Community Assessment Tool: *How Is Your Community Doing?*

Below is an assessment tool that is based upon the 12 Principles that you can use for reviewing your community.   I hope you find this to be a useful, leadership assessment tool.

Does your community, overall...

Principle A – Involve Everyone	Yes	No	?	Score
Believe in and support effective public participation as essential to achieving your community's goals?				
Support public participation processes designed to empower your members?				
Support public participation processes designed to raise all knowledge levels?				
Seek a wide diversity of stakeholders (citizens, non-profits, businesses, and those with particular areas of knowledge and training) in major decision making?				
Totals Principle A				
Principle B – Work Together				
Support building social capital through forming or joining networks and partnerships?				
Endorse appropriate collaborative partnerships for helping to leverage resources and support implementation?				
Provide (or planning to provide) stakeholder trainings, workshops, and/or other collaborative learning opportunities?				
Seek agreement among key non-profits, government agencies, and businesses to work together and is willing to share resources and responsibilities?				
Totals Principle B				
Principle C – Protect Resources and Promote Fairness				
Have goals and planned actions that include improving the local economy and/or minimizing negative effects upon that economy?				
Recognize linkages between conservation and the local economy that can help promote equity, local needs, financial and environmental sustainability?				
Regulate or are considering regulating access to critical natural resources to help ensure necessary, sustainable local use of these resources?				
Consider graduated sanctions in order to help minimize or reduce risks to local health and well-being?				
Totals Principle C				
Principle D – Be Transparent				
Provide systems for information sharing with a wide diversity of people and organizations (both experts and non-experts) through multiple approaches?				
Have communication systems designed to raise the level of awareness and support learning, decision making, and change?				

Have leaders who are committed to openness and transparency throughout change processes?				
Have leaders who explicitly state what they will and will not communicate to community members?				
Totals Principle D				
Principle E – Support Research				
Have a common information base that is accessible and useful to all members?				
Provide information that includes technical, scientific, social, ecological or economic forms of local/indigenous knowledge?				
Performs an economic evaluation of its environmental assets?				
Have plans for on-going research (which might include a role for community members) in order to improve existing solutions?				
Totals Principle E				
Principle F – Delegate and Empower				
Support a genuine sharing of power and responsibility between those with formal authority roles, community groups, and others in the wider community?				
Have clear and fair rules, procedures, and regulations?				
Engage individuals and groups most affected by environmental and other community rules and regulations in the process of making or modifying the rules?				
Support devolution of control and shared decision making related to funding, monitoring, enforcement, and governance?				
Totals Principle F				
Principle G – Earn Trust				
Embrace the involvement of community members in most aspects of creating and implementing your community plans?				
Have a positive level of trust for the appointed and elected leaders?				
Support open approaches to problem solving and decision making?				
Endorse direct involvement of the community members in most activities and decision making to make it more likely community members will trust the process and accept the outcomes?				
Totals Principle G				
Principle H – Embrace Feedback				
Support feedback systems that allow for opportunities to learn from mistakes, uncertainty, and crises?				
Hold local appointed or elected representatives clearly accountable to their members or constituents?				
Provide performance evaluations of those who make decisions periodically reviewed by those who are affected by the decisions?				

Have the social and technical capacities for monitoring, evaluating, responding, and enforcement adequate for effective on-going systems.				
Totals Principle H				
Principle I – Practice Leadership				
Have organizational and management systems that are resilient and able to cope with external shocks and rapid change?				
Use planning and implementation approaches, which include roles for a variety of stakeholders and partners?				
Use decision making approaches, which include people affected by decisions as well as those knowledgeable of the issues?				
Have an on-going approach to managing change that engages, trains, and mobilizes members in the work of the community?				
Totals Principle I				
Principle J – Decide Together				
Provide opportunities for facilitated dialogue involving scientists, policy makers, resource users, practitioners, and community members?				
Support efforts to analyze/understand key information about environmental, economic and social systems, including the aspirations of local people?				
Have a shared holistic vision/plan that anticipates probable environmental, social, and economic outcomes?				
Create opportunities in the policy creation process for experts and non-experts to share knowledge and collaborate on social, ecological, and economic systems?				
Totals Principle J				
Principle K – Strengthen the Foundation				
Have a strong local social structure, common interests, and shared norms in which divisions are not too serious or disruptive?				
Have resource systems that have clearly defined boundaries?				
Have members who, although unsatisfied with the status quo, are still hopeful enough to be engaged?				
Have adequate support and financial resources to support needed changes?				
Totals Principle K				
Principle L – Resolve Conflicts				
Plan for and develop capacity and strategies for conflict management and resolution?				
Have relationships with institutions outside of your community that could provide mediation of significant conflicts?				
Work pro-actively to transcend organizational rivalry and competition between organizations or stakeholder groups?				
Utilize participatory decision making processes that promote dialogue and reduce factionalism?				

Totals Principle L				
Totals of All 12 Principles				

Interpretation of Summary Scores for Each Principle:
Yes Answers

4	**E**: Excellent – Share what you do with other communities
3	**V:** Very Good –There are still a few areas for improvement.
2	**G**: Good – However, many opportunities are still available.
1	**NI**: Needs –Improvement Serious discussions are needed.
0	**W**: Wow – There are lots of change opportunities available!

Interpretation of Overall Score for All 12 Principles (yes answers):

37 - 48	Incredible! You are a role model for participatory democracy.
30 - 36	Doing well overall. Focus on the Principle areas that are low.
24 - 35	Discontent may be growing; community members may be feeling left out.
12 - 23 .	Anticipate growing conflicts or discontent. Focus on how to resolve conflicts and strengthen the foundation of the community.
0 - 11	Immediate dialogue with elected and appointed leaders is needed.