Ethical Decision Template

Version: 1.0 (2025-06-01)

Framework: Consciousness & Inner Development

Type: Decision-Making Tool

Audience: Governance Leaders, Policy Makers, Community Leaders, Ethics Committees,

Decision-Making Bodies

Overview

The Ethical Decision Template provides a structured framework for making complex governance decisions that align with consciousness principles, community values, and ethical integrity. This template guides decision-makers through comprehensive analysis that considers stakeholder impacts, cultural sensitivity, long-term consequences, and systems effects while maintaining practical feasibility and democratic legitimacy. The template integrates multiple ethical frameworks with consciousness governance principles to support thoughtful, inclusive, and sustainable decision-making.

Purpose: Enable systematic ethical analysis and decision-making that serves collective well-being while respecting diverse values, cultural perspectives, and democratic processes in governance contexts.

Scope: Comprehensive decision-making framework covering ethical analysis, stakeholder consultation, impact assessment, implementation planning, and accountability mechanisms for governance decisions of all scales and complexity levels.

Application Format: Step-by-step template for individual decisions, adaptable framework for organizational decision-making processes, and evaluation tool for assessing decision quality and ethical alignment.

Core Ethical Framework

Consciousness Governance Ethics Foundation

- Service to Collective Well-being: Decisions prioritize community and planetary health over individual or institutional advantage
- Intergenerational Responsibility: Consideration of impacts on seven generations into the future
- Cultural Respect and Inclusion: Honoring diverse cultural values and including marginalized voices in decision-making
- Systems Awareness: Understanding how decisions ripple through interconnected social and ecological systems
- Transparency and Accountability: Open decision-making processes with clear accountability to affected communities
- Adaptive Wisdom: Flexibility to adjust decisions based on new information and changing circumstances

Integrated Ethical Frameworks

- **Rights-Based Ethics**: Protecting and advancing human rights, including economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights
- Consequentialist Analysis: Evaluating decisions based on their likely outcomes and impacts on well-being
- Virtue Ethics: Considering what actions reflect the character and virtues of conscious leadership
- Care Ethics: Emphasizing relationships, care, and responsibility for vulnerable community members
- Justice Ethics: Addressing fairness, equity, and the distribution of benefits and burdens
- **Indigenous Ethics**: Including traditional wisdom about reciprocity, responsibility, and relationship with all life

Cultural and Spiritual Dimensions

- Sacred Responsibility: Understanding governance as sacred trust requiring moral integrity and spiritual grounding
- Community Wisdom: Accessing collective intelligence and traditional knowledge in decision-making
- Ceremony and Ritual: Including appropriate cultural practices for significant decisions

- Prayer and Reflection: Contemplative practices for accessing deeper wisdom and guidance
- Ancestor Guidance: Considering wisdom from cultural traditions and those who came before
- Future Generation Advocacy: Speaking for those not yet born who will inherit the consequences of current decisions

Ethical Decision-Making Process

Phase 1: Preparation and Centering (15-30 minutes)

Personal Preparation:

- Mindful Centering: Take time for breathing, meditation, or prayer to center before decisionmaking
- Intention Setting: Clarify intention to serve collective well-being through this decision
- Bias Recognition: Acknowledge personal biases, interests, and emotional reactions that might affect judgment
- Values Connection: Connect with personal and organizational values that should guide this decision
- Support Invocation: Request guidance from mentors, ancestors, or spiritual sources as appropriate

Decision Context Clarification:

- Decision Statement: Write clear statement of the decision that needs to be made
- **Time Frame**: Identify decision timeline and any urgency factors affecting the process
- Authority Scope: Clarify decision-making authority and who has input vs. decision power
- Resource Constraints: Identify available resources and practical constraints on possible decisions
- Legal and Policy Context: Understand legal requirements and policy constraints affecting the decision

Phase 2: Stakeholder Analysis and Consultation (1-4 hours)

Stakeholder Identification and Mapping:

Primary Stakeholders (directly affected):

- Community Members: Individuals and families directly impacted by the decision
- Cultural Communities: Specific cultural groups with particular interests or concerns
- **Economic Interests**: Workers, businesses, and economic actors affected by the decision
- Environmental Interests: Ecosystems, species, and environmental systems affected
- Future Generations: Children and future generations who will inherit consequences

