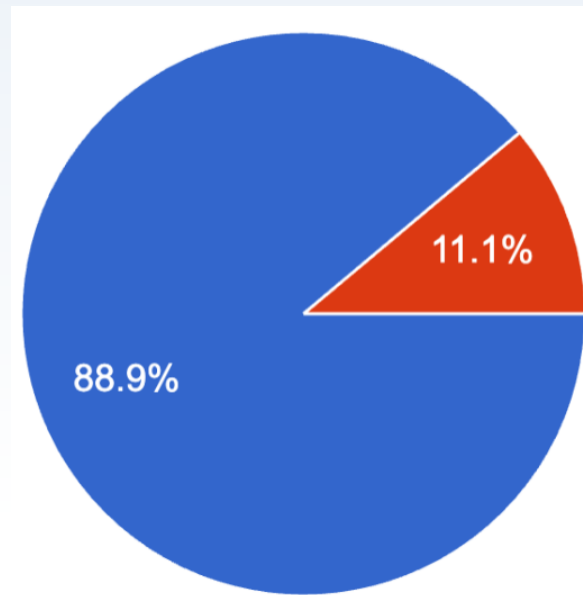
- Final votes will be taken via **roll call**. Each member's vote will be captured and shared in the public-facing summary, including their names.
- All recommendation(s) will be captured in a **summary report** that the Community Working Group will review within a set timeframe, after which time it will be submitted to CDFW and OPC after completing each Community Working Group meeting.
- **Meeting summaries and/or reports will be made available to the public** online, shared via the Community Working Group's email list, and communicated to other key audiences identified by the Community Working Group.





In Scope: Management Framework

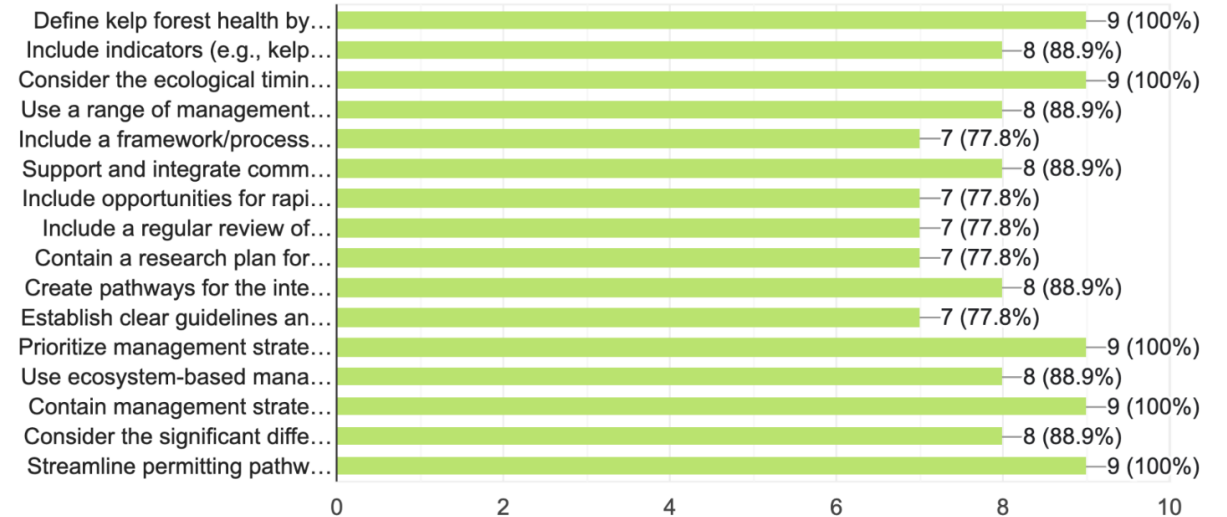
1. **Develop a flexible management framework that accounts for the dynamic nature of kelp ecosystems and changing ecological conditions to allow for adaptive management.** In no particular order, the framework should:



- Thumbs Up: I think this recommendation is the best choice of the options available to us
- Thumbs Sideways: I can accept the recommendation, although I do not necessarily support it and propose an alternative
- Thumbs Down: I disagree with the recommendation. I need to block its adoption and propose an alternative.
- Abstain

The Management Framework should:

