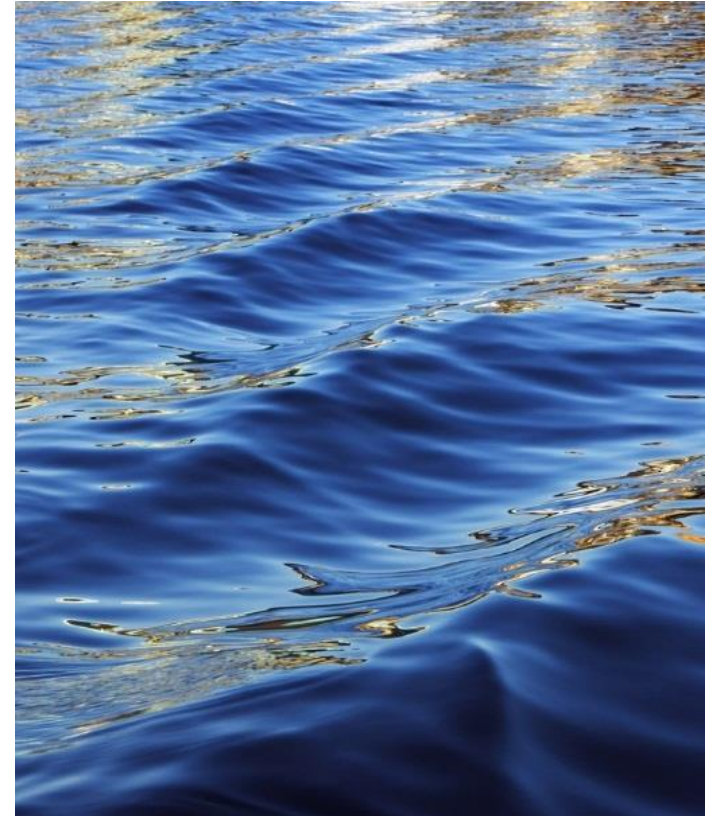


# Picking an Environmental Sustainability Project

An Assessment Template

Rotary District 5080 Environment Comm/ ESRAG



# Environmental Sustainability Project Selection

## A Stepwise Process

The following is a draft process that walks users through identifying whether there is a problem or need to be addressed culminating in objectively choosing a project.

This process is neither exhaustive nor set in stone. It can and should be adapted to meet the needs of the individual teams using it.

The process is simplified into seven steps. It is critical that each step be completed in order. Skipping a step may result in unintended consequences of wasted resources, denied access by stakeholders or other roadblocks presented.

**As we test this assessment on future project ideas, we will continually improve this assessment tool.**

# Step One: Problem identification (we don't want to be creating projects that don't address a critical need)

**Step one:** identify the need or problem to be addressed. Articulate it, reaffirm and agree. Where multiple needs have been identified capture all of them on a list for further discussion and selection. (Remember this is only the first step. Agreeing on a need or problem does not mean you've agreed to proceed with it)

**Needs and problems are not projects, they are broad areas for potential focus and project brainstorming**

**Problem Example:** Our local river is polluted to the point that people don't want to use it for recreation and we are seeing fewer aquatic species present each successive year

## Step Two: Goal(s) Objective(s)

- Once you've identified potential problem areas, discuss what goals or objectives might be to address them:
  - **Problem** = contaminated river in our community
  - **Goal** = return river to a habitable ecosystem for all local flora and fauna
  - **Objective** = identify and execute one specific project that will start the process of habitat restoration for the river
- Undertake this step for each identified need or problem

## Step Three: Select problem to address

- Review the identified problems, the associated goals and objectives and discuss the team's initial thoughts on where their passions and energies lie
- Cull the list to as little as one problem through consensus discussion
- Do you have a passion to seek a solution for the agreed problem?
- Does the team have a passion to seek a solution?
- Is it reasonable that the team can effectively address this problem?

## Step Four: Brainstorm project ideas

- Brainstorm a list of potential project ideas that will move you toward achieving your objectives and goals. List the goal and objectives on the top of the idea list for reference
- While brainstorming think about what it might take to accomplish the project but don't get hung up on the details at this point. Some obvious resource requirements may result in a project idea being untenable. Note these down

## Step Five: Cull the list

- Again, seek out individual's passion for a project. Is everyone on board? Are they willing to dedicate time to accomplish it?
- Cull the list down to two or three possible projects based on passion, energy and the expectation you will have the necessary resources to accomplish
- What positive impact will the project have on the environment and community; is it lasting?
- **Note:** the next step is where you must address the details of selecting a project

# Step Six: Asking the tough questions

**This is the most critical step in the project selection process as it is where you must challenge your internal assumptions and answer challenging questions.** Document all discussion and responses.