Secondary Stakeholders (indirectly affected):

- Regional Communities: Neighboring communities and regions with related interests
- Institutional Partners: Organizations and institutions that will be affected by implementation
- Professional Communities: Expert communities with relevant knowledge and concerns
- Global Networks: International communities and movements with related interests

Stakeholder Impact Assessment:

- **Direct Impacts**: How will each stakeholder group be directly affected by different decision options?
- **Indirect Impacts**: What secondary and long-term effects might affect different stakeholders?
- **Differential Impacts**: How might impacts vary across different identity groups and communities?
- **Cumulative Effects**: How do impacts of this decision combine with other policies and conditions?
- Mitigation Possibilities: What could be done to reduce negative impacts on different stakeholder groups?

Consultation Process Design:

- Culturally Appropriate Methods: Design consultation approaches appropriate for different cultural communities
- Accessibility Accommodation: Ensure consultation processes are accessible across abilities, languages, and economic situations
- Multiple Participation Channels: Provide various ways for stakeholders to participate and provide input

- Time and Resource Support: Provide necessary support for meaningful stakeholder participation
- Feedback Integration: Clear process for how stakeholder input will be considered and integrated

Phase 3: Ethical Analysis and Values Assessment (30-60 minutes)

Rights-Based Analysis:

- Human Rights Impact: How does each decision option affect fundamental human rights?
- **Environmental Rights**: How do options affect rights of nature and environmental protection?
- Cultural Rights: How do options affect cultural preservation and cultural community rights?
- Economic Rights: How do options affect rights to livelihood, housing, and economic security?
- **Political Rights**: How do options affect democratic participation and political voice?

Consequentialist Impact Evaluation:

Short-term Consequences (1-2 years):

- **Immediate Benefits**: What positive outcomes are likely in the short term?
- Immediate Harms: What negative consequences might occur in the short term?
- Distribution of Effects: Who benefits and who bears costs in the short term?
- Implementation Challenges: What difficulties might arise during implementation?

Medium-term Consequences (3-10 years):

- **System Changes**: How might this decision change larger systems and institutions?
- Relationship Effects: How might this decision affect relationships between different groups?
- **Precedent Implications**: What precedent does this decision set for future decisions?
- Adaptive Capacity: How does this decision affect community capacity to adapt to future challenges?

Long-term Consequences (10+ years):

• Intergenerational Effects: How will this decision affect future generations?

- Environmental Legacy: What are the long-term environmental impacts?
- Cultural Legacy: How does this decision affect cultural preservation and evolution?
- System Sustainability: How does this decision affect long-term system sustainability?

Virtue and Character Assessment:

- **Leadership Virtues**: What decision would demonstrate the virtues of conscious leadership?
- Community Character: What decision would reflect and build positive community character?
- Moral Courage: What decision requires moral courage and serves higher principles?
- Integrity Alignment: What decision best aligns with stated values and commitments?
- Service Orientation: What decision best serves collective well-being rather than narrow interests?

Phase 4: Cultural and Spiritual Consultation (30-90 minutes)

Traditional Wisdom Integration:

- Indigenous Knowledge: What wisdom do indigenous traditions offer about this decision?
- Cultural Teachings: What guidance do relevant cultural and spiritual traditions provide?
- **Historical Precedent**: What can be learned from how similar decisions were handled in the past?
- Ritual and Ceremony: What traditional practices might provide guidance or support for this decision?
- Community Elders: What wisdom do community elders and wisdom keepers offer?

Spiritual Discernment Process:

- Contemplative Practice: Use meditation, prayer, or reflection for deeper insight about the decision
- Community Discernment: Engage in collective spiritual discernment with others
- **Signs and Synchronicities**: Pay attention to meaningful coincidences or signs related to the decision
- Energetic Assessment: Notice what decision feels most aligned and life-giving

 Spiritual Consultation: Seek guidance from spiritual advisors or wisdom keepers as appropriate

Sacred Responsibility Assessment:

- Sacred Trust: How does each decision option honor the sacred trust of leadership?
- Ancestor Accountability: What would ancestors think of each decision option?
- Future Generation Advocacy: What decision best serves those not yet born?
- Life-Serving Choice: What decision best serves all life and the web of relationships?
- Spiritual Integrity: What decision maintains spiritual and moral integrity under pressure?

