PROJECT SUMMARY

Participatory science data can provide information that would otherwise not be available due to time, geographic, or resource constraints. For that reason, these data may be used to supplement environmental data collected by EPA, states, and tribes. Participatory science has applications in most environmental areas. Regulators are beginning to use participatory science data to inform environmental protection.

PROJECT LEADS

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RESOURCES

Community science session at the EE2020 virtual webinar in October 2020: Improving the Management and Use of Community Science Data: What Can We Learn From State and Tribal Programs?

15 case studies and best practices that describe how participatory science is used as a tool in both regulatory and non-regulatory environmental programs by states, tribes, and local governments.

Tribal Science White Paper

Participatory Science

Improving how participatory science data is collected and used

Challenge

Participatory science data can provide useful information to both the public and environmental regulators alike; however, there do exist challenges with regard to consistent data application, processes, methods, and data quality. Overcoming such challenges will take the collective power of EPA, states, and tribes collaborating with participatory science groups.

Benefits

- **Improve data infrastructure and tools –** Increase capacity to collect, share, analyze, and integrate participatory science data
- **Elevate data standards and collection methods –** Improve upon existing standards in place for community scientists to collect data to move toward streamlined data and processes, and
- **Promote data accessibility and transparency** – Collaborate with partners to share data effectively and efficiently.

Accomplishments

- **Held a data management workshop in November 2021** – a facilitated discussion with participatory science data experts, users, and regulatory staff to define a common roadmap to improve data management approaches.
- **Developed 12 technical case studies and a set of discussion papers** that seeded the agenda and discussion at the November 2021 data management workshop (coming soon to the EPA participatory science website).
- **Finalized and released the EPA vision and principles for participatory science.**
- **In coordination with EELC tribal members, developed a Tribal Science White Paper** detailing tribal case studies to showcase and better understand how tribes use participatory science in environmental protection and management. The white paper shares best practices for tribal participatory science and identifies ways that EPA, states, and other organizations can improve support for future tribal participatory science activities.
- **Conducted extensive outreach at various conferences, including:**
  - The community science session at the EE2020 virtual webinar in October 2020: Improving the Management and Use of Community Science Data: What Can We Learn from State and Tribal Programs?
  - Update on ongoing participatory science activities at the ECOS Fall 2020 Meeting
- Developed the Roadmap and Theory of Change – workshop participants and other key stakeholders reviewed the Roadmap and Theory of Change developed as a workshop product.

Upcoming Milestones

- EPA Implementation Plan Outline – EPA is working on drafting an outline for an internal Participatory Science Data Management Implementation Plan. The implementation plan will identify projects and activities to improve sharing and use of data, data formats, standards, and data testing/validation.