

# Public attitudes towards aquatic animal welfare

Survey prepared for:



October 2024

# 1. Background & research design

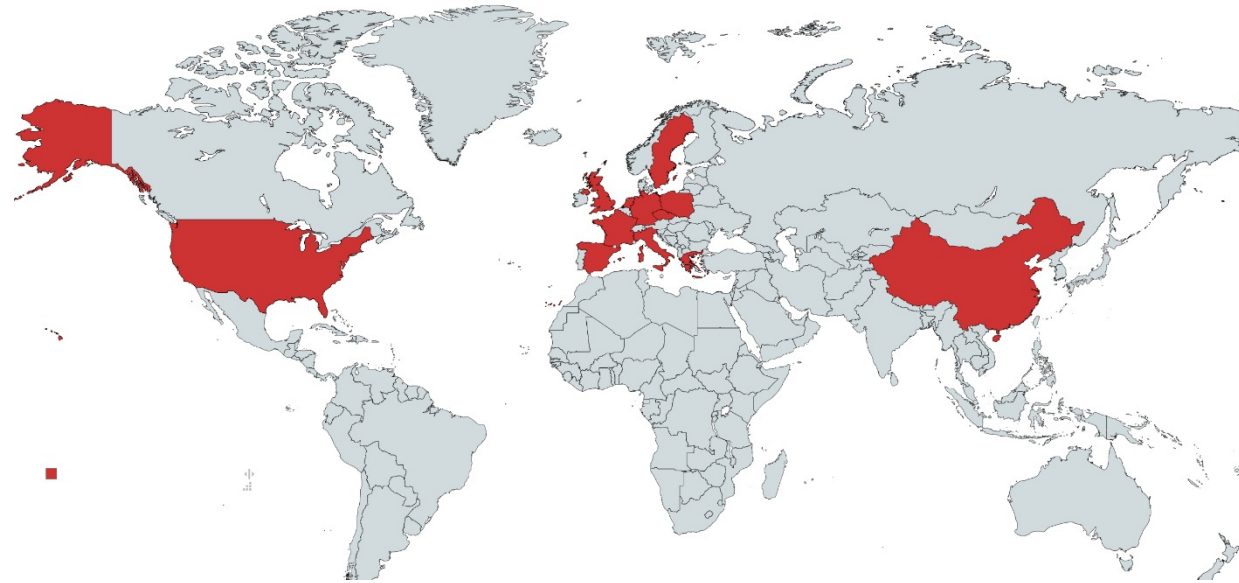


# Research design & sample

To answer the research questions, an **online survey** of  $\pm$  12 minutes was designed, which 12 301 respondents from 12 different countries completed. The fieldwork ran from March 20<sup>th</sup> to April 5<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Data were weighted in each country to be nationally representative by age, gender and region.

This report highlights the results from **China**.



*The 12 countries included: China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, USA*



Please note that due to rounding, percentages on some graphs may add up to 101%, and the top-2 scores may differ by 1% from the actual underlying scores.

# Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of the following **topics**:

- Background
- Attitudes Towards Animals
- Importance & Awareness of Aquatic Animal Welfare
- Consumption Habits & Behaviour
- Welfare Labelling
- Socio demo & Profiling



