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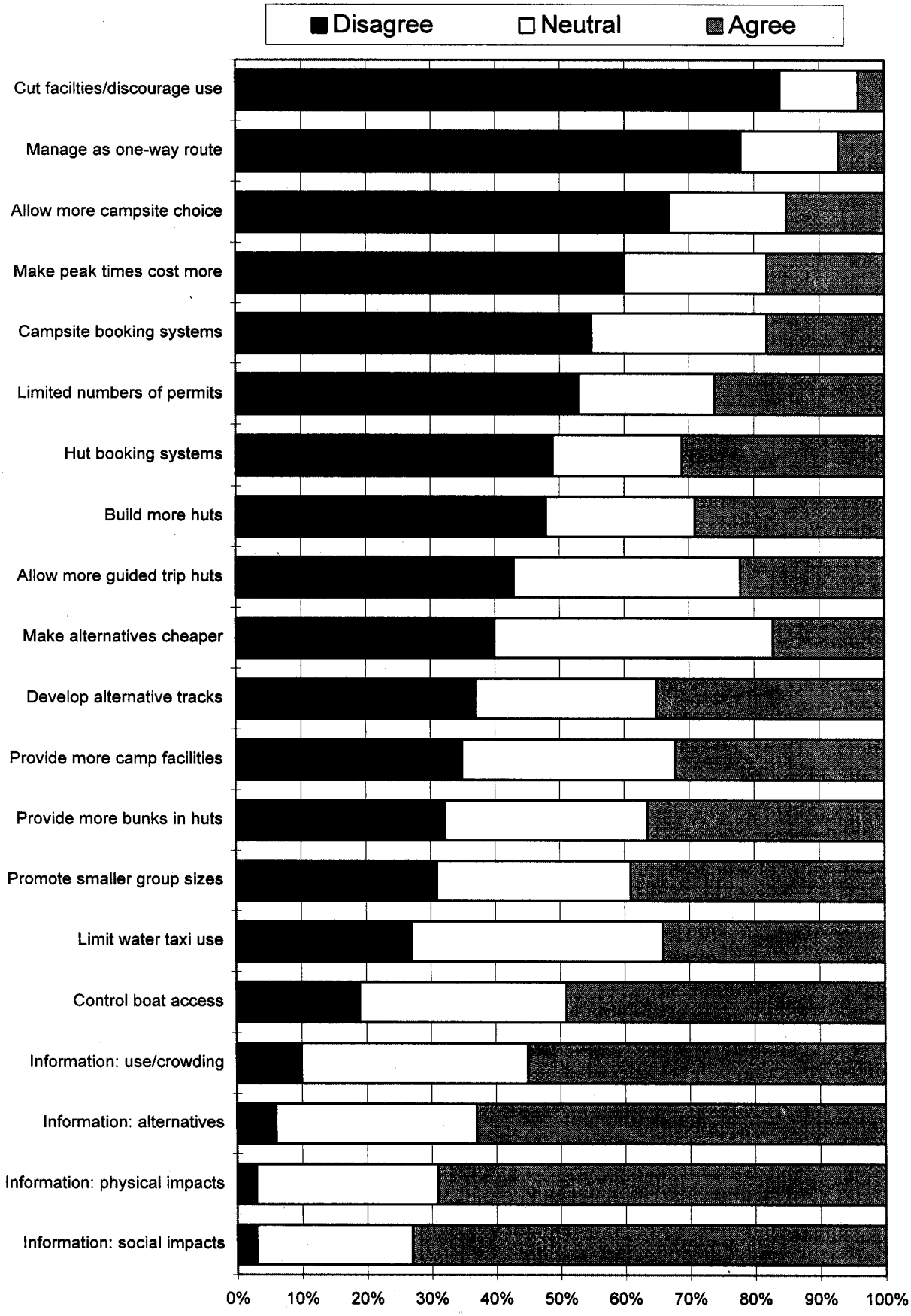

FIGURE 9. MANAGEMENT PREFERENCE RESPONSES.

