



# Citizen Science to Measure Progress on the Environment

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# What is citizen science?

Public participation

Voluntary contributions

Scientific research and knowledge production

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## Mapping citizen science contributions to the UN sustainable development goals

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### Abstract

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a vision for achieving a sustainable future. Reliable, timely, comprehensive, and consistent data are critical for measuring progress towards, and ultimately achieving, the SDGs. Data from citizen science represent one new source of data that could be used for SDG reporting and monitoring. However, information is still lacking regarding the current and potential contributions of citizen science to the SDG indicator framework. Through a systematic review of the metadata and work plans of the 244 SDG indicators, as well as the identification of past and ongoing citizen science initiatives that could directly or indirectly provide data for these indicators, this paper presents an overview of where citizen science is already contributing and could contribute data to the SDG indicator framework. The results demonstrate that citizen science is “already contributing” to the monitoring of 5 SDG indicators, and that citizen science “could contribute” to 76 indicators, which, together, equates to around 33%. Our analysis also shows that the greatest inputs from

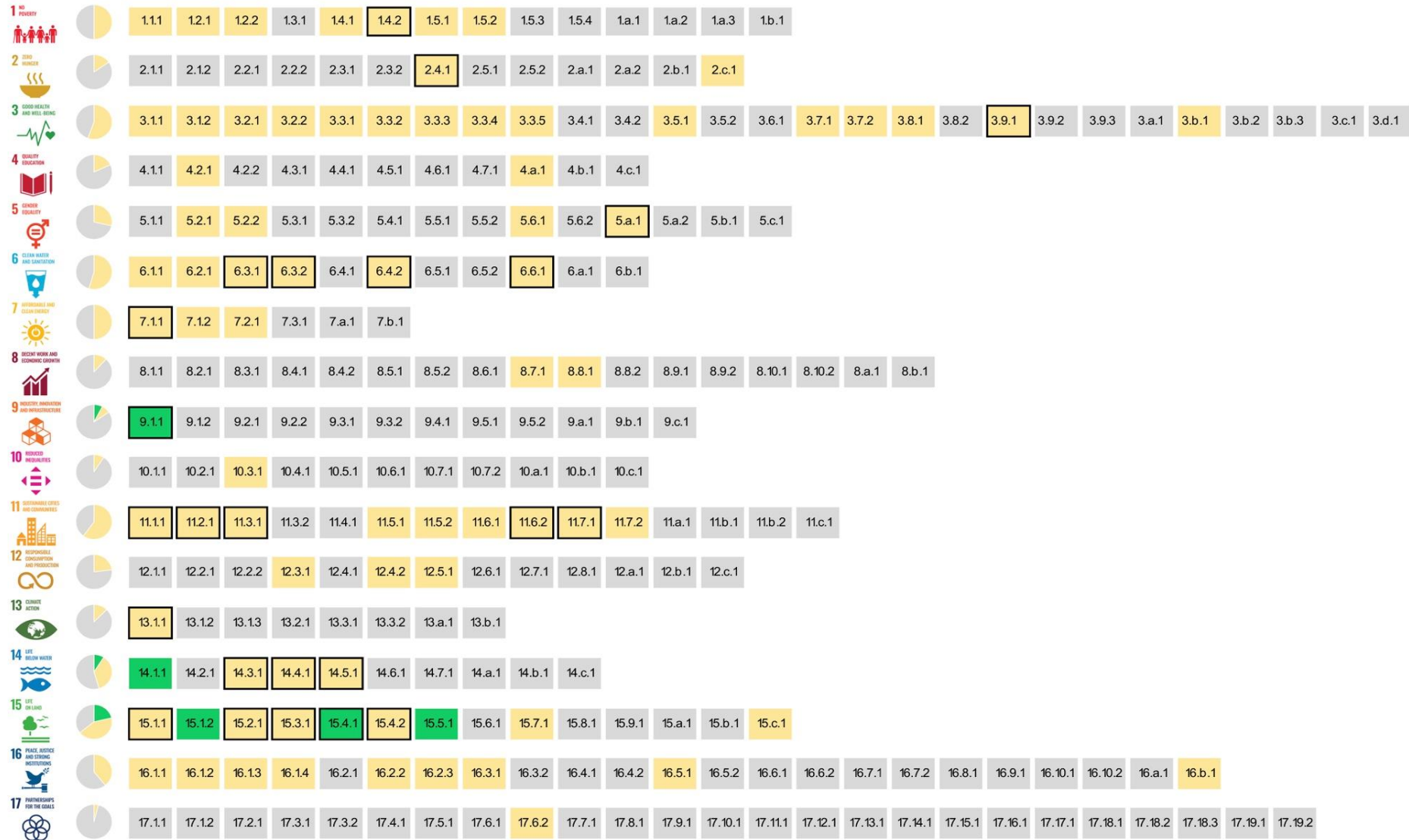
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SDG Indicator 14.1.1b on marine litter

# The SDG indicators where citizen science *projects* are 'already contributing', 'could contribute' or where there is 'no alignment'





# Citizen Science for the SDGs in Ghana for marine litter

## Process

- Mapping of priorities in Ghana and the results of the systematic review
- Coordination around citizen science data
- Workshops by UNEP and the GSS
- Data validation by the line ministry in Ghana/EPA

## Results

- Leveraging citizen science data that already exists
- Embedding citizen science data into wider strategies and policies in Ghana

## Lessons

- Utilizing existing tools, data and network
- Building trust, common goals and ownership through partnerships

# Thank you

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