Phase 5: Systems Analysis and Unintended Consequences (30-60 minutes)

Systems Mapping and Analysis:

- **System Interactions**: How does this decision interact with other systems and policies?
- Feedback Loops: What reinforcing or balancing loops might this decision create or affect?
- **Leverage Points**: Where in the system does this decision create the most powerful intervention?
- **System Health**: How does this decision affect overall system health and resilience?
- Emergence Potential: What new possibilities might emerge from this decision?

Unintended Consequence Assessment:

Potential Negative Side Effects:

- **Economic Disruption**: Could this decision create unintended economic hardship?
- Social Division: Might this decision increase conflict or division within the community?
- **Environmental Harm**: Could there be unexpected environmental consequences?
- **Cultural Disruption**: Might this decision harm cultural practices or community cohesion?
- Political Backlash: Could this decision create political instability or opposition?

Mitigation and Monitoring Strategies:

- Early Warning Systems: How can negative consequences be detected early?
- Course Correction Mechanisms: How can the decision be adjusted if problems arise?
- **Support Systems**: What support can be provided for those negatively affected?

- Accountability Processes: How will decision-makers be held accountable for consequences?
- Learning Integration: How will lessons from this decision inform future decisions?

Phase 6: Decision Synthesis and Selection (30-45 minutes)

Option Development and Refinement:

- **Creative Integration**: Can elements from different options be combined into better solutions?
- **Stakeholder Concerns**: How can stakeholder concerns be addressed through option modification?
- Implementation Feasibility: What modifications would make options more feasible to implement?
- Risk Mitigation: How can options be modified to reduce risks and negative consequences?
- Innovation Opportunity: Are there creative approaches not yet considered?

Decision Criteria Application:

Weighted Decision Matrix: Create scoring system (1-5 scale) for each option against key criteria:

Criteria	Weight	Option A	Option B	Option C
Community Well-being	25%	Score	Score	Score
Stakeholder Equity	20%	Score	Score	Score
Long-term Sustainability	20%	Score	Score	Score
Cultural Appropriateness	15%	Score	Score	Score
Implementation Feasibility	10%	Score	Score	Score
Financial Sustainability	10%	Score	Score	Score

Qualitative Integration Assessment:

Gut Check: What option feels most aligned with values and purpose?

- **Community Resonance**: What option would most likely gain community support and understanding?
- Moral Clarity: What option provides the clearest moral choice?
- Future Legacy: What option would create the legacy most aligned with values?
- Spiritual Alignment: What option feels most spiritually and ethically aligned?

Final Decision Selection:

- Clear Choice: Select decision option based on comprehensive analysis
- Rationale Documentation: Write clear explanation of decision reasoning
- Stakeholder Communication: Plan for explaining decision to different stakeholder groups
- Implementation Planning: Initial planning for decision implementation
- Monitoring Strategy: Plan for tracking decision impacts and making adjustments

Implementation and Accountability Framework

Implementation Planning

Implementation Strategy Development:

- Phase Planning: Break implementation into manageable phases with clear milestones
- Resource Allocation: Identify necessary resources and funding for successful implementation
- Responsibility Assignment: Clear assignment of implementation responsibilities to specific individuals and organizations
- **Timeline Development**: Realistic timeline with flexibility for adaptation based on experience
- **Communication Strategy**: Plan for ongoing communication with stakeholders during implementation

Stakeholder Engagement During Implementation:

- Ongoing Consultation: Regular check-ins with key stakeholder groups during implementation
- **Feedback Integration**: Mechanisms for incorporating stakeholder feedback into implementation adjustments

- Conflict Resolution: Processes for addressing conflicts and concerns that arise during implementation
- Transparency Maintenance: Regular public reporting on implementation progress and challenges
- **Community Participation**: Opportunities for community members to participate in implementation

Monitoring and Evaluation

Impact Monitoring System:

Quantitative Indicators:

- Outcome Measures: Specific metrics for measuring decision success
- Process Measures: Indicators of implementation quality and effectiveness
- Equity Measures: Metrics for assessing equitable impact across different groups
- Sustainability Measures: Indicators of long-term sustainability and resilience
- Unintended Consequence Tracking: Measures for detecting negative side effects