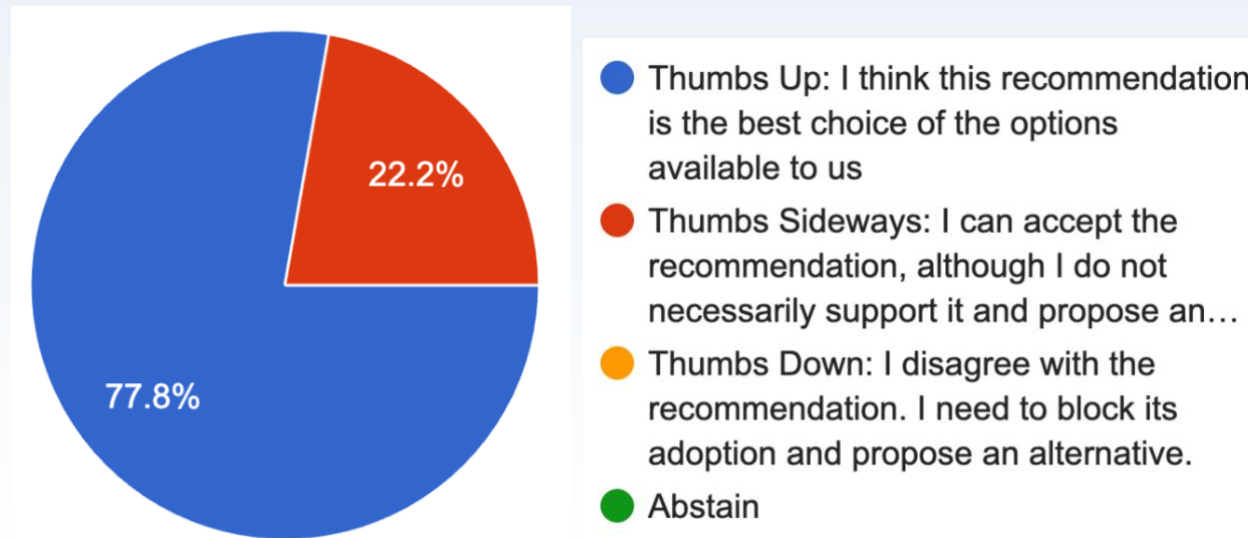
9 responses





In Scope: Kelp Observation Tool

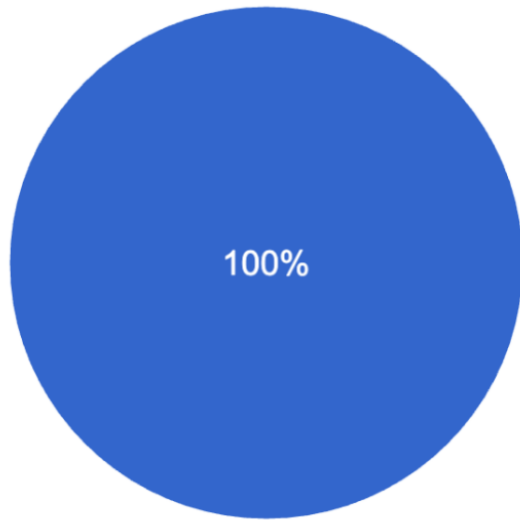
2. To keep the public and local communities engaged as partners in kelp forest management, develop **public-facing kelp observation tool(s)** that enable stakeholders to submit observations of kelp health.





In Scope: Restoration

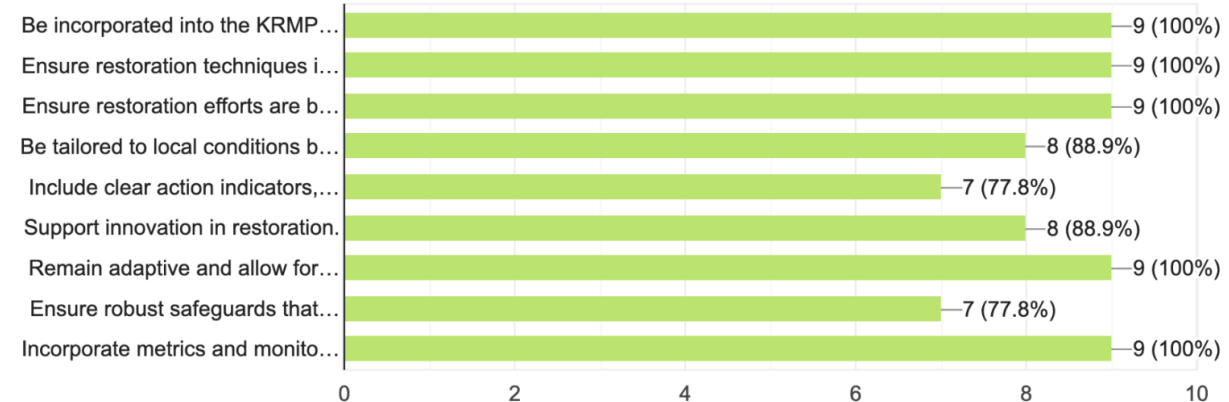
3. Use science, community priorities, and Traditional Ecological Knowledges to develop a comprehensive restoration toolkit. In no particular order, the toolkit should:



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The Restoration Toolkit should:

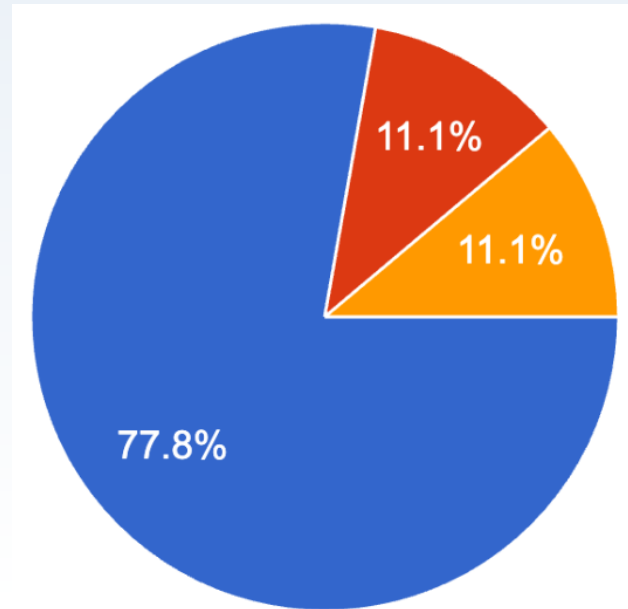
9 responses





In Scope: Restoration & MPAs

4. Ensure the KRMP does not hinder the **ability for restoration to occur in areas where Marine Protected Areas designations may change.**

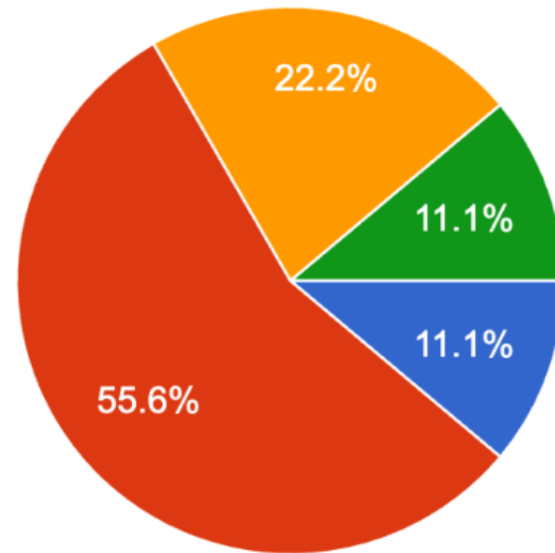


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In Scope: Prioritizing Capacity & Resources

#5 Capacity/Resources: The CWG appreciates that the management of California's kelp forests is dependent on available resources (i.e., capacity, f...25 meeting summary and outlined in the table below 9 responses