## 2. Results

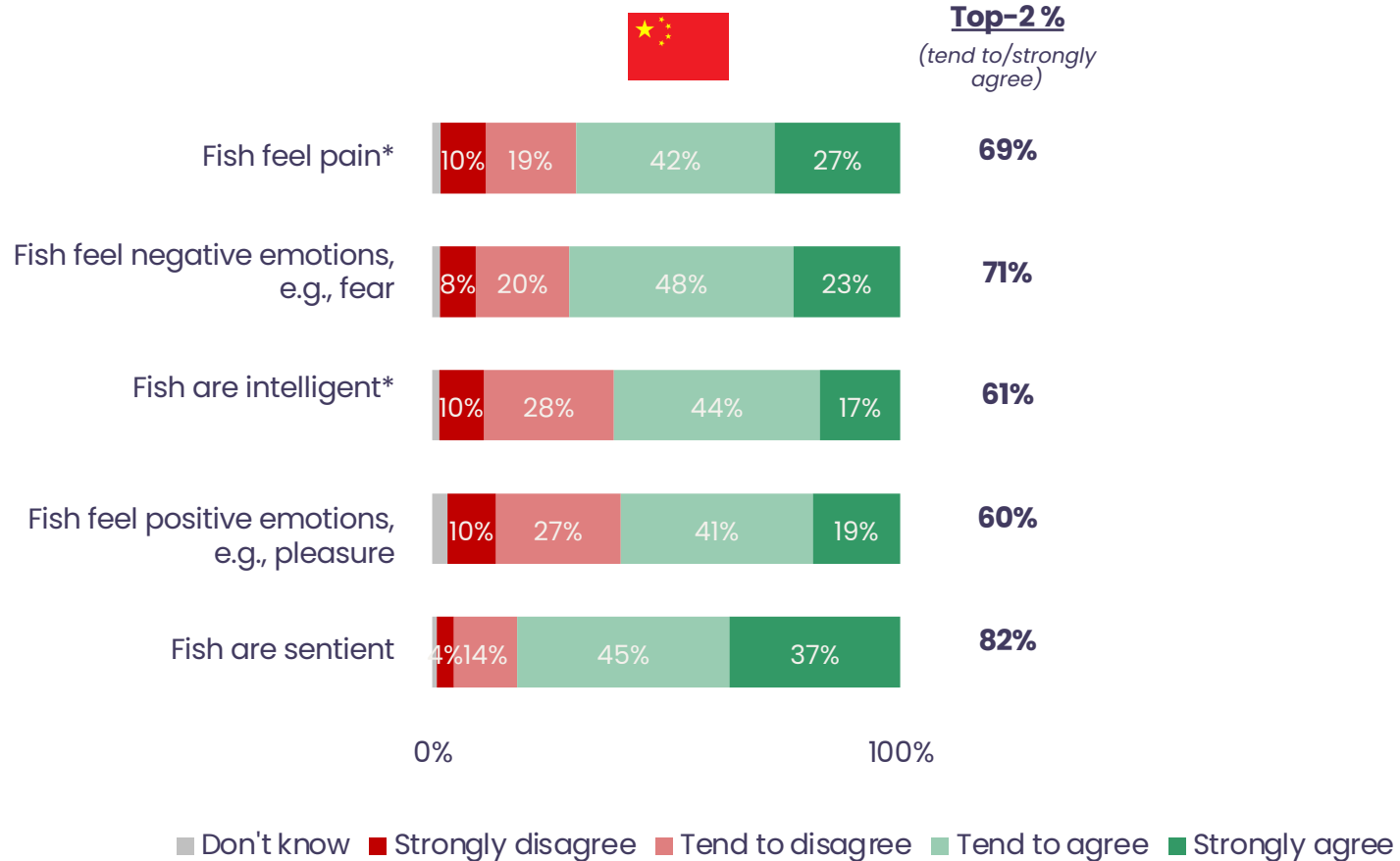




## 2.1 Attitudes Towards Animals

# Most people agree that fish can feel pain. There is more doubt on the emotional/intelligence statements, though the trend is positive.

“Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?”



\* This statement was negated in the questionnaire (i.e. 'Fish do not feel pain'/'Fish are not intelligent'). For the sake of uniform interpretation, the statement is reversed here in the report.



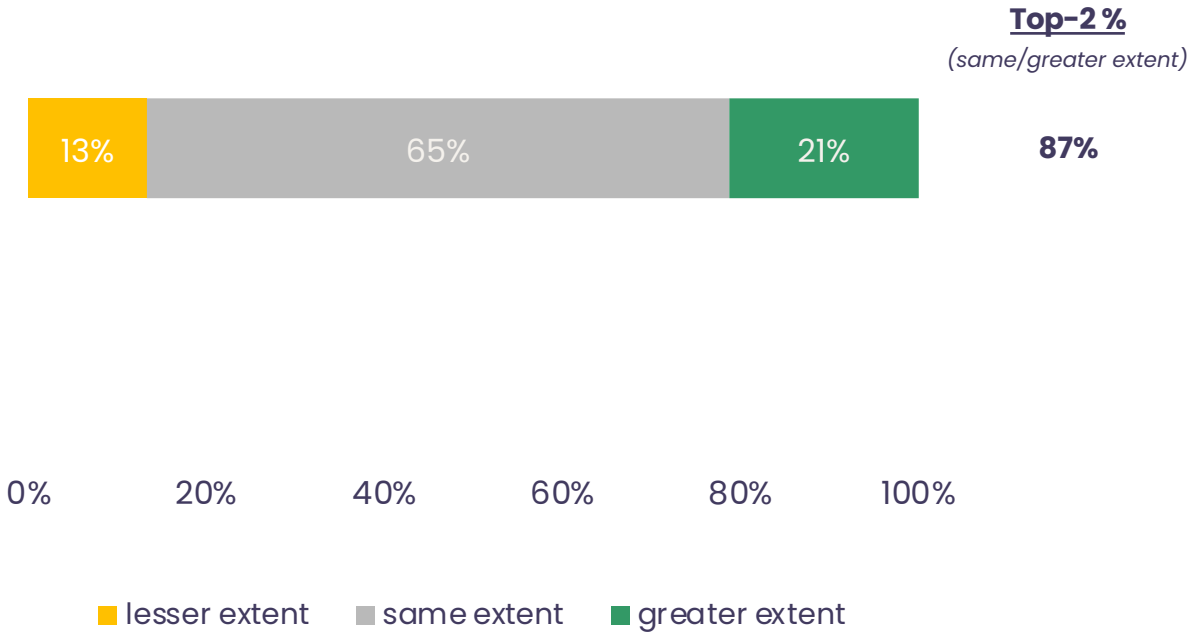
## **2.2 Importance & Awareness of Aquatic Animal Welfare**