- ✓ Does the project meet Rotary's Four Way Test? How so?
- ✓ List anticipated resources and amounts required: people, dollars, equipment, education (getting up to speed), expertise, time, permits. Is it reasonable that all will be acquired?
  - Note: precision on these isn't required at this point though it's important to know if a resource is unavailable or too extensive.
- ✓ Is there an obvious qualified project lead; someone who will step up?
- ✓ Are there known criteria within Rotary that must be met for funding etc.; what are they?
- ✓ How easy or difficult is it to get all affected stakeholders engaged and agree on the project? List the known stakeholders.
- ✓ What is the relative impact on climate change?
- ✓ What is the relative impact on environmental sustainability?

# Step seven: Reviewing step six responses

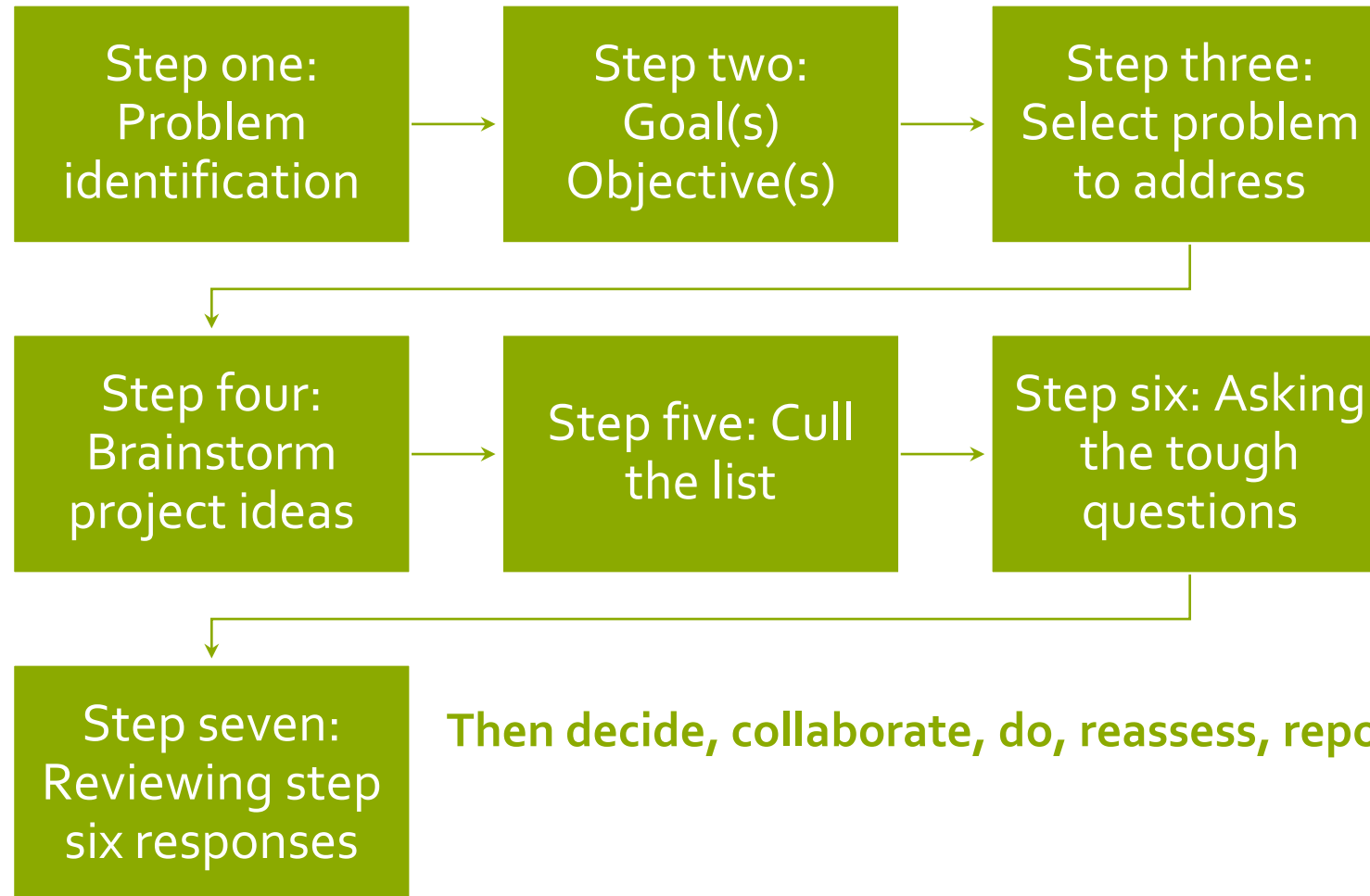
If possible, place all responses to step six in a table vertically with the project titles across the top row. This will aid in the decision process as answers will be beside each other.