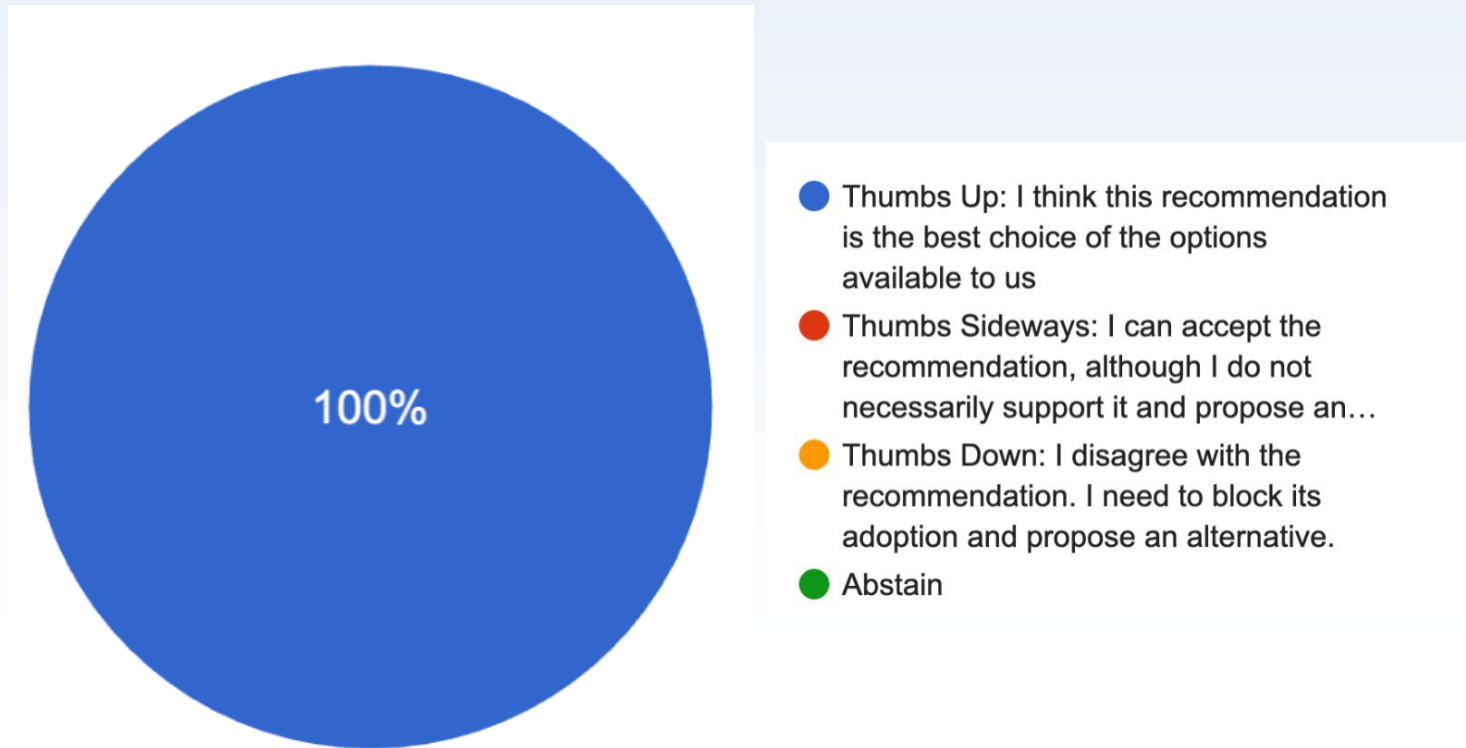


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In Scope: Maximize Limited Capacity

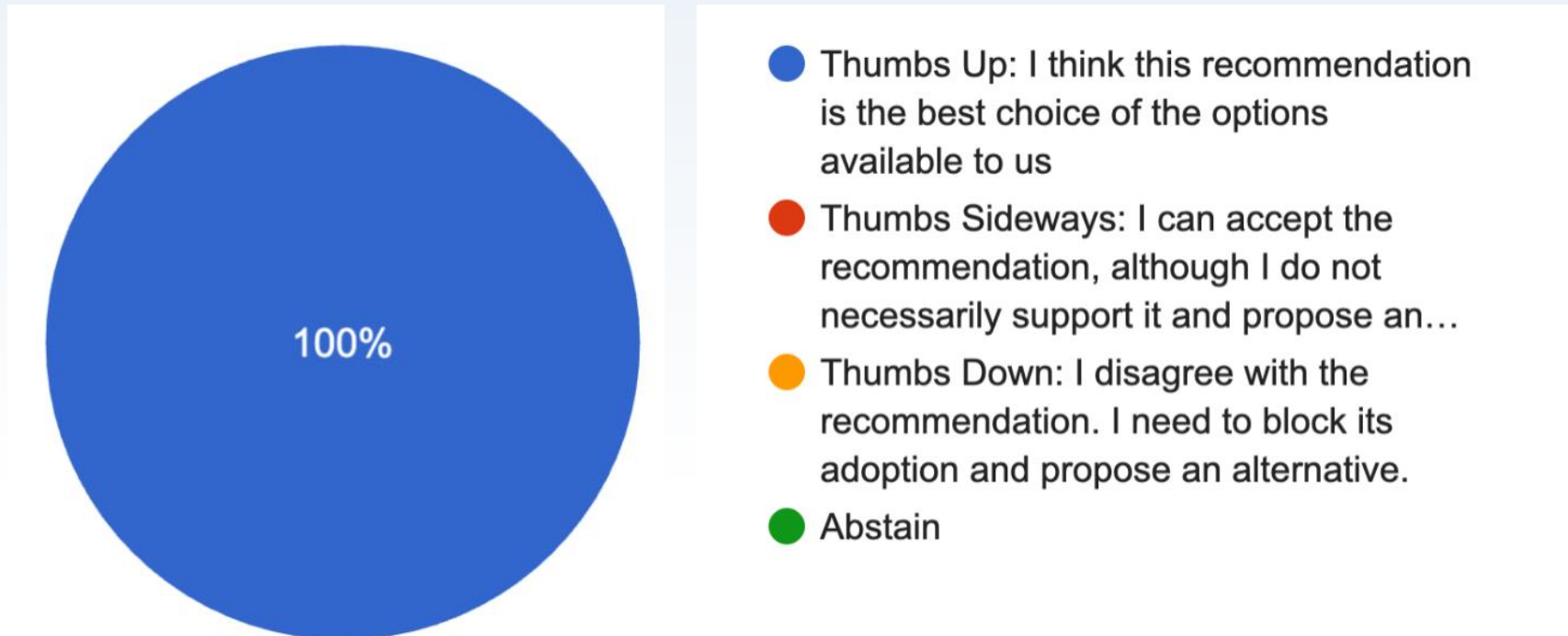
6. To maximize available resources, the CWG recommends the KRMP outline how **CDFW will strengthen partnerships** to support monitoring, research, restoration, etc.





