

*Figure 1. The Bellagio Principles*

*What should be included in a sustainability indicators system:*

- Principle 1 – A clear vision of sustainable development and goals that define that vision should guide assessment of progress toward sustainable development.
- Principle 3 – Indicators should include the essential elements of equity, ecological conditions, and economic development (*to which we add 'cultural vitality'*).
- Principle 4 – The indicator set should have a time horizon long enough to capture both human and ecosystem time scales, and should apply to a defined space of study.
- Principle 5 – Indicators should have a practical focus and an explicit set of categories or organizing framework that links vision and goals to indicators and assessment criteria. There should be a limited number of key issues and indicators, standardized measurement, and comparison of indicator values to targets.

*How the indicators process should be managed:*

- Principle 10 – Attention should be paid to institutional capacity – clearly assigned responsibility for data collection, maintenance, and documentation.
- Principle 8 – Broad participation – key grassroots, professional, technical, and social groups, as well as decision-makers should be involved.
- Principle 6 – Openness – methods and data should be accessible to all.

- Principle 7 – Effective communication should address the needs of audience, users, decision-makers and use simple structure and language.

*Mechanics of analysis / How sustainability should be assessed:*

- Principle 2 – Holistic perspective – Indicators should consider the wellbeing of social, ecological, and economic sub-systems, their state, and the direction and rate of change of that state, of their component parts, and the interaction between parts.
- Principle 9 – There should be ongoing assessment – repeated measurement, adaptive and responsive to change, and development of collective learning and feedback.

Source: Adapted from Hass et al. (2002)