# Most people believe we should protect the welfare of fish just like we do for other animals we eat.

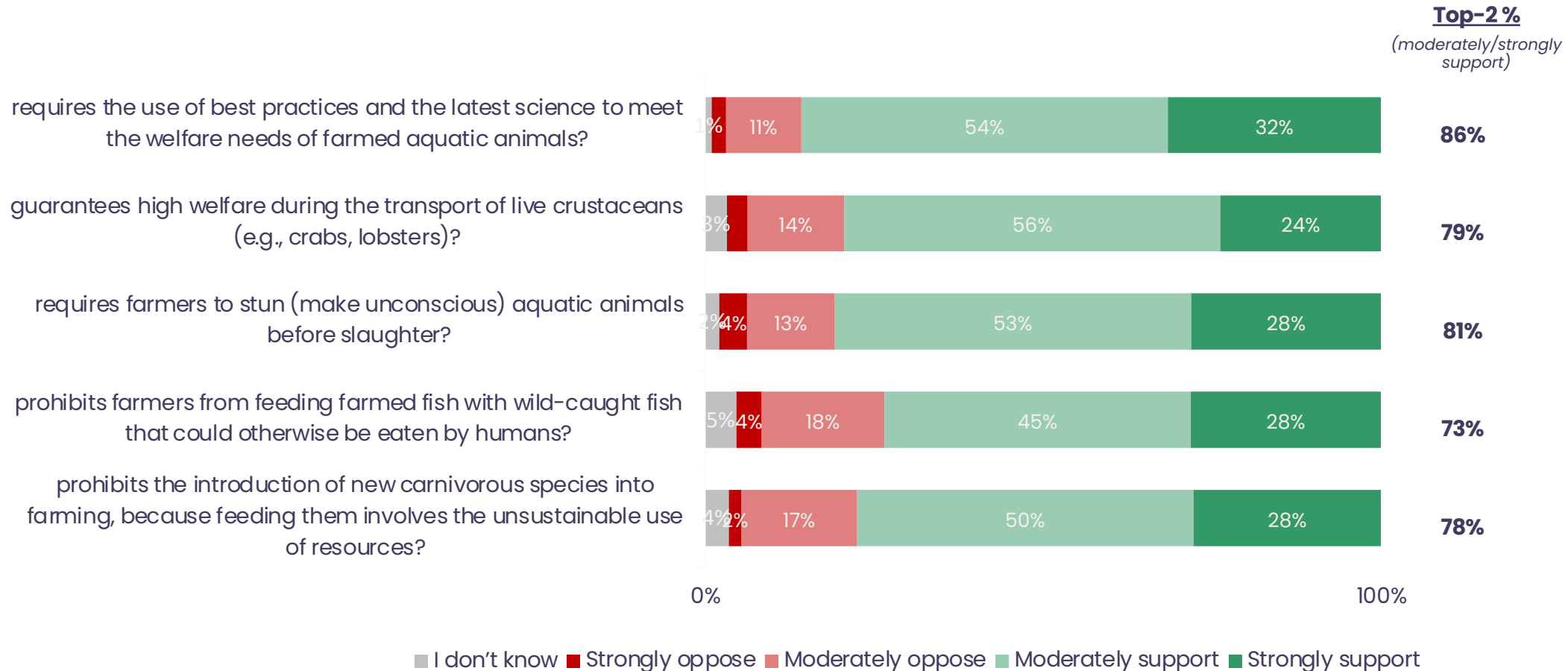
“Q4. Which of the following comes closest to your view?”

The welfare of fish should be protected to a greater/a lesser/the same extent than the welfare of other animals we eat.”



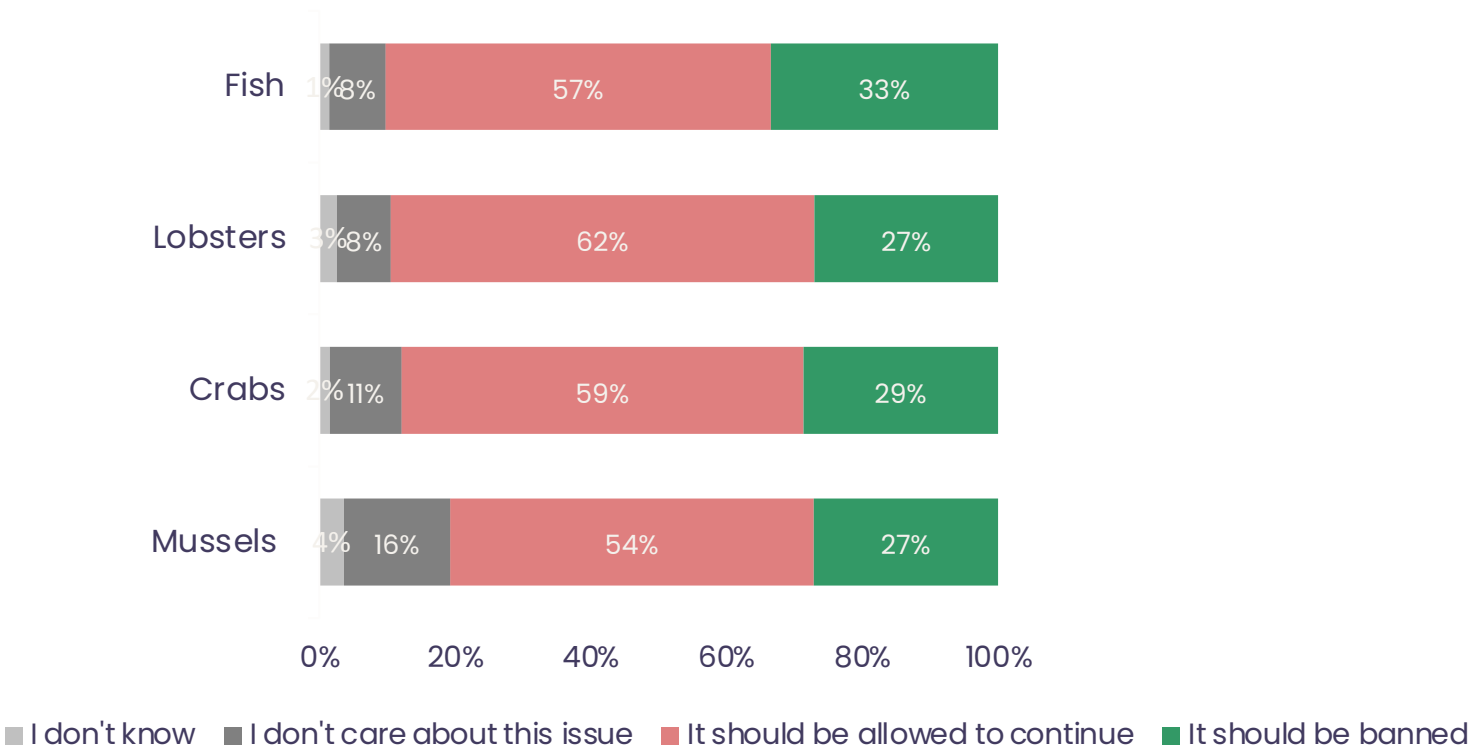
# This conviction drives widespread advocacy for enacting stricter legislation regarding the welfare of aquatic animals.

“Q7. Would you support or oppose legislation that...”



# However, the majority of citizens harbor the opinion that live sales of aquatic animals to consumers should be allowed to continue.