In Scope: Outreach & Education

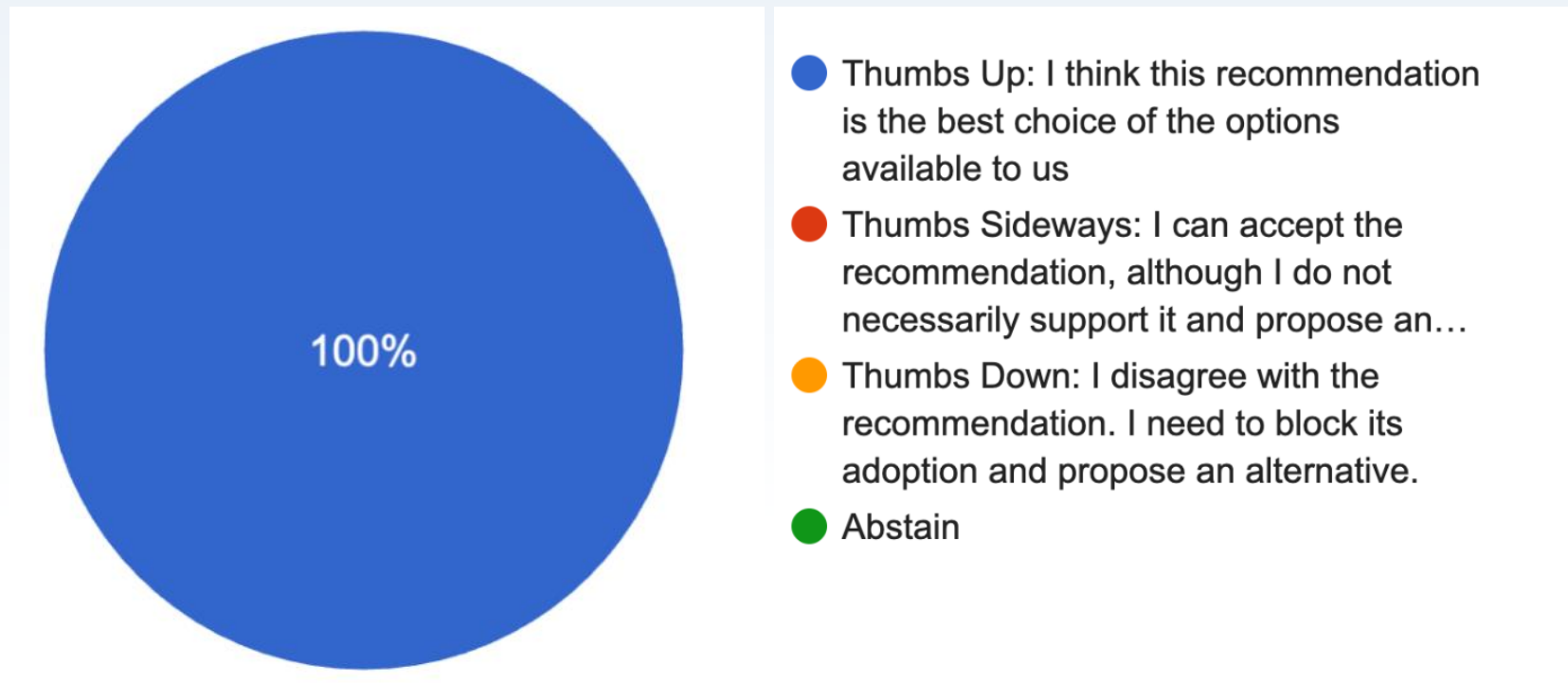
9. Develop tools to help the public understand the consultation and pre-approval protocols across permitting agencies to reduce permitting delays, which will improve project readiness to help communities act quickly and effectively without unnecessary administrative burdens.





In Scope: Broader Coordination

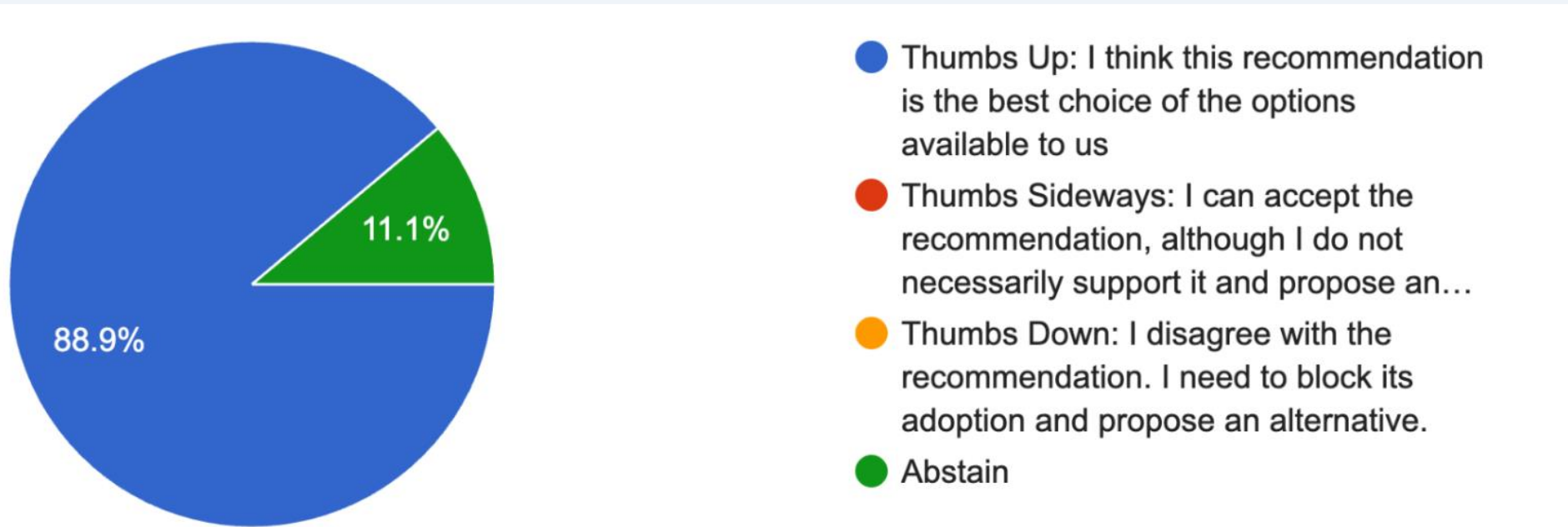
10. Promote **coordination, alignment, and information sharing among agencies, academic institutions, researchers, community science groups, and local communities** involved in kelp monitoring, restoration, and management.





