

# What influences indigenous people's perception of environmental changes?

Indigenous communities live in close connection with the land and are **more directly affected by environmental changes caused by climate change and natural resources exploitation**.

Not all individuals perceive environmental changes and their impacts in the same way. Their perception can be influenced by personal characteristics and protective factors. But what are they?

## Results

### Age

**Older participants felt more impacts** than younger participants.

This could be explained by attachment and connexion to the land which increases with age, or because older participants had responsibilities on the land.

Gender, parenthood and time spent on the land had no significant effect on perception of the impacts of environmental changes.

### Quality of life

Participants who reported a **higher quality of life felt fewer impacts** of environmental changes.

Social support and life in the community did not have a protective effect on felt impacts of perceived environmental changes

### Resilience

Being **more resilient increased perceived impacts** of environmental changes.

This may be because more resilient participants still go on the land and are therefore more likely to witness environmental changes and their impacts.

**The more environmental changes were perceived, the more impacts were felt, no matter the characteristics of the person.**

With increasing environmental changes as a result of natural resource exploitation and climate change in Canada, environmental distress will likely increase in Indigenous populations.

# 251

persons completed the survey, including 126 women

Of four communities belonging to three different Indigenous peoples, part of the Algonquian language family :

- Cri Ouje-Bouhoumou
- Atikamekw Opitciwan
- Anishnaabeg Pikogan and Wahgoshig

Very few participants were over 65 years old. Most mentioned they prefer interviews, as they can **detail and contextualize their answers** rather than answer closed-ended questions.

## Possible solutions

Two possible solutions to reduce environmental distress are:

- To refuse resource development projects beyond a certain threshold of environmental change where felt impacts exceed the resilience capacity of the more vulnerable community members;
- To develop measures to increase protective factors, especially resilience and quality of life.

Authors of the original paper | Laura Fuentes, Hugo Asselin, Annie Claude Bélisle, Oscar Labra  
Infographics | Joanie Bédard & Anne-Marie Cardinal

For the original paper  
> [click here](#)