- It is advised to weight each criterion. Agree on a reasonable weighting scheme. That way final selection will be objective

<i>Example only</i>	Project one		Project two		Project three	
Meets 4way test	Y/N justification	10	Y/N justification	10	Y/N justification	10
People & equipment		20		20		20
Funding		15		15		15
Time		10		10		10
Leadership		10		10		10
Stakeholders		25		25		25
Expertise		10		10		10
Relative impact		30		30		30
	Total Points		Total Points		Total Points	

**Ensure all the criteria in step six are represented in the table**

# The Assessment 7 Steps; simplified



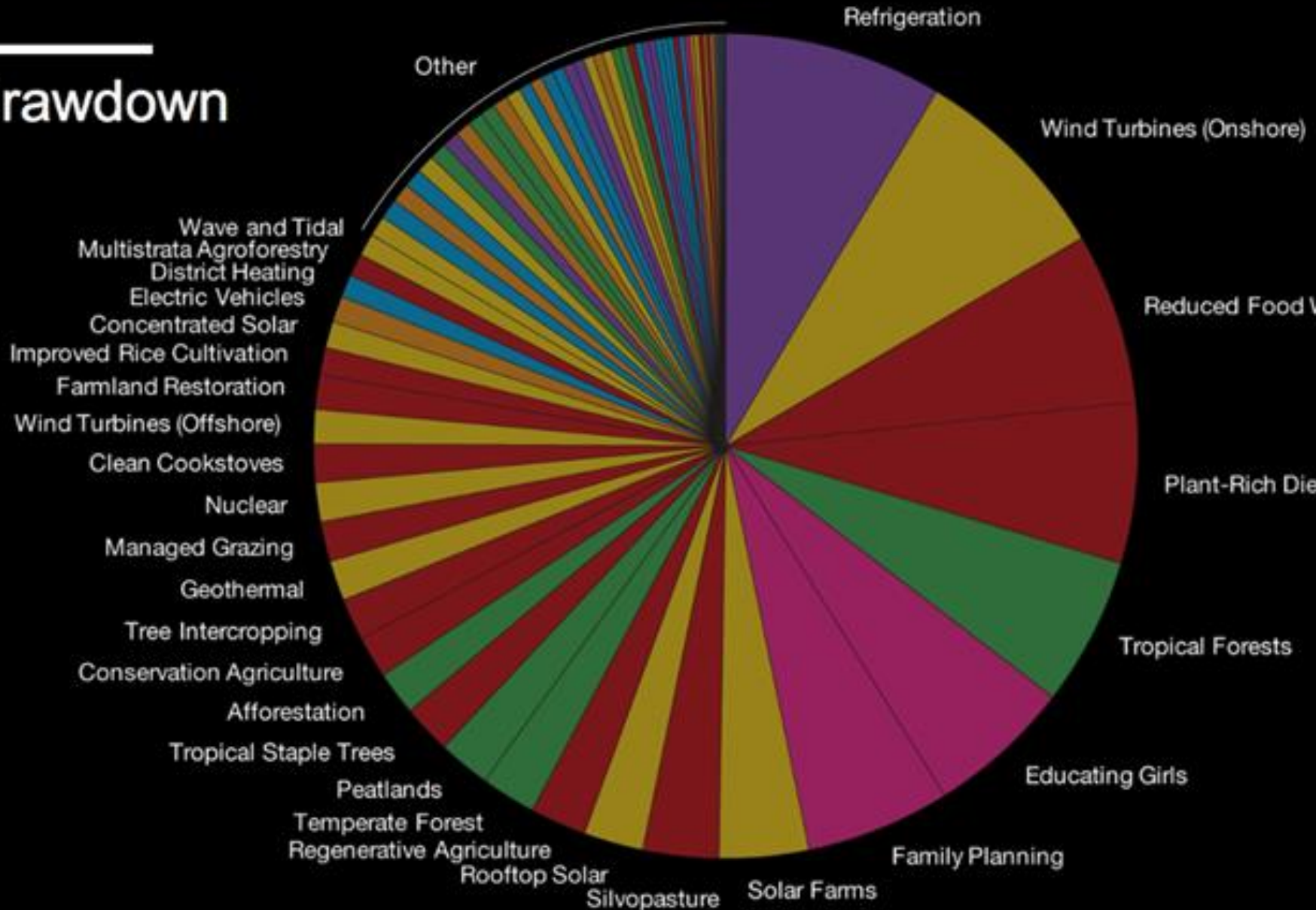
Then decide, collaborate, do, reassess, report and evolve.



# How effective is your action? Step Six re-check

- While many are acting to protect the environment and support sustainability, too often the actions taken have limited impact on environmental protection and combatting climate change.
- **How do we go from “doing good”/ “greenwashing” to “doing excellent”?**
- Evaluate your project options based on the problem you are intending to solve or reduce using available resources such as;
  - Project Drawdown® *“is a nonprofit organization that seeks to help the world reach “drawdown”—the future point in time when levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere stop climbing and start to steadily decline.”* <https://drawdown.org/>
  - Canadian Energy and Climate Nexus. *“it’s time to unite behind energy and climate policies that truly work for everyone. As an unbiased, non-profit advocate for the complex issues of energy systems and climate science, the Canadian Energy and Climate Nexus (CECN) provides a path to secure and encourage Canada’s future energy prosperity for generations.”* <https://thececn.ca/>

# Drawdown



Relative and at times surprising impacts of various actions to combat climate change.

**Note:**  
Plant rich diet  
Reduced food waste  
Changing refrigerants

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What have we learned?  
Next Steps?

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