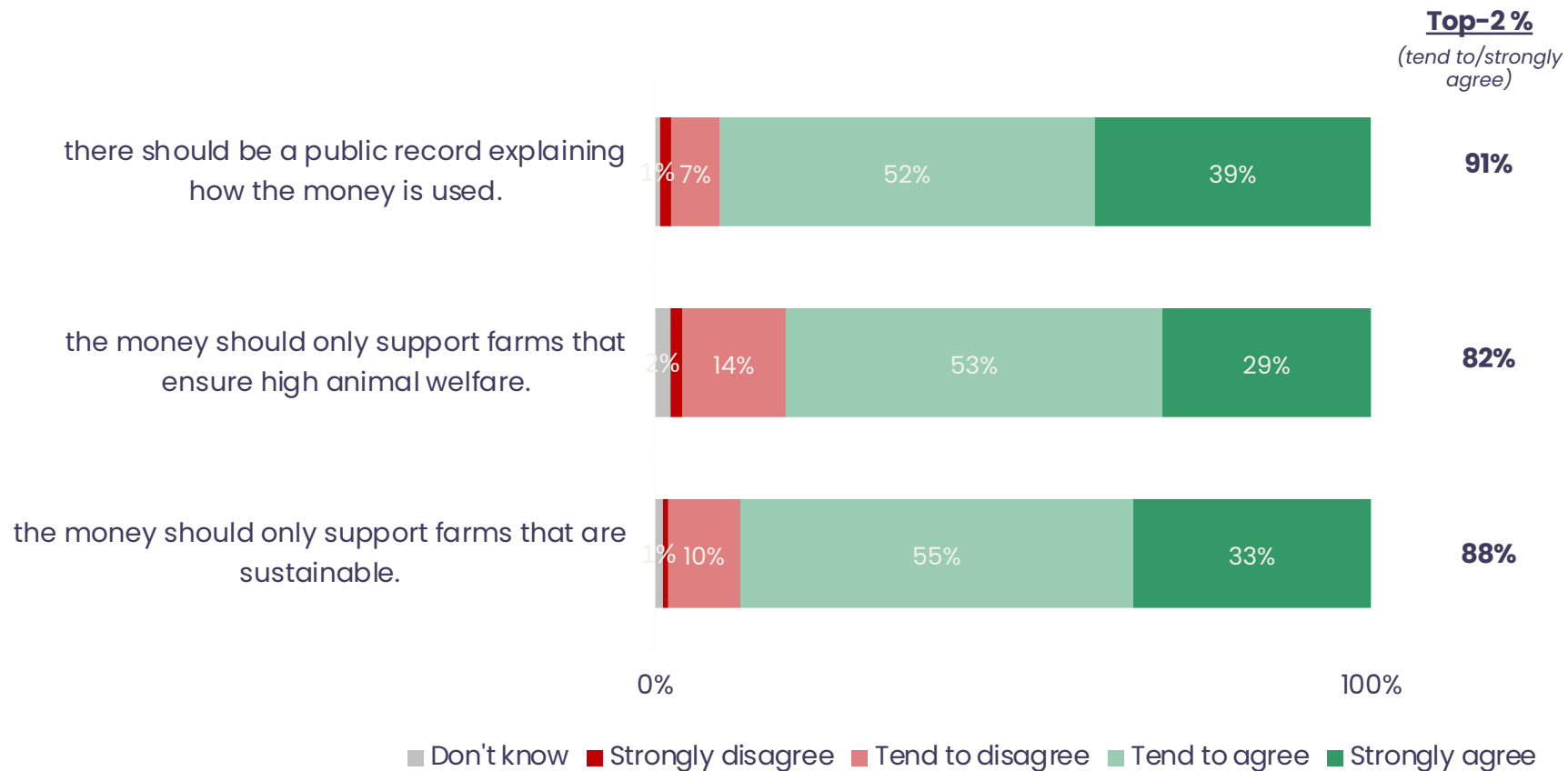
*"Q8. Aquatic animals are sometimes sold alive to the final consumer. [...] Please indicate which statement you agree with regarding the live sale of the following aquatic animals to consumers."*



# Finally, citizens also expect public funds to be allocated transparently, prioritizing farms that uphold high animal welfare and sustainability standards.

