

Empowering communities through local monitoring

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Over recent decades, community-based environmental monitoring (often called "citizen science") has exploded in popularity, aided both by smartphones and rapid gains in computing power that make the analysis of large data sets far easier.

Publishing in *BioScience*, handling editors Rick Bonney, of Cornell University, Finn Danielsen, of the Nordic Foundation for Development and Ecology (NORDECO), and numerous colleagues share an open-

access special section, already downloaded thousands of times, that highlights numerous community-based [monitoring](#) programs currently underway.

In an article on locally based monitoring, Danielsen and colleagues describe the potential for monitoring by community members—who may have little scientific training—to deliver "credible data at local scale independent of external experts and can be used to inform local and national decision making within a short timeframe."

Community-based monitoring efforts also have the potential to empower Indigenous rightsholders and stakeholders through their broader inclusion in the scientific process, writes Bonney in a Viewpoint article introducing the section. Moreover, he says, "Indigenous and local peoples' in situ knowledge practices have the potential to make significant contributions to meeting contemporary sustainability challenges both locally and around the globe."

More information: Finn Danielsen et al, The Concept, Practice, Application, and Results of Locally Based Monitoring of the Environment, *BioScience* (2021). [DOI: 10.1093/biosci/biab021](https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biab021)

Rick Bonney, Expanding the Impact of Citizen Science, *BioScience* (2021). [DOI: 10.1093/biosci/biab041](https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biab041)

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