Citizen Science and the SDGs: Examples, Opportunities and Challenges

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Systematic Review of Citizen Science and SDG Indicators

- Green = where citizen science is already contributing

- Yellow = where citizen science has the potential to contribute

- Black boxes indicate both citizen science and EO can contribute together

- Citizen science already contributing to 5 indicators with the potential to contribute to 76 more

- Potential in both environmental and social indicators

Source: Fraisl et al. (2020) https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11625-020-00833-7

Reporting on Indicator 14.1.1b with Citizen Science

- Citizen science data (monitoring beach litter) have been integrated into the official SDG monitoring and reporting mechanisms of Ghana **= first country to do so**

- Legal framework was in place
- Inputs to Ghana's Ocean Plan and other relevant policies
- Bridging local data collection efforts with global monitoring processes by leveraging the SDG framework
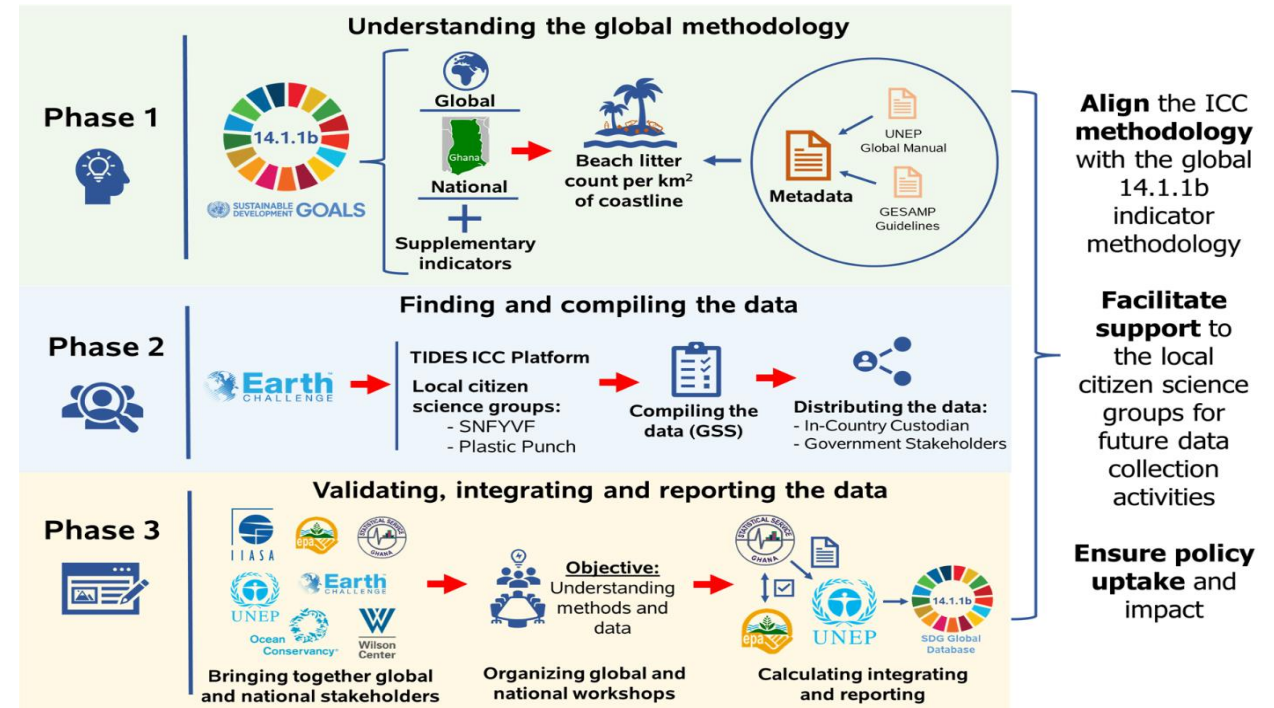
Also of Relevance for Social Indicators

- SDG 3 (Health and Wellbeing) and SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) were identified in the systematic review as having a high potential to benefit from citizen science

- Undertook a review of health-related indicators (SDGs and WHO's Triple Billion Targets)

- Found that citizen science can contribute to at least 42 indicators (out of 58 health-related ones): 9 in a direct way and the rest in a supplementary way

- Ongoing project looking into citizen science for indicator 16.6.2 (UNDPOGC):
  - Satisfaction with healthcare, education and government services
  - Access, affordability, quality of facilities, equal treatment for everyone, overall satisfaction
  - Courtesy and treatment (healthcare), effective delivery (education), timeliness (government services)
  - Talking to NSOs, designing a citizen science strategy, identifying challenges

Citizen Science for SDG Monitoring

Opportunities

- More frequent data collection

- Higher spatial resolution/remote places

- Filling gaps in cases where no data exist

- Local knowledge/thematic richness

- Raising awareness of global and local issues related to sustainable development

- Transformative behaviors

Challenges

- Data quality and trust in the data

- Alignment with official protocols and data requirements, and legal environment

- Representativeness of the data/other biases

- Digital divide

- Inclusivity

- Engagement (recruitment, sustained participation, aligning motivations with purpose)

Images: flaticon.com
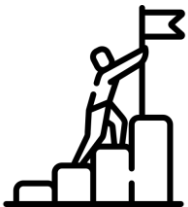
Thank you for your time

Any questions?

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