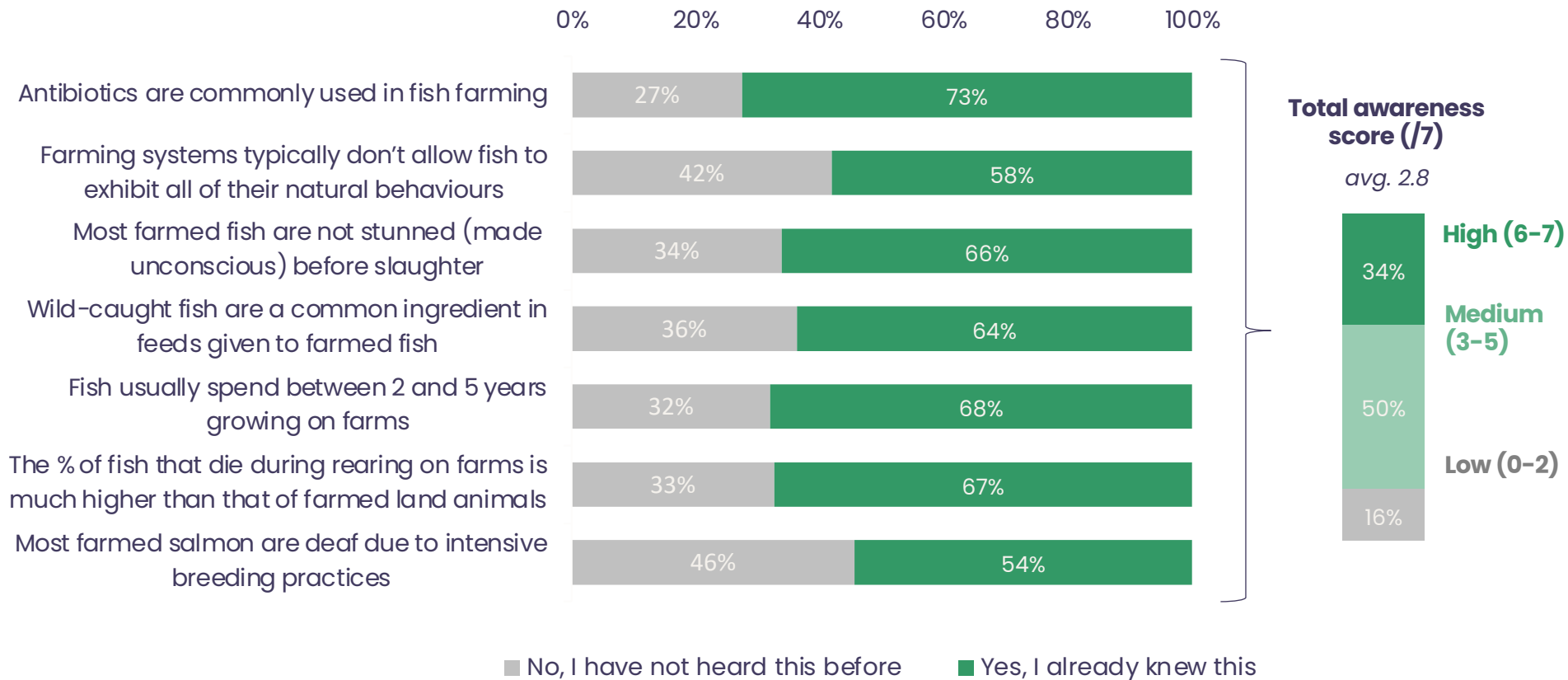
“Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?”

When public money is used to fund aquaculture... ”



# There is quite good reported awareness regarding fish farming practices, with 50% indicating familiarity with 3–5 statements, and 34% reporting awareness of 6–7 statements.

*“Q6. Below you can find some statements concerning fish farming. In each case, please indicate whether you were aware of this information or not.”*