In Scope: Harvest

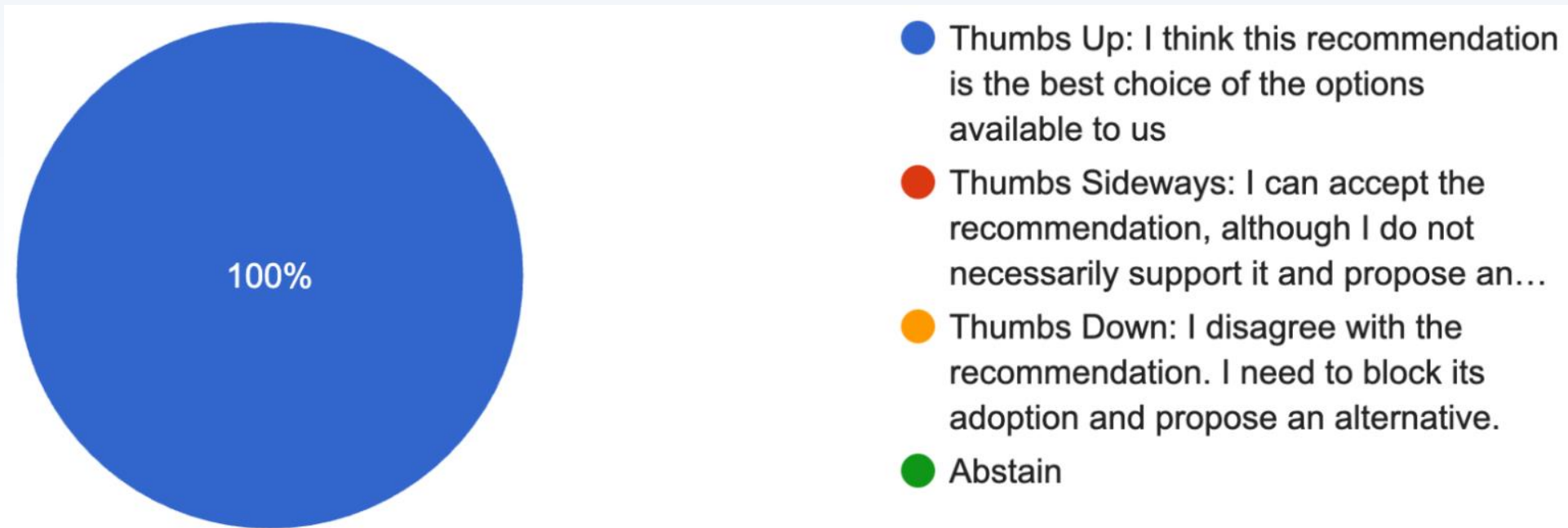
15. When kelp forests are in decline, CDFW should **address the cumulative impacts to kelp forests (e.g., water quality, boat propeller damage) by coordinating with other management agencies (e.g., CA Dept of Water Resources) before implementing harvest closures**, since minimal levels of kelp are thought to be harvested by commercial and non-commercial harvesters.





Outside Scope: Inter-agency Coordination

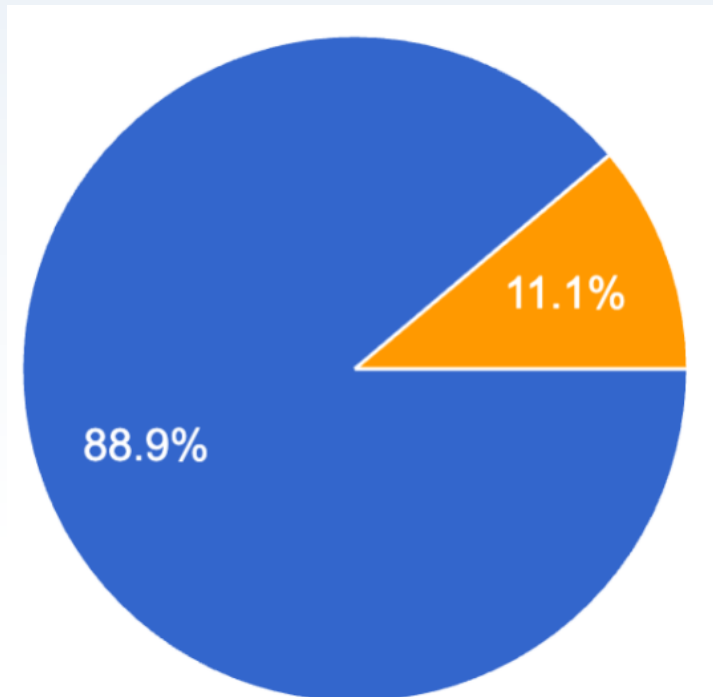
18. Coordinate with other state and federal agencies to streamline permitting processes. *Additional detail/Context:* Research and restoration program leads and volunteers continue to be confused about the processes to obtain permits and begin work. CDFW should coordinate internally across departments and work with other agencies (e.g., Coastal Commission, State Lands Commission, National Marine Sanctuaries, State Parks, etc.) to streamline permitting processes and support coordinated response planning.





In Scope: Engagement Strategy

7. Develop a **comprehensive, ongoing strategy for engaging Tribes, local communities, recreational and commercial users, NGOs, and other stakeholders** to promote awareness, foster stewardship, and cultivate community-supported research and restoration programs.

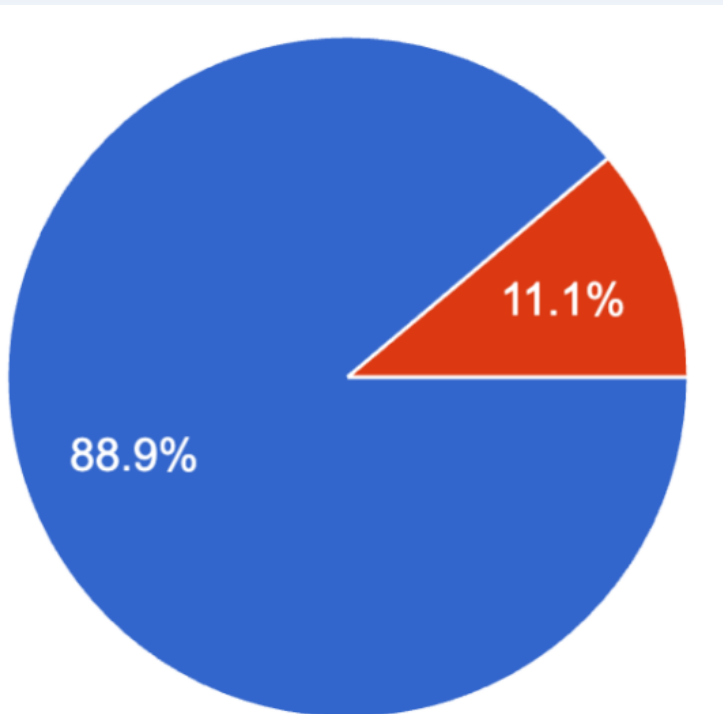


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In Scope: Community & Tribal-Led Networks

8. Prioritize and integrate long-term community- and Tribal-led monitoring and restoration initiatives into kelp management. The CWG recommends that the KRMP recognize value in **volunteer networks** to support the state's management, research, and restoration efforts.

