

Energy Democracy Community Reflection Questions

To use this survey, participants should either **add up scores for each of the 4 sections (pillars)** and see where they are on the Energy Democracy pathway overall, or if there is less time, at a glance they can **see if they scored mostly 1s (Extractive), 2s (Better but not Great), or 3s (On the Pathway to Energy Democracy)**, and identify where on the pathway to energy democracy they are and in which specific areas they can make changes.

Note: When participants select [0] “I don’t know yet”, they should assume a rating of Extractive and facilitators should follow up by finding information to provide further details in the following workshop. Facilitators should keep in mind it is good practice to bring back information to participants throughout all workshops.

Social Justice

1. I or someone I know in my community experiences:

Choose best answer

- a. A lot of health issues (asthma, cancer, heart disease, etc.) **[1]**
- b. A few health issues **[2]**
- c. Generally good health **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

2. In my community:

Choose best answer

- a. It seems like everything is polluted (air, water, soil, etc.) **[1]**
- b. Some elements are polluted **[2]**
- c. There is clean air and water **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

3. In my community:

Choose best answer

- a. A lot of people face financial challenges (trouble making ends meet, utility shut-offs, etc.) **[1]**
- b. Some people face financial challenges **[2]**
- c. People are generally financially secure **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

4. I live near:

Choose best answer

- a. Many polluting energy facilities and infrastructure such as a power plant, fracking well, pipeline, railroad track, highways and anything else that impacts your ability to live a healthy life **[1]**
- b. Some polluting energy facilities and infrastructure **[2]**
- c. No polluting energy facilities or infrastructure **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

5. Government entities and/or businesses in my community:

Answer Yes [3], Partially [2], No [1] or I don't know yet [0]

- Ensure Indigenous sovereignty
- Engage in inclusive decision making regarding where and how I get my energy
- Ensure that new developments come with community benefits such as good-paying jobs or amenities like parks and libraries
- Steward community ownership of public assets

6. I have access to...

Answer Yes [3], Partially [2], No [1] or I don't know yet [0]

- Renewable energy
- Rooftop solar
- Tax credits for renewable energy systems like rooftop or community solar
- Energy efficiency
- Guarantees of public investment in green development in my community
- Accessible, reliable, and affordable public transportation

7. ___% of my household income is spent on energy

Choose best answer

- a. 10% or less **[3]**
- b. 15% **[2]**
- c. 20% **[1]**
- d. 25% or more **[0]**
- e. I don't know yet **[0]**

**0-25
Extractive**

**25-35
Better, but Not
Great**

**35+
On the Pathway towards
Energy Democracy**

**TOTAL
SCORE: _____**

Regenerative Energy

1. I feel that my energy source and energy systems:

Answer Yes **[3]**, Partially **[2]**, No **[1]** or I don't know yet **[0]**

- Represent my culture
- Are guaranteed rights for me to access
- Are reliable and resilient, with energy sources that are easy to access in cases of grid failure
- Are community-managed, community-benefiting, or community-owned

2. My local/state/federal government has the following policies:

Answer Yes **[3]**, Partially **[2]**, No **[1]** or I don't know yet **[0]**

- Renewable energy goals
- Significant investments in electric public transportation
- Cap and trade carbon markets
- Regulatory ban on all extractive energy systems by 2030
- Phasing out nuclear or fossil fuels
- Regulations to ensure clean drinking water
- Water cannot be used for fossil fuel generation, fracking extraction, or cooling of nuclear power plants
- Recognition of Indigenous water rights
- Water is a human right and is not commodified
- Energy is a human right and is not commodified

3. Where does my energy come from?

Select all that apply

- a. Natural gas or oil **[1]**
- b. Coal or coal waste **[1]**
- c. Nuclear **[1]**
- d. Wind **[2]**
- e. Solar **[2]**
- f. Geothermal **[2]**
- g. I don't know yet **[0]**