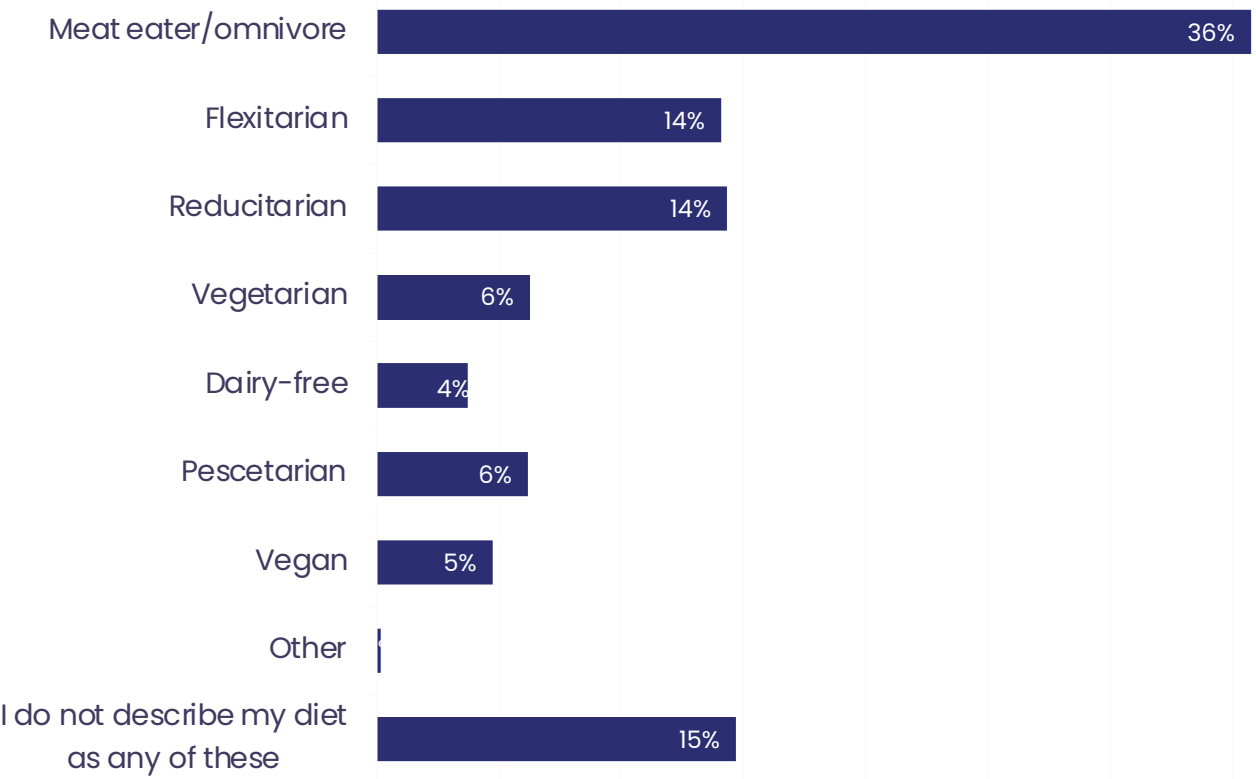




## 2.3 Consumption Habits & Behaviour

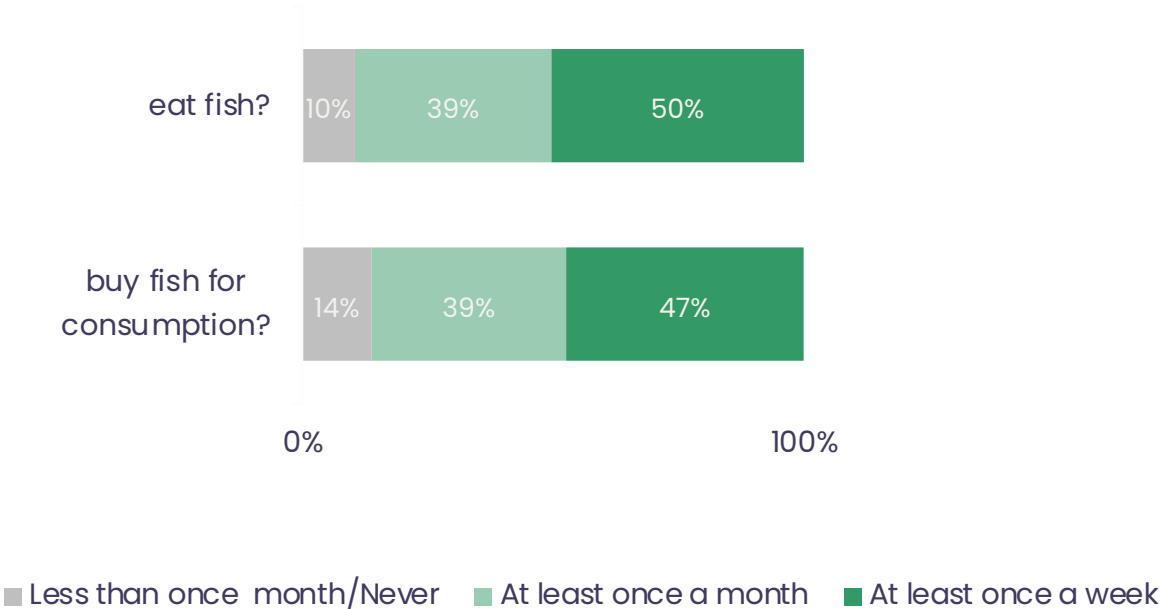
# Almost half of the Chinese population identifies as meat eaters ...

"Q10. Which of the following terms do you use to describe your diet?"



# ... and half of Chinese citizens consume fish at least once a week.

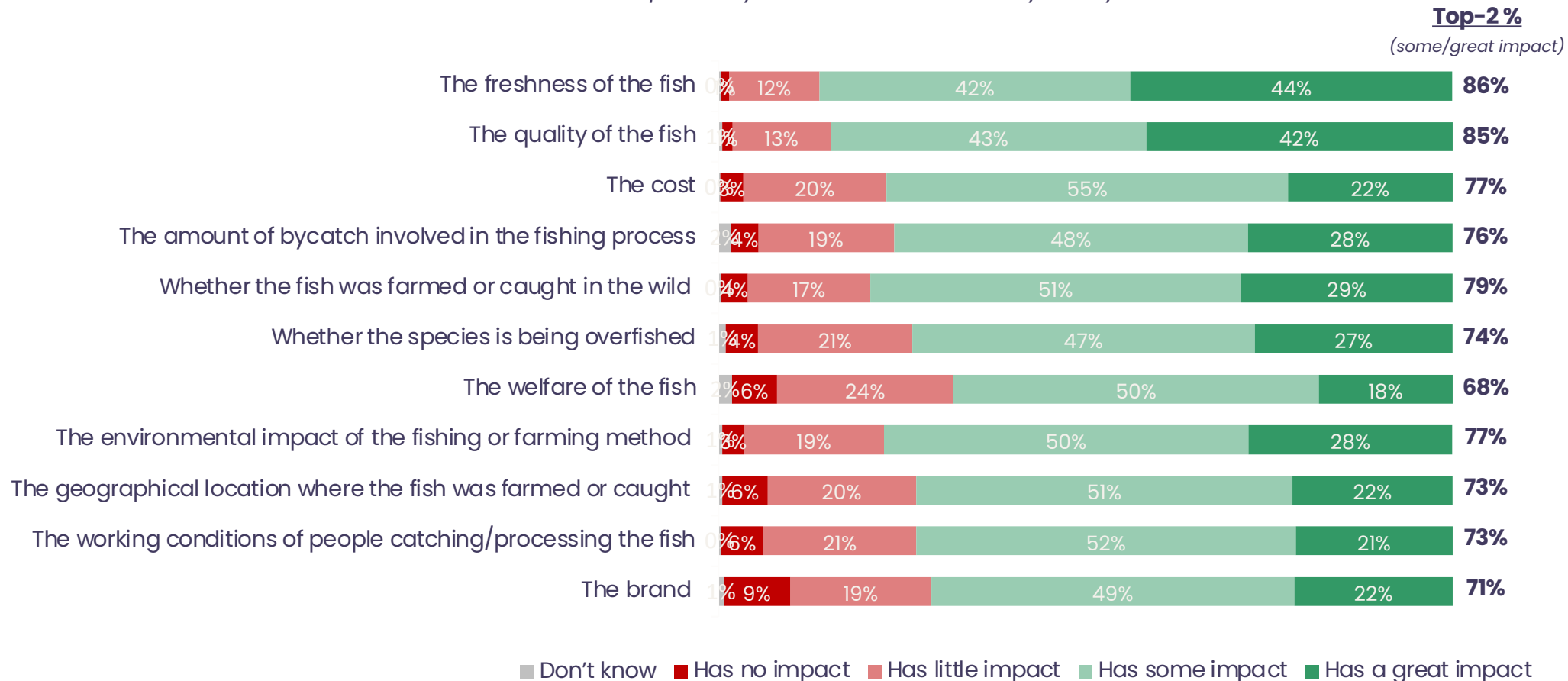
"Q11. Roughly how often, if at all, do you ...?"