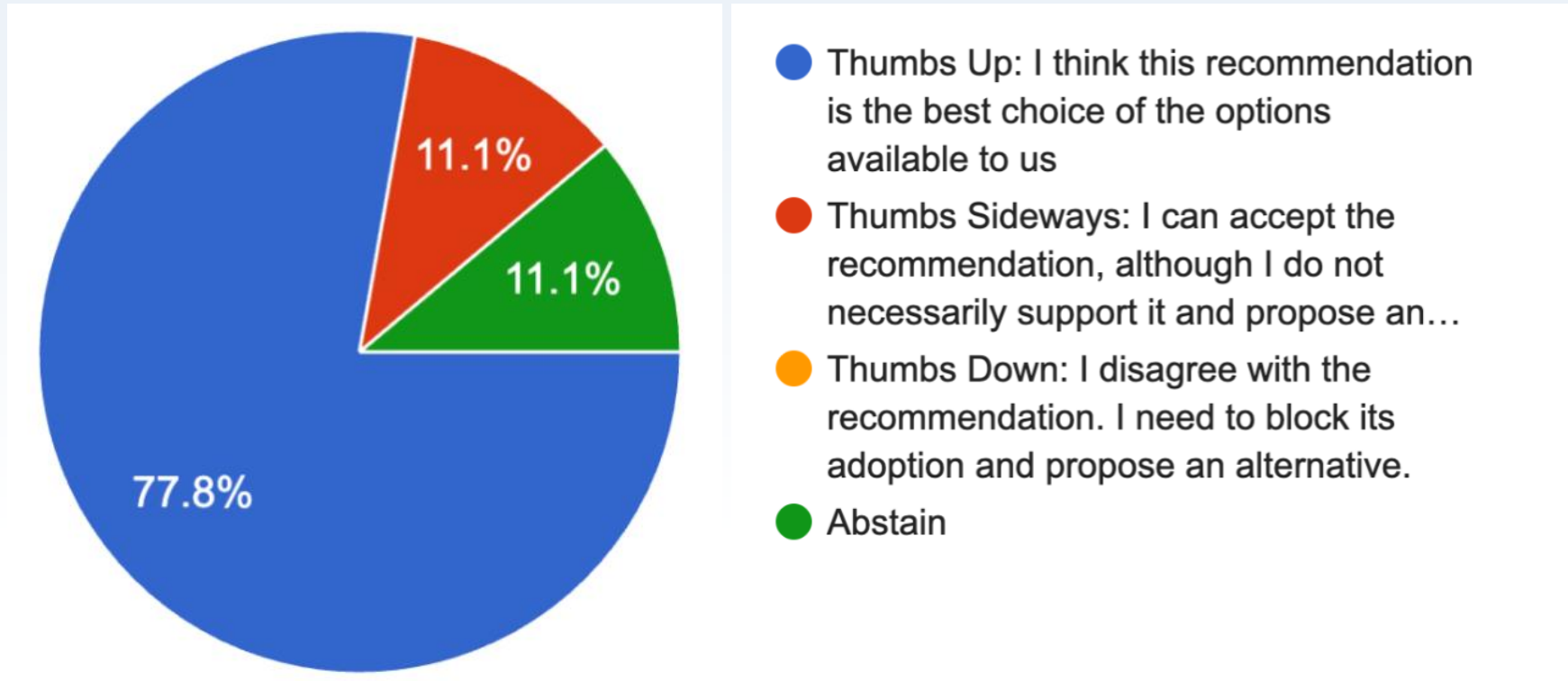


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In Scope: Harvest Best Practices

11. **Develop a best practices guide for non-commercial Bull and Giant kelp harvest** to communicate existing regulations and promote voluntary, sustainable harvesting behaviors, while creating opportunities for engagement and leadership within the harvest community.

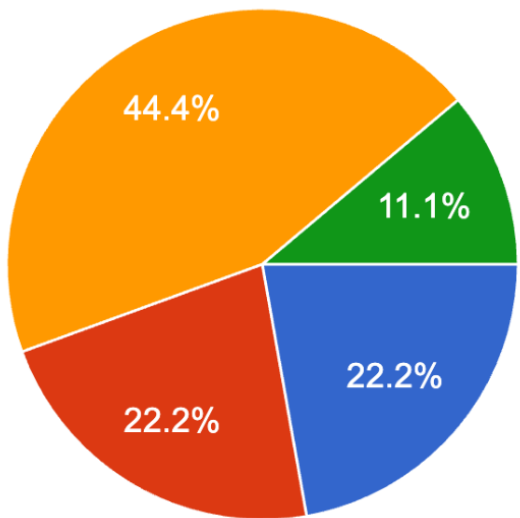




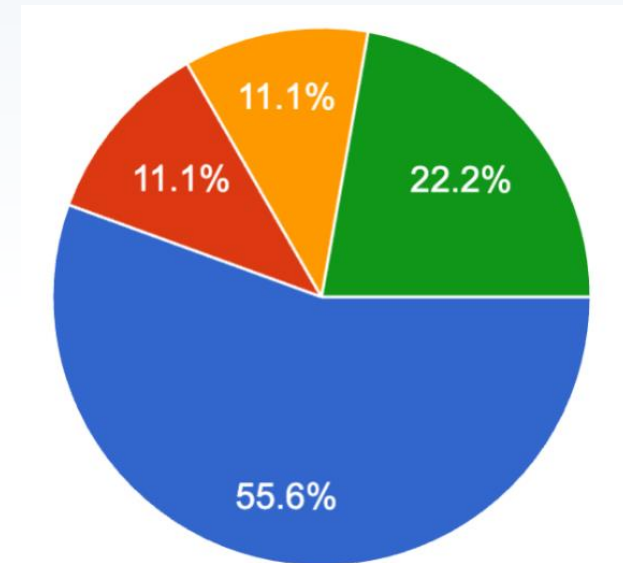
In Scope: Tracking Rec Harvest

12.a. Develop a system to **track and collect information on the recreational harvest** of Bull and Giant Kelp. Improved data availability will enable the state to evaluate whether harvest regulations are sustainable and achieving their intended outcomes and ensure that management decisions are grounded in comprehensive and real data.