Qualitative Assessment Methods:

- Stakeholder Satisfaction: Regular surveys and feedback collection from affected stakeholders
- **Community Story Collection**: Gathering stories about how the decision has affected community members
- Cultural Impact Assessment: Evaluation of how the decision affects cultural communities and practices
- Relationship Quality: Assessment of how the decision affects relationships between different groups
- System Health: Qualitative assessment of how the decision affects overall system functioning

Learning and Adaptation Process:

- Regular Review Cycles: Quarterly or semi-annual review of decision impacts and implementation
- Stakeholder Feedback Integration: Systematic incorporation of stakeholder feedback into adjustments

- Course Correction Protocols: Clear process for making adjustments when monitoring reveals problems
- Documentation and Sharing: Recording lessons learned for future decision-making and sharing with other communities
- **Continuous Improvement**: Using evaluation findings to improve both the decision and the decision-making process

Accountability Mechanisms

Community Accountability:

- Public Reporting: Regular public reports on decision implementation and impacts
- Community Forums: Regular community meetings for discussion of decision impacts and concerns
- Grievance Processes: Clear processes for community members to raise concerns about decision impacts
- Decision Maker Accessibility: Regular office hours and accessibility for decision makers
- Community Oversight: Community committees or boards with oversight authority

Institutional Accountability:

- Ethics Committee Review: Regular review by ethics committees or oversight bodies
- Peer Review: Evaluation by other leaders and institutions using similar ethical frameworks
- Professional Standards: Adherence to professional standards for ethical decision-making
- Legal Compliance: Ensuring decisions comply with legal requirements and human rights standards
- Policy Alignment: Regular assessment of decision alignment with stated policies and values

Personal Accountability:

- **Self-Reflection Practice**: Regular personal reflection on decision quality and ethical alignment
- Mentorship and Coaching: Regular consultation with mentors or coaches about decisionmaking
- Spiritual Practice: Contemplative practices for maintaining ethical awareness and development

- Continuing Education: Ongoing learning about ethical decision-making and consciousness development
- Legacy Consideration: Regular reflection on the legacy being created through decisions

Decision Templates and Worksheets

Rapid Ethical Decision Worksheet

For decisions requiring quick turnaround (under 24 hours):

Decision Summary:

- Decision Needed: [One sentence description]
- Timeline: [Decision deadline]
- Key Stakeholders: [Top 3-5 affected groups]
- **Primary Values**: [Top 3 values that should guide this decision]

Quick Stakeholder Check:

- Who benefits most: [Stakeholder group]
- Who bears greatest cost: [Stakeholder group]
- Most vulnerable affected: [Stakeholder group]
- Future generation impact: [Brief assessment]

Ethical Quick Check:

- Rights protected: [Which rights are protected by this decision]
- **Harms minimized**: [What harms are avoided or minimized]
- Values aligned: [How decision aligns with key values]
- Precedent concern: [Any concerning precedents set]

Decision and Rationale:

- **Decision**: [Clear statement of decision made]
- **Primary Reason**: [Main ethical reason for this decision]
- Follow-up Needed: [What consultation/monitoring needed post-decision]

Comprehensive Ethical Analysis Worksheet

For complex decisions with adequate time for full analysis:

Section A: Decision Context

- **Decision Statement**: [Detailed description of decision needed]
- Background Context: [Historical and situational context]
- Legal/Policy Framework: [Relevant laws, policies, precedents]
- Resource Constraints: [Available resources and limitations]
- **Timeline**: [Decision timeline and any urgency factors]

Section B: Stakeholder Analysis

- **Primary Stakeholders**: [List with brief impact description]
- Secondary Stakeholders: [List with brief impact description]
- Consultation Process: [How stakeholders were/will be consulted]
- **Key Concerns Raised**: [Summary of major stakeholder concerns]
- **Unheard Voices**: [Who might be missing from consultation]

Section C: Options Analysis

- **Option 1**: [Description, pros, cons, stakeholder impacts]
- Option 2: [Description, pros, cons, stakeholder impacts]
- Option 3: [Description, pros, cons, stakeholder impacts]
- Creative Alternatives: [Any innovative approaches considered]