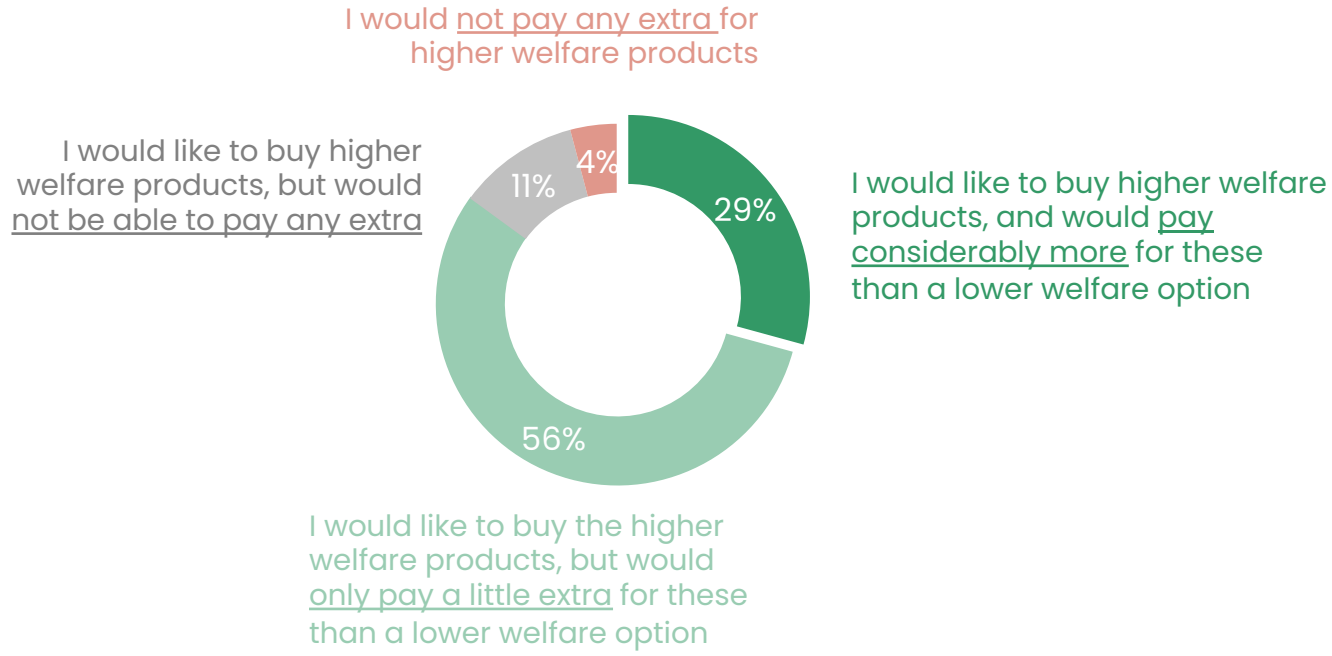
# Consumers primarily prioritize factors such as freshness and quality when selecting fish. Additionally, 68% of consumers also take into account welfare-related considerations.

“Q12. To what extent, if at all, does each of the following things have an impact on your choice of which fish you buy?”



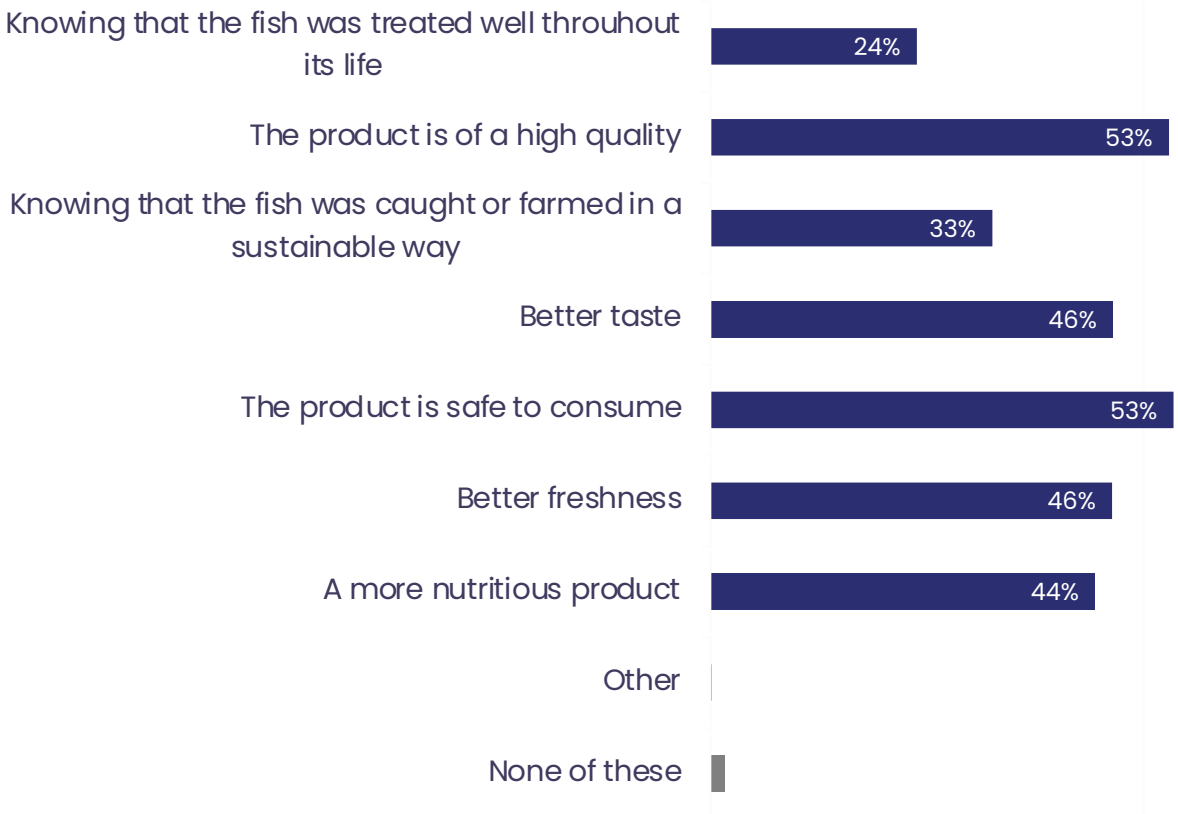
# The willingness to pay for higher welfare fish products is quite high: 96% would like to buy higher welfare fish products, with more than 1 out of 4 willing to pay a significant premium.