12.b. Because non-commercial kelp harvest is thought to be so low and there would be low compliance from non-commercial harvesters on data collection efforts, the CWG **does not recommend CDFW require reporting from non-commercial harvesters.**



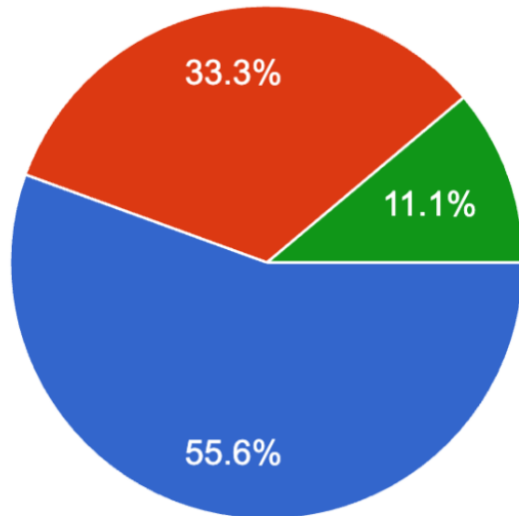
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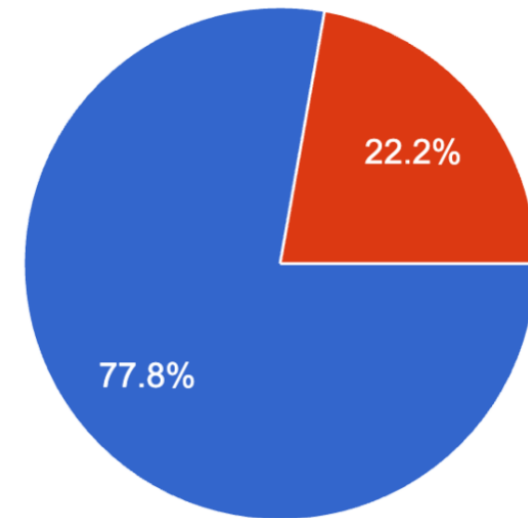
In Scope: Harvest Practices

13. **Increase the non-commercial harvest of Giant and Bull kelp** to help support subsistence harvest.



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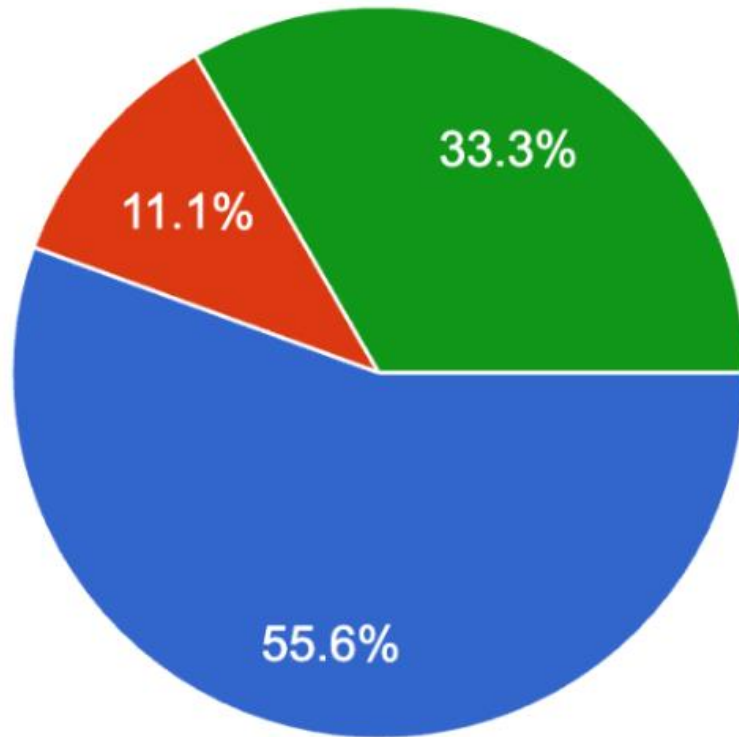
14. CDFW should identify the **maximum number of commercial harvest permits allowed** in each administrative bed to help ensure that harvest does not exceed sustainable thresholds.





Outside Scope: Artificial Reefs

16. Explicitly **address artificial reefs** as a restoration method or clearly explain their exclusion from the KRMP.

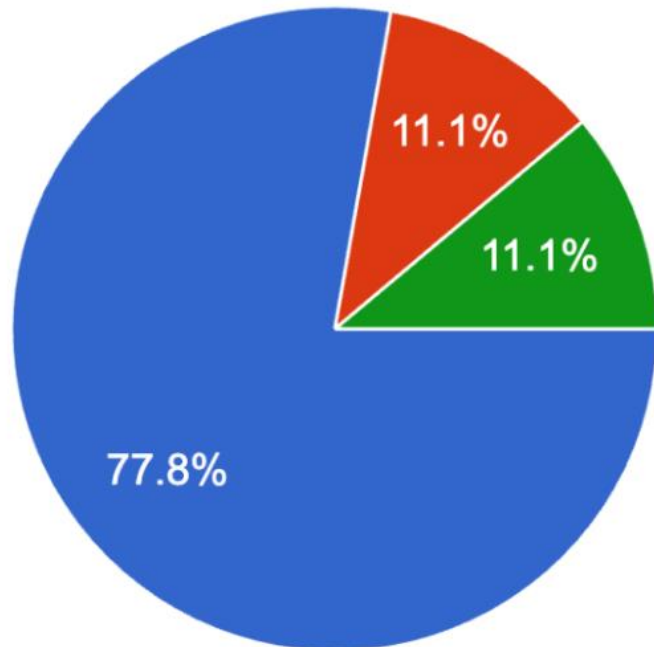


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Outside Scope: Funding Priorities

17. The CWG requests that **state appropriators allocate more funding to support CDFW's implementation of the KRMP**, including funds for research and long-term monitoring, restoration, innovation, outreach/education, and staff capacity to support these priorities.