Section D: Ethical Framework Application

- **Rights Analysis**: [How each option affects human and environmental rights]
- Consequentialist Analysis: [Likely outcomes and impacts of each option]
- **Virtue Analysis**: [What each option says about character and values]
- Care Analysis: [How each option affects relationships and vulnerable people]
- Justice Analysis: [How each option affects fairness and equity]
- **Cultural/Spiritual Analysis**: [Traditional wisdom and spiritual guidance]

Section E: Systems and Long-term Analysis

System Impacts: [How decision affects larger systems]

- Unintended Consequences: [Potential negative side effects]
- Long-term Implications: [Impacts on future generations]
- **Precedent Setting**: [What precedent this decision establishes]
- Adaptive Capacity: [How decision affects ability to adapt to future challenges]

Section F: Decision and Implementation

- **Decision Made**: [Clear statement of final decision]
- Primary Rationale: [Main reasons for this decision]
- Stakeholder Communication: [How decision will be communicated]
- Implementation Plan: [Key implementation steps and timeline]
- Monitoring Strategy: [How impacts will be tracked and evaluated]

Conflict Resolution Ethical Decision Worksheet

For decisions involving significant conflict or disagreement:

Conflict Analysis:

- Conflict Description: [Nature and scope of conflict]
- Parties Involved: [Key individuals and groups in conflict]
- **Underlying Interests**: [What each party really needs/wants]
- Values in Tension: [Which values are in conflict]
- Historical Context: [How past events contribute to current conflict]

Common Ground Assessment:

- Shared Values: [Values that all parties share]
- Shared Concerns: [Concerns that unite rather than divide]
- Mutual Interests: [Ways parties' interests align]
- Relationship Preservation: [Importance of maintaining relationships]

Resolution Options:

- Compromise Option: [Solution where each party gives up something]
- Creative Integration: [Win-win solution addressing all parties' core needs]
- Majority Decision: [Solution favored by majority with minority protection]

- **Sequential Implementation**: [Phased approach allowing for different priorities]
- Parallel Solutions: [Different approaches for different groups]

Relationship and Community Impact:

- Trust Building: [How each option affects trust and relationships]
- Community Healing: [How each option contributes to community healing]
- Future Collaboration: [How each option affects future ability to work together]
- Precedent for Conflict Resolution: [What model this sets for future conflicts]

Special Considerations and Adaptations

Crisis and Emergency Decision-Making

Emergency Ethical Framework: When time pressure requires rapid decisions, prioritize:

- 1. Life and Safety: Immediate threats to life and physical safety
- 2. Vulnerable Population Protection: Ensuring most vulnerable are protected
- 3. **Community Values**: Quick consultation with community representatives
- 4. **Reversibility**: Preference for decisions that can be modified later
- 5. **Documentation**: Recording decision rationale for post-crisis review

Crisis Consultation Process:

- Community Representative Input: Quick consultation with designated community spokespersons
- Elder/Wisdom Keeper Guidance: Brief consultation with traditional wisdom sources
- Professional Expertise: Input from relevant technical experts
- Legal/Policy Check: Verification of legal compliance and policy alignment
- Values Alignment: Quick check against core organizational and community values

Cross-Cultural Decision-Making

Cultural Competence Requirements:

- **Cultural Impact Assessment**: Evaluation of how decision affects different cultural communities
- Traditional Knowledge Integration: Including indigenous and traditional wisdom in decision analysis
- Cultural Protocol Respect: Following appropriate cultural practices for significant decisions
- Language and Communication: Ensuring decision communication is culturally appropriate and accessible
- Cultural Authority Consultation: Involving recognized cultural authorities in decision process

Multi-Cultural Consensus Building:

- Cultural Bridge-Building: Finding ways to honor different cultural approaches to the issue
- Sequential Cultural Consultation: Meeting with different cultural communities separately before joint discussion
- Cultural Translation: Helping different cultural groups understand each other's perspectives
- Ceremony and Ritual: Including appropriate cultural practices in decision-making process
- Multiple Implementation: Different approaches for different cultural communities when appropriate

Environmental and Ecological Decision-Making

Rights of Nature Integration:

