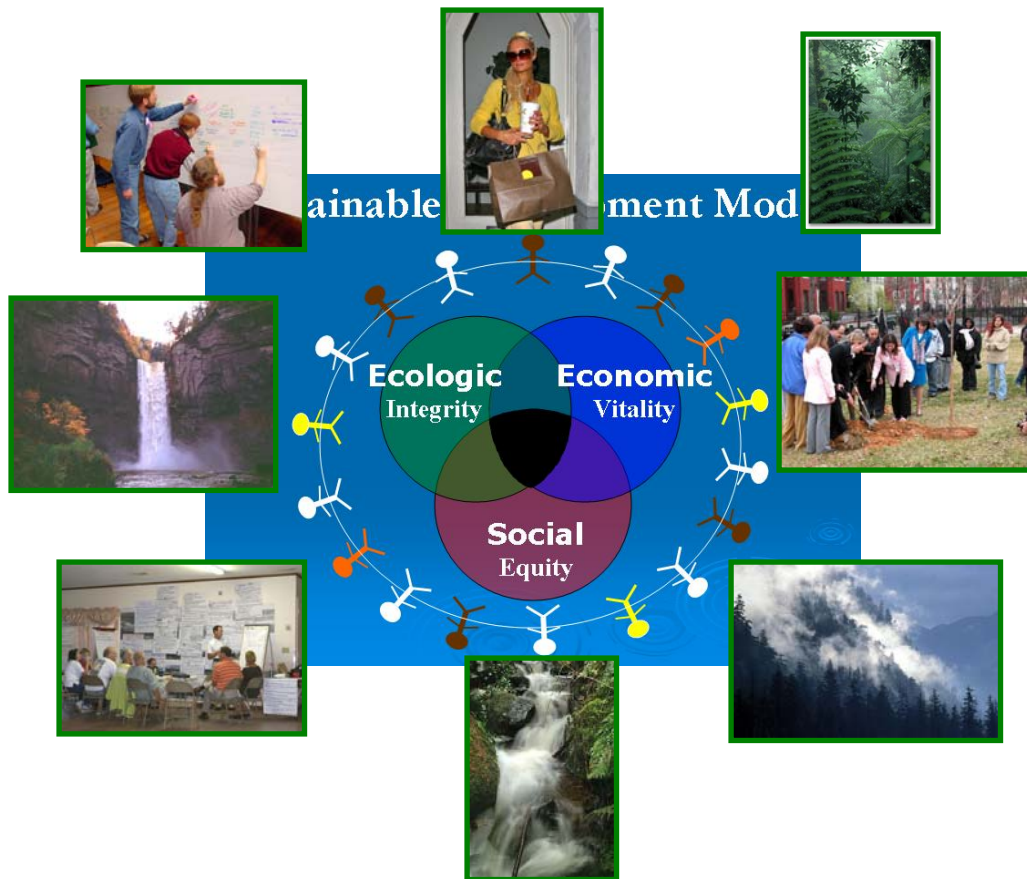


COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT (CSA)



Developed by the Global Ecovillage Network
with modifications by:



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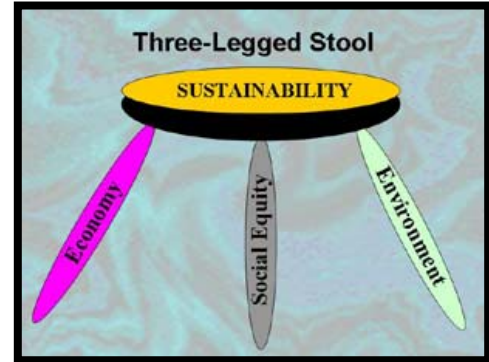
"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

Albert Einstein

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT (CSA)

HOW SUSTAINABLE IS YOUR COMMUNITY?

The Community Sustainability Assessment is a comprehensive checklist that anyone can complete to get a basic idea of how sustainable their community is. This assessment tool is applicable to any community. While it requires good knowledge of the life-styles, practices and features of the community, it does not require research, calculation and detailed quantification. This assessment takes about two-three hours for an individual to complete, or several times that if done as a group experience by community members.



General Instructions

The Community Sustainability Assessment (CSA) was developed to assist communities in assessing their accomplishments and charting directions toward ever increasing sustainability. Like a **Three Legged Stool**, overall sustainability of a community (the seat) is upheld when each of the three legs is strong and balanced. In the CSA the three legs, each as important as the other, are the Ecological, Social and Economic aspects of community. For purposes of broadening the measure of community sustainability, a fourth area of measurement has been included here, referred to as the Spiritual.