4. I have access to or use:

Select all that apply

- a. Energy efficient appliances or smart home **[1]**
- b. Electric vehicle (private) **[1]**
- c. Electric transit (public) **[1]**

5. My household uses _____ energy per year:

Choose best answer

- a. Over 12,000 kWh **[1]**
- b. Around 5,000 to 10,000 kWh **[2]**
- c. Less than 5,000 kWh **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

**0-15
Extractive**

**15-25
Better, but Not
Great**

**25+
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**TOTAL
SCORE: _____**

Moral Economy

1. In my community:

Answer Yes **[3]**, Partially **[2]**, No **[1]** or I don't know yet **[0]**

- There are ample living wage jobs available
- Low-income/low-wealth and BIPOC communities have green workforce training and job opportunities in sustainability fields
- Minority-owned businesses can successfully bid and benefit from local and larger government and corporate contracts
- There are programs that train workers in the skills they need to transition from polluting industries to sustainable ones
- There are pension guarantees and retirement resources
- I have the ability to influence a plan to transition away from polluting industries

2. How close is your community to achieving this vision?

Answer we've achieved this vision **[3]**, there is some action towards this vision **[2]**, there is talk but no action **[1]** or I don't know of anyone talking about this **[0]**

- The community controls, manages, and owns local energy systems
- Community-scale renewable energy projects are funded through public funds, non-extractive capital, or community-controlled funds
- Investments by government and big corporations benefit the community, are designed and defined by the community, and are publicly and transparently managed
- If there are energy utilities, they are publicly owned/managed, they use renewable sources of energy, and they create revenue for the residents, prioritizing Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and Environmental Justice (EJ) communities

0-15
Extractive

15-25
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25+
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TOTAL
SCORE: _____

Co-governance/Good Governance

1. My electric utility:

Select all that apply

- a. Is the only one I have access to **[0]**
- b. Uses predatory tactics when providing energy to low-income, low wealth-communities (shutoffs, fees to pay bills, etc.) **[0]**
- c. Is owned by investors **[0]**
- d. Is a cooperative **[1]**
- e. Invests sustainably and with local BIPOC/EJ communities leading and owning the project **[1]**
- f. Is accountable to public input, particularly input coming from EJ/BIPOC communities **[1]**
- g. I don't know yet **[0]**

2. My public utility commission:

Choose best answer

- a. Has only political appointees from extractive energy industries **[1]**
- b. Has some representation from EJ and civil rights groups, but decision-making is dominated by political appointees from extractive energy industries **[2]**
- c. Have appointees elected by and that represent EJ and civil rights communities **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

3. My public utility commission:

Choose best answer

- a. Is accountable to the community first and foremost **[2]**
- b. Is accountable to industries first and foremost **[1]**
- c. Provides radically accessible public feedback spaces and work in an equitable partnership with communities to shape programs and provide clear information and feedback on programs **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

4. My public utility commission:

Answer Yes **[3]**, Partially **[2]**, No **[1]** or I don't know yet **[0]**

- Does outreach for public comments and feedback
- Is receptive to public feedback
- Is accountable to public input and feedback
- Hosts accessible public hearings and community meetings
- Has a citizen advisory committee and collaborative planning models
- Shares information with communities and is transparent about its decision making
- Respects and honors tribal sovereignty

5. My electric grid is:

Choose best answer

- a. Centralized (one major company controls energy) **[1]**
- b. There is a mixture of centralized connections and microgrids **[2]**
- c. Majority decentralized grid that connects people to community renewable microgrids and storage with public accountability **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

6. My government:

Choose best answer

- a. Bails out investor-owned utilities with no accountability to ensure funding gets to tax-payers/rate-payers **[1]**
- b. Ensures that energy utilities and energy generators are held financially accountable to the community for any neglect **[2]**
- c. Is aiding in the transition from extractive economies and energy structures, such as investor-owned utilities, and towards community-benefiting, -controlled, and -owned regenerative energy systems **[3]**
- d. I don't know yet **[0]**

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Extractive

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TOTAL
SCORE: _____