- Ecosystem Impact Assessment: Evaluation of decision impacts on natural systems
- Species and Habitat Protection: Consideration of impacts on wildlife and biodiversity
- **Traditional Ecological Knowledge**: Including indigenous knowledge about environmental relationships
- Future Generation Environmental Legacy: Assessment of environmental legacy for future generations
- **Restoration and Regeneration**: Preference for decisions that restore rather than degrade natural systems

Precautionary Principle Application: When scientific knowledge is incomplete:

Burden of Proof: Requiring proof of safety rather than proof of harm

- Risk Assessment: Conservative assessment of potential environmental and health risks
- Alternative Analysis: Exploration of less risky alternatives
- Monitoring and Adaptation: Robust monitoring with ability to reverse course if needed
- Community Protection: Prioritizing protection of community health and environment

Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Decision Quality Assessment

Decision Process Evaluation:

- Stakeholder Inclusion: Were all relevant stakeholders meaningfully included?
- Information Quality: Was decision based on accurate and comprehensive information?
- Ethical Analysis: Was thorough ethical analysis conducted using multiple frameworks?
- Cultural Sensitivity: Were cultural considerations appropriately addressed?
- **Transparency**: Was decision process transparent and well-documented?

Decision Outcome Evaluation:

- Goal Achievement: Did decision achieve intended outcomes?
- Stakeholder Satisfaction: Are stakeholders satisfied with decision and process?
- Unintended Consequences: Did any negative unintended consequences occur?
- Implementation Success: Was decision implemented effectively?
- Learning Generated: What was learned from this decision for future decisions?

Continuous Improvement Process

Decision-Making Skill Development:

- Ethical Framework Training: Regular training in ethical decision-making frameworks
- Cultural Competence Development: Ongoing development of cross-cultural decisionmaking skills
- Systems Thinking Training: Education in systems analysis and complexity navigation
- Facilitation Skill Building: Training in facilitation of multi-stakeholder decision processes

• Spiritual Development: Contemplative practices supporting wisdom and discernment

Organizational Learning:

- Decision Archives: Documentation of major decisions for organizational learning
- Best Practice Sharing: Sharing successful decision processes with other organizations
- Failure Analysis: Honest assessment of decision failures for learning
- Process Innovation: Continuous improvement of decision-making processes
- Feedback Integration: Regular incorporation of stakeholder feedback into process improvement

Conclusion and Implementation Guidance

The Ethical Decision Template provides a comprehensive framework for making governance decisions that align with consciousness principles while remaining practical and effective. This template supports decision-makers in navigating complex ethical terrain while maintaining transparency, community accountability, and long-term perspective.

Key Implementation Principles

Comprehensive yet Adaptable:

- Full framework for complex, high-stakes decisions with adequate time
- Streamlined versions for urgent decisions requiring rapid response
- Cultural adaptation for diverse communities and contexts
- Scalable approaches for different organizational sizes and capacities

Community-Centered and Participatory:

- Meaningful stakeholder consultation and participation
- Transparency in decision-making process and rationale
- Accountability to affected communities throughout implementation
- Continuous learning and adaptation based on community feedback

Ethically Grounded and Practically Effective:

Integration of multiple ethical frameworks with consciousness principles

- Balance between idealistic values and practical constraints
- Attention to implementation feasibility and sustainability
- Monitoring and evaluation for continuous improvement

Implementation Pathway

Individual Practice Development:

- 1. Begin using rapid ethical decision worksheet for daily decisions
- 2. Practice comprehensive analysis framework on one significant decision
- 3. Seek feedback from stakeholders on decision quality and process
- 4. Develop personal ethical decision-making practices and accountability
- 5. Share learning and mentor others in ethical decision-making

Organizational Integration:

- Train leadership and decision-making bodies in ethical decision framework
- Integrate ethical analysis requirements into organizational decision processes
- Establish stakeholder consultation and accountability mechanisms
- Create organizational learning systems for decision quality improvement
- Develop organizational culture supporting ethical decision-making

Community and System Change:

- Advocate for ethical decision-making requirements in governance systems
- Build community capacity for participation in ethical decision processes
- Create networks for sharing ethical decision-making best practices
- Integrate ethical decision frameworks with broader consciousness governance transformation
- Contribute to evolution of ethical standards and practices in governance

The Ethical Decision Template provides practical tools for embodying consciousness governance principles in real-world decision-making while building capacity for increasingly wise and ethical governance that serves all life.

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