Cluster 2: National Citizen Science strategies

Moderation: Frank Becker;
Note taker: Katrin Vohland

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Results from Group 2: National Citizen Science strategies

The group was moderated by Frank Becker; Katrin Vohland gave input and took notes.

The group discussed that it is difficult to find national strategies on CS. They may be hidden in other strategies, such as ones that address Open Science, or strategies may not be known to the persons who answered the questionnaire.

The survey was perceived as to long. It was also stated that there are too few answers in order to really validate the ideas. In addition, levels are unconnected. It was recommended to change the method and rather ask focus groups at the policy level in order to get some more insights.

It was raised that the survey questions also provoke biases. For instance, while Spanish people may say, “oh, rather low, I expect more”, Polish people may say there is not too much – but in fact would be able to provide a lot of examples.

This stresses the fact that a clear definition of the concept is needed beforehand. But as this was an explorative study, the different terms which were collected in the different languages may help to frame the term adequately.

It was discussed whether CS will have the power to become a term such as “sustainability”, triggered by the Brundtland report. People were a bit sceptical and said CS has to earn trust, it is/should be rather a bottom up process then top down.

It was suggested to develop a “role model” for CS, which comprised facets such as awareness for benefits of different groups, and not only the “pan European urban city dwellers”.

The gender imbalance was shortly touched – with the comments that men have less communication skills, and that there is not that much money available for CS. I.e. less prestigious then some other sciences.

From Turkey it was reported that it is very effective to link up with NGOs. So, CS becomes instrumental for environmental sustainability while many sectoral strategies are less effective.

This led to the more general question how far CS can support democratic developments and act as indicator for civil society. It was recommended to support transdisciplinary approaches as they combine policy and cross cutting issues.

As recommendations, it was formulated that CS should be more open to stakeholders, and think more carefully about dissemination options in order to mainstream CS to more diverse community. In addition, conflict management may also be a skill to be trained for CS activists.

The questions in the survey:

1. **Is the term 'Citizens Science' used in your country? (single choice)**
2. **Are other terms used to refer to Citizen Science (in the national language(s) and translated into English – if applicable)?**
3. **Which type of objectives and values drive Citizen Science in your country? (multiple choice)**
4. **In which domains is Citizen Science supported/applied in your country? (multiple choice)**
5. **How would you describe the stage of development of Citizen Science in your country?**
6. **How would you see the stage of development of Citizen Science in your country with respect to your knowledge of other e1isting experiences and your expectations?**
7. **How do governmental authorities consider Citizen Science in your country? (multiple choice)**
8. **Where do current Citizen Science activities in your country originate from? (multiple choice)**
9. **Do any non-governmental Citizen Science entities support Citizen Science in your country? (multiple choice)**
10. **If yes, which kind of entities are these? (multiple choice)If yes, could you list**
11. **Do official/institutional/authoritative Citizen Science Strategies exist in your country? (multiple choice)**
12. **If yes, could you list existing references to their official basis and related institutional documentation (existing law, regulations, guidelines, etc. -including links if possible)?**
13. **Are these regulating/supporting Citizen Science in your country at different level? (multiple choice)**

Group discussion

Eight Participants, five nationalities: Katrin (Germany), Franck (Germany), Hai-Ying (Norway), Anderzej (Poland), Pinar (Turkey), Yasar (Turkey), Margrett (UK), Hamdi (Turkey)

1. Questions and suggestions from participants

- Small number of the respondents, the survey results can be biased. The questionnaire was designed towards experts in the field to answer.
- It might be a good idea to distribute the survey to national level, e.g., policy makers in citizen science field
- The word 'citizen science' in Poland is not used often, but 'open science'.
- Suggest to distribute the survey to European Commission
- Several questions are quite tricky, e.g., what level of citizen science in your country?
- How the respondents to understand the questions? It is uncertain if all the respondents understand the questions the same way.
- Modify the questions as necessary
- It is necessary to reach the common understanding for the citizen science topic within cost action
- Define the term of citizen science is quite tricky.
- Language barriers, suggest to translate the questions to local language

Conclusion: Survey results will be analyzed and published as a testing approach and preliminary results, and recommend for further revision and usage at country level.

2. Issues to add

- Potential for opening questions, e.g., starting with terminology, then purpose of the survey, targeting groups, etc.
- Our common future is one of the main sources to discuss the sustainability. Maybe making the use of citizen's science as a piece of political terms, involving citizens into decision making process.
- Open opportunities to engage citizens into scientific work
- Trust in science maybe referring to the attitude of scientists, trust in society we have earn

- Current survey is top-down approach survey, next step can be bottom-up, modify the survey into national context and translate into local language, and distribute the survey out to targeted groups to answer, then analyze the results. In this way, the survey results will be more accurate and sound.
- Next step, design the survey for purpose, geographically-based, platform exited, reuse the technology to support the survey, looking at strategy level and maturity level of citizen science strategy, future innovation of the survey, context of the national strategy, index/objective indicators of citizen science in Europe, and could compare such indicators among European countries, standardization of citizen science, etc.

3. Reflection of difference between countries

- Produce country fact sheet, harvest the difference between countries
- What people believe in, the norm used, solutions and tools, difference between genders, age, groups, culture, and level of democracy, economic level, education level, and trust level in the society, governance aspects, etc.?
- **Turkey**
    - There is no national citizen science document, use resources efficiently, NGOs are more active in citizen science.
    - Maybe it is a good idea that scientists can provide such citizen science strategy and provide it to policy makers.
    - Motivation is the key for engaging citizens.
- Governance aspects, democracy issues related indicators at country level, promote the civil society as a whole and/or social innovation, gender study as whole.
- The terms of transdisciplinary (put different knowledge together and create new knowledge and solutions) and interdisciplinary. Transdisciplinary - we keep it open to different fields.
- There are difference between transdisciplinary and citizen science.
- Concept of transdisciplinary, involving different stakeholders

4. Analyses drivers and barriers

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5. Recommendations, issues addressing, country scale

- **Turkey:** Documents in agriculture and tourism are different in addressing citizen science topic, conflict management strategy is important to integrate such conflict
- **Turkey:** There is different level of citizen science activities between developing and developed countries. To provide tools, guideline and engage citizens are necessary for developing countries. Best practices shall be highly recommended, and national strategy for citizen science shall be highly promoted and implemented as well.
- At country level, it may be useful to initiate citizen to collaborate, training activities for scientists to be involved in transdisciplinary activities.

6. Recommendations, issues addressing, EU scale

- Stakeholders, who you invite to be involved in citizen science activities.
- Do we want to disseminate the citizen science to broad group (dissemination), the main stream of the citizen science, local-national-regional level of citizen science strategy?
- Sustainable funding for citizen science activities from European commission.
- Complexity of the city is very high, it would be very useful to go directly to citizens, not government.
- Citizen science could be a tool to empower citizens into governance