“Q13. Which of the following best describes your preferences when it comes to buying higher welfare fish products?”



# Consumers recognize numerous benefits in opting for higher welfare fish products, including the safety and freshness of the food.

*"Q14. What, if anything, do you think are the benefits for you of choosing 'higher welfare' fish products?"*

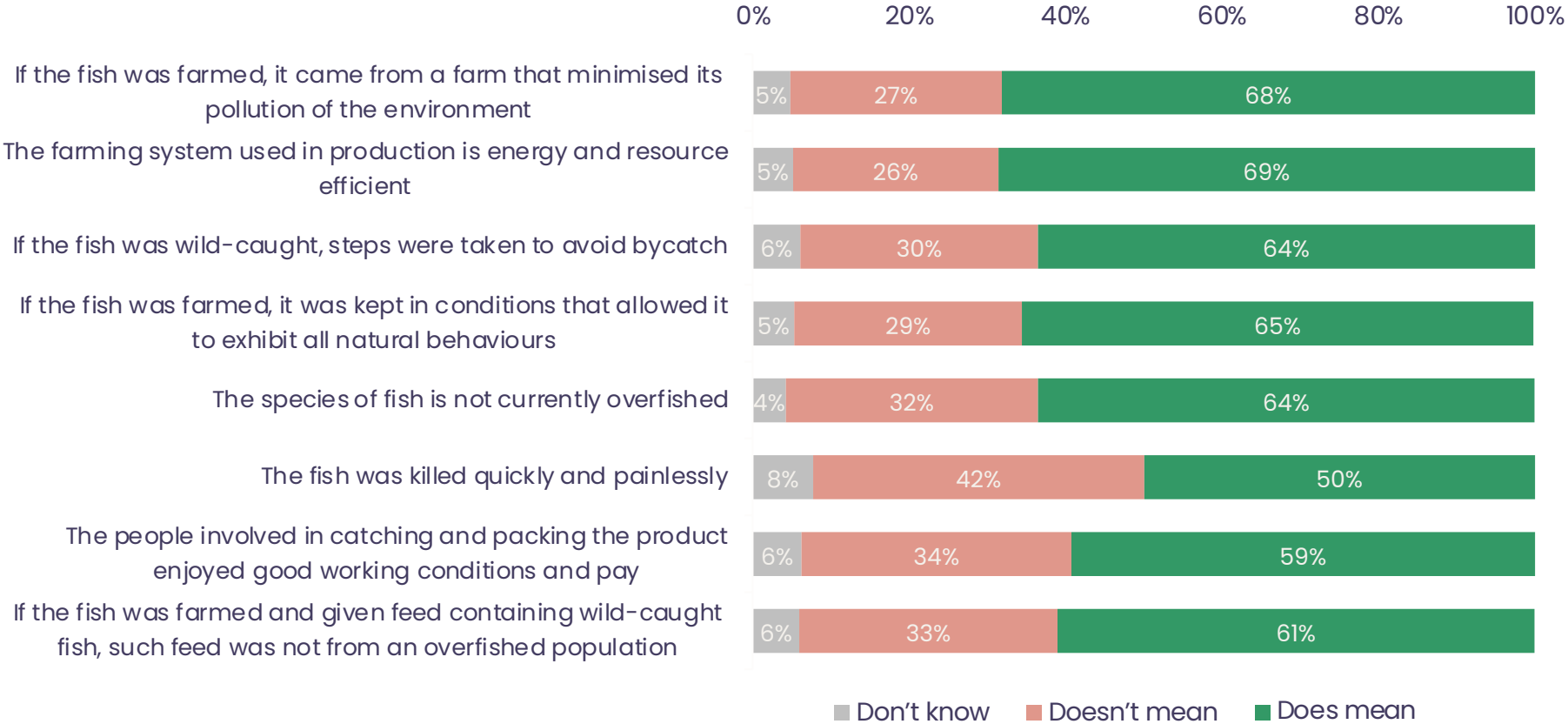




## 2.4 Welfare Labelling

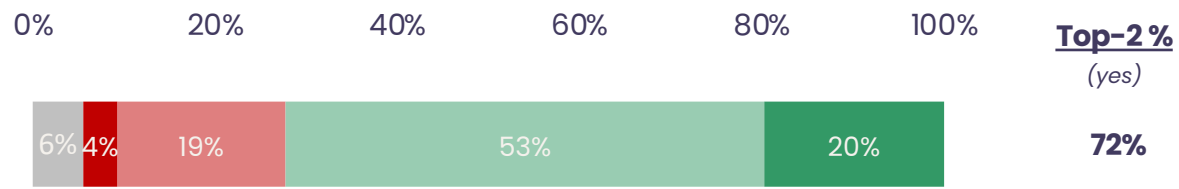
# Chinese citizens seem to associate aquatic animal welfare considerations with sustainability labels.

“Q16. In your opinion, which of the following, if any, do you think the term “Sustainable” on a fish product tells you about that product?”



# They also show openness to having information about fish farming practices on the labels of fish products.

*"Q15. Would you like to see information about the way in which the fish was farmed and killed on the label of all fish products?"*



■ Don't know/Don't mind/No opinion ■ No, definitely not ■ No, probably not ■ Yes, probably ■ Yes, definitely

# Their current knowledge on some labels is poor: around 40% believe that these labels impose rigorous welfare standards.

“Q17. Certification schemes set standards for aquaculture and/or fisheries. What do you think the following labels require?”