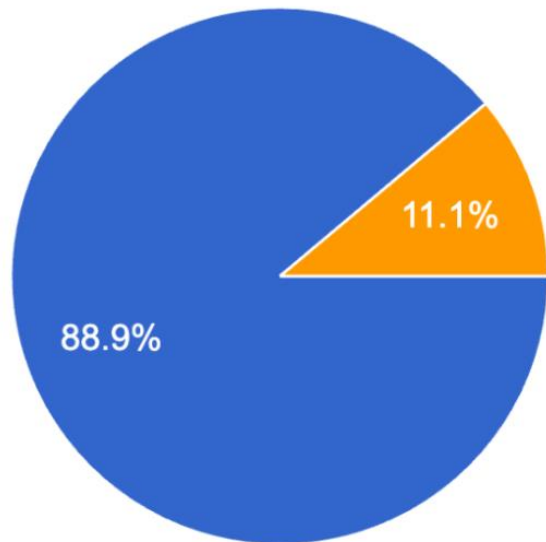


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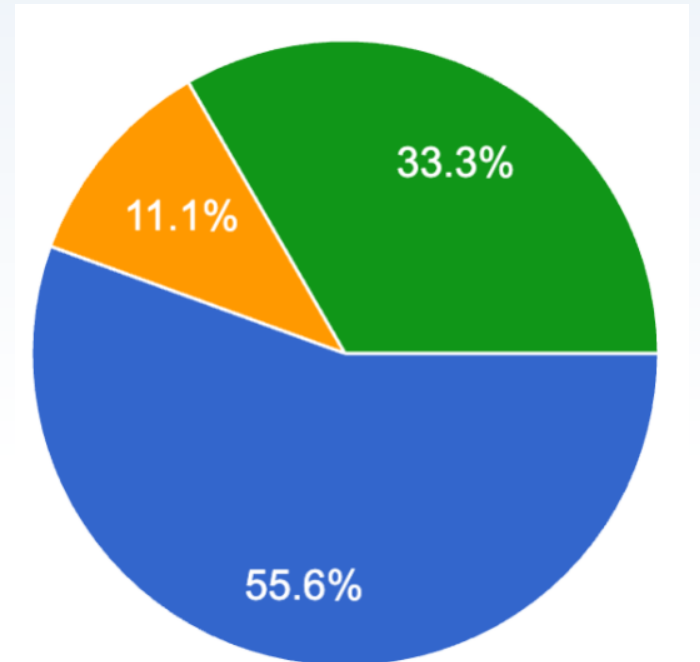
Outside Scope: Add'l Funding Priorities

17.a. **Maintain a kelp-focused CWG** to inform CDFW's decisions on harvest regulations, restoration, and management after the KRMP is completed and implemented.



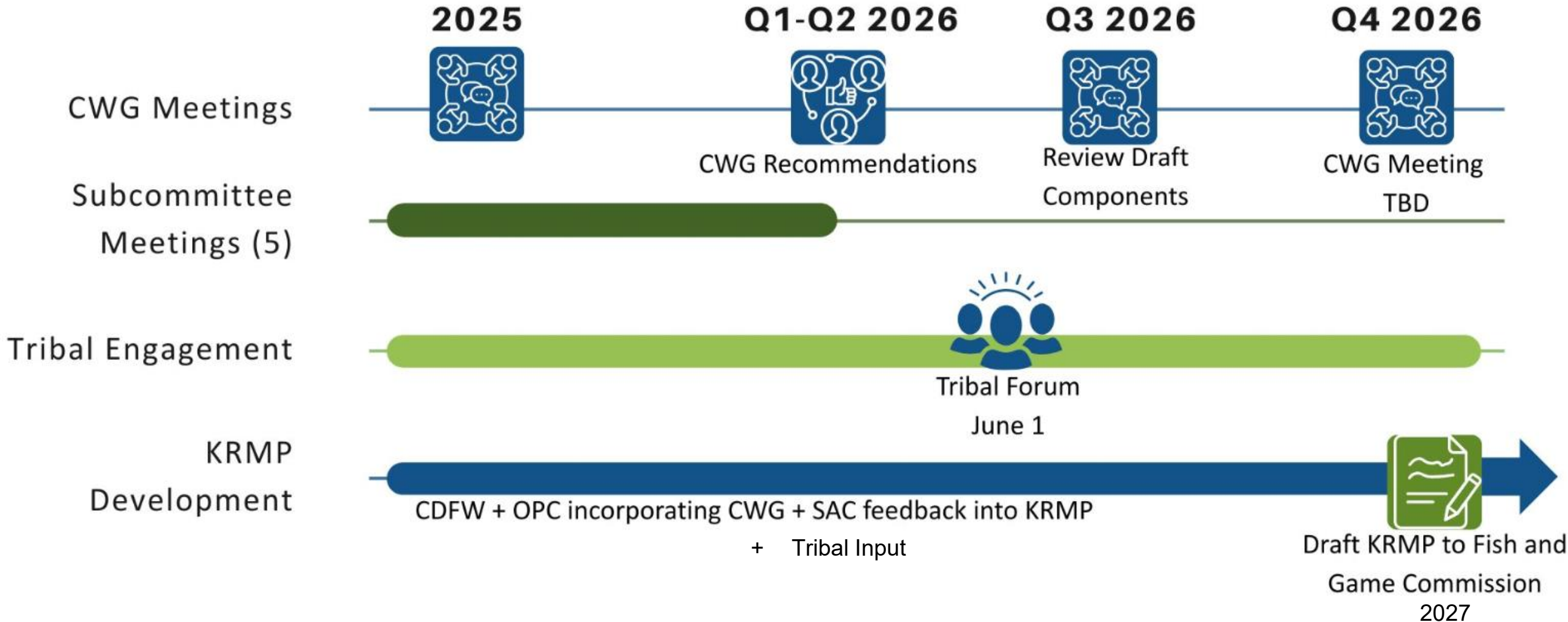
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17.b. The CWG requests the California Legislature establish a **“Kelp Restoration Volunteer Reimbursement Fund”** to support paid-volunteer networks in their restoration activities.





Next Steps





Looking Ahead & Adjourn

- Next steps
 - Circulate meeting summary with final recommendations for CWG review
 - KRMP update at MRC meeting in July 16
 - Next CWG Meeting: Tentatively Planned for late August 2026
 - Share your feedback, lingering thoughts, and ideas



PC: S. Kawana



PC: A. Dias



PC: K. Elsmore



Photo by Shelby Kawana, CDFW