The CSA is a subjective tool. This means that the person(s) completing it make their best judgments, and on some items guesses, as to what is true for their community. To get the most out of this exercise, community members may meet as a group and work through the CSA together. This offers a meaningful review of the community's accomplishments and areas for improvement. Low scoring items may be selected for community focus and action to improve sustainability, providing direction for the community's future. It is expected that communities' actively planning and pursuing sustainability will score high, however, there is always room for improvement - from a high to a perfect score.

To maximize the accuracy of scores, rate items based on the community's current actions NOT intentions. Repeating the CSA periodically allows communities to monitor their progress over time.

The CSA was designed to be universal, as useful as possible to a wide variety of communities. It is to be expected that the nature of any one community will lead to low scores in some areas and high scores in others. If any items do not apply to your community, do not score them. Many of the questions in the Assessment offer an "**Other**" option for your answer. Please use these and the Comments sections to tell about other ways your community achieves sustainability.

Overall, scores should offer an informative picture of the community's sustainability.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

SCORING INFORMATION

Name of the community: _____

Age of the community (number of years in existence): _____

Name of person completing the Assessment/Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Fax #: _____

eMail address: _____ Web address: _____

Please indicate how much time it took to complete this Assessment: _____

How many people in your community participated in completing the CSA? _____

Use additional pages as necessary, to share your comments about the CSA and your experience in using it. Please indicate the section and item number you are commenting on. Your input is greatly appreciated!

For each item in this questionnaire, check the box(es) that you believe most closely describe the truth for your community. After each answer that you selected, there is a number in parenthesis - that is your score for that item. At the end of each section, there is a space to add up your total score for that section. Insert your scores for each section of the CSA below to calculate your overall score.

333+	Indicates excellent progress toward sustainability
166-332	Indicates a good start toward sustainability
0-165	Indicates actions are needed to undertake sustainability

"To work at this alone is to fail."

Wendell Berry

ECOLOGICAL SECTION:

- 1. Sense of Place Total: _____
- 2. Food Availability, Production & Distribution Total: _____
- 3. Physical Infrastructure, Buildings & Transportation Total: _____
- 4. Consumption Patterns & Solid Waste Management Total: _____
- 5. Water - sources, quality & use patterns Total: _____
- 6. Waste Water & Water Pollution Management Total: _____
- 7. Energy Sources & Uses Total: _____

Total points for the Ecological section: _____

SOCIAL SECTION:

- 1. Openness, Trust & Safety; Communal Space Total: _____
- 2. Communication - the flow of ideas & information Total: _____
- 3. Networking Outreach & Services Total: _____
- 4. Social Sustainability Total: _____
- 5. Education Total: _____
- 6. Health Care Total: _____

Total points for the Social section: _____

ECONOMIC SECTION:

- 1. Sustainable business development Total: _____
- 2. Dealing with economic leakage problems in the community Total: _____
- 3. Community activities to support more sustainable businesses Total: _____
- 4. People's willingness to pay for community improvement Total: _____
- 5. Community awareness about sustainability strategies in business Total: _____

6. Diverse, environmentally and socially responsible, resilient business Total: _____

7. Sustainable Economics - healthy local economy Total: _____

Total points for the Economic section: _____

SPIRITUAL SECTION:

1. Spiritual Sustainability Total: _____

2. Arts & Leisure Total: _____

3. Cultural Sustainability Total: _____

4. Community Glue Total: _____

5. Community Resilience Total: _____

6. A New Holographic, Circulatory World View Total: _____

7. Peace & Global Consciousness Total: _____

Total points for the Spiritual section: _____

OVERALL CSA SCORE:

Ecological Checklist: _____	
Social Checklist: _____	
Economic Checklist: _____	
Spiritual Checklist: _____	
TOTAL SCORE: _____	
1,300+	Indicates excellent progress toward sustainability
650-1,300	Indicates a good start toward sustainability
0-650	Indicates actions are needed to undertake sustainability

Sample of the Community Sustainability Assessment (CSA) Scorecard

ECOLOGICAL CHECKLIST #3

Physical Infrastructure, Buildings & Transportation - ecological materials, methods & designs

B. The extent to which building materials used are :

- natural/recyclable: most (2) some (1) few/none (0)
- recycled/reusable materials: most (2) some (1) few/none (0)
- from your own bioregion: most (2) some (1) few/none (0)

ECOLOGICAL CHECKLIST #4

Consumption Patterns & Solid Waste Management

A. Estimates of how many people in the community use the following methods to reduce consumption of natural resources and generation of solid wastes:

- Voluntary simplicity - personal consumption is minimized
 all - very few exceptions (10) most (6) some (3) few/none (0)
- Shared resources - equipment, tools, clothing, etc.
 all - very few exceptions (10) most (6) some (3) few/none (0)
- Shared facilities - kitchens, storage space, offices, etc.
 all - very few exceptions (10) most (6) some (3) few/none (0)
- Bulk/cooperative buying
 all - very few exceptions (10) most (6) some (3) few/none (0)