6. Visitor attitudes towards management options

Attitudes toward 20 options for managing future increases in track use-levels were surveyed, with visitors indicating the degree to which they agreed or disagreed. These options included increasing the capacity of accommodation, dispersing use pressures, imposing use-limits, and providing pre-walk information (refer Appendix 1, Question 8). The complete list of responses, as summarised in Figure 9, indicates a variety of visitor attitudes.

The only management approach attracting consistently high support, was that associated with using pre-walk information to influence visitor choices about making track visits. Around 60% of visitors agreed with these approaches while less than 10% disagreed. And around 50% agreed with controls on motorboat access while around 20% disagreed. Disagreement was much higher with the more direct control methods such as reducing facilities and services in order to discourage use, making the track one-way, allowing more campsite choice, and making peak times cost more for visits, with over 60% of visitors disagreeing with these. Development options (such as building more huts, or allowing more guided trip opportunities) and rationing options (such as applying track booking or permit systems) were also unpopular, with between 40–60% of visitors disagreeing with these. For many of the other options, the proportions of visitors either for or against were more similar. For example, the options related to providing more camping facilities, alternative tracks, more bunks in huts, limiting water-taxi use, and promoting smaller group sizes all received similar degrees of positive and negative response.

Overall these results indicate a pattern of preferences by visitors for different management options (also refer Table 5 and Figure 10). Indirect information-based approaches are clearly most favoured by almost all visitors. Altering use of existing facilities and providing some alternative opportunities for walking and accommodation tended to split visitors more evenly for or against. Apart from controls limiting motorboat access, the more direct actions to control and channel use or to develop more accommodation options/facilities were clearly least favoured.

6.1 EFFECTS OF AGE, GENDER, NATIONALITY, AND CROWDING PERCEPTION

6.1.2 Background to analyses

Additional analyses were required to assess whether these management items varied significantly among the visitors according to age group, gender, nationality and crowding perception. Table 5 and Figure 10 show the attitudes to management scales created for these analyses (refer Section 4.1.1).

TABLE 5. ATTITUDES TO MANAGEMENT SUMMARY SCALES (REFER APPEND. 2).

SCALE	DESCRIPTION
Rationing/use-limits	Hut/camp booking systems, limited permits
Manipulate use conditions	Cheap options, small groups, facility reduction, high peak costs, one-way track
Information management	Encourage use elsewhere, promote low-impact behaviour
Increase accommodation	More hut/camp capacity, guided options, camping freedom, new tracks, guided options
Limit boats	Limit motorboat access, limit use of water taxis

6.1.2 Significant findings

Differences in these management scales according to age-group (over and under 40 years), gender (male/female), nationality (New Zealand and overseas), and crowding perception (uncrowded/crowded) were analysed (refer Section 4.1 for method). The significant effects and interactions associated with the analysis using these independent variables are summarised in Table 6. These results indicate significant differences in attitudes towards management options which occur according to interactions between gender, nationality, and crowded perception.

TABLE 6. SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON ATTITUDE TO MANAGEMENT SCALES.

SOURCE OF SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT SCALES	MEAN VALUES (ADJUSTED)*	
Crowded effect *F(5,303) = 4.52, p = .001*	Increase accommodation *F(1,307) = 18.44, p = .000*	Uncrowded 3.38	Crowded 3.09
Nationality effect F(5,303) = 2.37, p = .001	Limit boats *F(1,307) = 5.19, p = .023* Rationing/use-limits *F(1,307) = 5.01, p = .026*	New Zealand 2.85 3.34	Overseas 2.36 3.70
Gender/Crowded interaction F(5,303) = 2.72, p = .020	Increase accommodation *F(1,307) = 6.14, p = .014* Limit boats *F(1,307) = 4.16, p = .042*	Male Uncrowded 3.36 Crowded 3.16 Male Uncrowded 2.86 Crowded 2.62	Female 3.40 3.40 Female 2.71 2.69

* Mean values for the summary scales are divided by the number of constituent items to give a interpreted using the original question categories (e.g., 1 = Strongly agree 3 = Neutral 5 = Strongly disagree)

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