Other (1 point for each) Specify:

B. Indicate which of the following systems are in place and the extent they are used by the community:

- Recycling: glass, plastic, aluminum, tin, etc. (2)
 often (5) sometimes (3) rarely (0) never (-5)
- Reuse (2)
 often (5) sometimes (3) rarely (0) never (-5)
- Repair or making things (vs. buying new ones) (2)
 often (5) sometimes (3) rarely (0) never (-5)

Other (1 point for each) Specify:

C. An estimate of how many people in the community know the location and method of managing trash from the community (garbage removal, landfill site, etc.):

all - very few exceptions (5) most (3) some (1) few/none (0)

Add up the numbers in parentheses behind each item above that you checked.

4. Consumption Patterns & Solid waste Management Total: _____

50+ Indicates excellent progress toward sustainability

25-49 Indicates a good start toward sustainability

0-24 Indicates actions are needed to undertake sustainability

Comments:

ECOLOGICAL CHECKLIST #5

Water - sources, quality & use patterns

E. The extent to which the following water conservation methods are used by the community:

- Irrigation methods that conserve water
 often (6) sometimes (3) rarely (1) never (-1)
- Greywater reuse
 often (6) sometimes (3) rarely (1) never (-1)
- Minimizing household use
 often (6) sometimes (3) rarely (1) never (-1)
- Devices reducing the amount of water used (faucet aerators, low flow shower heads, etc.)
 often (6) sometimes (3) rarely (1) never (-1)
- Xeriscaping (landscaping with drought tolerant native plants requiring minimal maintenance)
 often (6) sometimes (3) rarely (1) never (-1)
- Use of natural/non-toxic products (cleaning, gardening, household products, etc.)
 often (6) sometimes (3) rarely (1) never (-1)
- Care and maintenance of plumbing to prevent/repair leaks
 often (6) sometimes (3) rarely (1) never (-1)

Other (1 point for each) Specify:

ECOLOGICAL CHECKLIST #6

Waste Water & Water Pollution Management

A. Sewage management systems used in the community: Check as many as apply -

Composting toilets, dry toilets, constructed wetlands or living machine systems
 all (7) most (5) some (3) little (1)

Low flush toilets or standard toilets with toilet dams (objects in tank that reduce flush volume)
 all (7) most (5) some (3) little (1)

Regular flush toilets, no conservation methods (-1)

Other (1 point for each) - describe:

Sanitation is not adequately managed (contamination threat) (-5)

B. An estimate of how many people in the community know the location and method of sewage treatment used by the community:

all - very few exceptions (6) most (3) some (1) few/none (0)

D. The quality of any water leaving the community, as compared with when it entered is:

improved, cleaner (10) the same, unchanged (0) decreased, less clean (-5)

If decreased:

does it meet local standards for waste water emissions yes (2) no (0)
 does it meet local standards for drinking water yes (3) no (0)

E. Water Pollution:

Does not exist locally (10)
 Exists and is being treated to restore clean water (8)
 Exists and is not being addressed (-5)

F. Systems are available locally for proper disposal of toxic substances (paint, oil, batteries, etc.):

yes (8) no (0)

Community members make use of these:

yes (8) no (0)

Add up the numbers in parentheses behind each item above that you checked.

6. Waste Water & Water Pollution Management Total: _____**50+ Indicates excellent progress toward sustainability****25-49 Indicates a good start toward sustainability****0-24 Indicates actions are needed to undertake sustainability****Comments:****ECONOMIC CHECKLIST #3****Community activities to support more sustainable businesses****B. How many community members would support businesses becoming more sustainable:**
 all (6) most (3) some (0) none at all (-1)
C. The degree to which community members desire more environmentally responsible goods and services:
 completely (4) mostly (3) some (1) little (0) none (-1)
D. The extent to which community members believe local business should take more responsibility for environmental conditions they have impacts on:
 all - very few exceptions (4) most (3) some (1) few/none (-2)
G. An estimate of how many people in the community would support a slight local tax increase to promote "green" business activities in the community:
 majority (5) some (3) minority (1) few or none (0)
I. The degree to which people would support the sale of recycled products in the local business community:
 all - very few exceptions (4) most (3) some (1) few/none (-2)
ECONOMIC CHECKLIST #5**Community awareness about sustainability strategies in business****B. An estimate of how many community members believe that global climate change will affect their economics related to costs of energy, fuel, and waste disposal (such as greenhouse gas emissions):**
 all - very few exceptions (4) most (3) some (1) few/none (-2)