

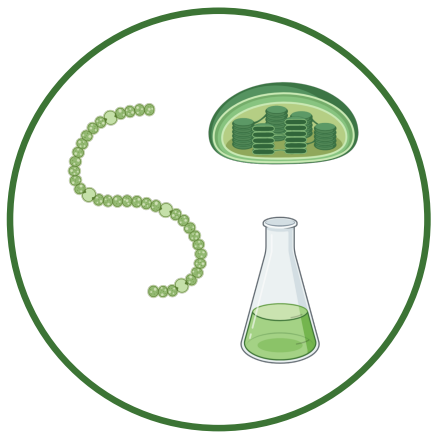
What's in the water?

Citizens as field reporters of cyanobacterial blooms

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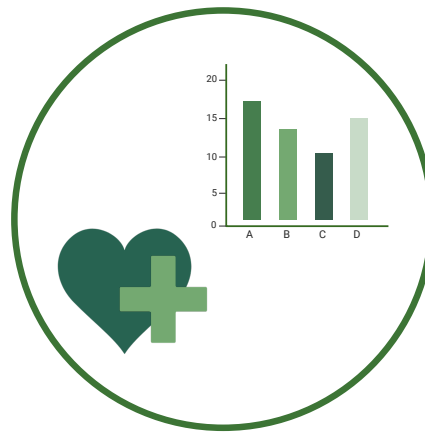
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1 CYANOBACTERIA



- Cyanobacteria are **prokaryotic organisms** that resemble algae in some characteristics.
- They are mostly blue-green in color due to chlorophyll-a and other pigments, which enable them to **perform photosynthesis**.
- Under favorable conditions (high nutrient concentration, high water temperature, low water flow) they can form **blooms in the water**. These can usually be seen as **green scum** on the water surface.

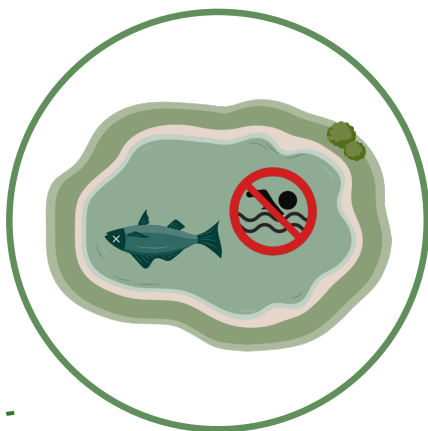
BENEFITS



- Citizens gain information on **cyanotoxin risk** (interactive map), **guidelines** for protecting their health, **information** on other water-related issues, and **personal satisfaction** from participating in research.
- Researchers gain **information** on the distribution of cyanobacterial blooms, which forms a basis for **future research projects**, while also **building citizens' trust** in science.

- ### 2
- Some cyanobacterial species can produce **cyanotoxins**, which pose a risk to human and animal health.
 - Excessive growth of cyanobacteria can negatively impact ecosystems by **reducing oxygen levels** and **blocking sunlight**.
 - This can sometimes lead to **massive fish kills**.

NEGATIVE IMPACT



- ### 6
- In the first **two years** of the platform's operation:
- We have built an online network of almost **900 citizens**.
 - We have received **over 40 contributions** that have helped us identify **seven new sites** with potentially toxic cyanobacteria.
 - We also recorded **other phenomena** (e.g. algal blooms, iron bacteria).

OUTCOMES



PROJECT AIM



- ### 3
- To **track cyanobacterial blooms** in the environment with the help of citizens.
 - To promote change in **people's attitude towards nature**.

OUTREACH



- ### 7
- We were featured in at least **45 media contributions** locally and nationally (newspapers, web portals, radio) and received **two awards** for our work.
 - We participated in **nine events** (lectures, fairs, etc.).
 - Our followers **showed great interest** in the results, shared information and helped us raise awareness.

- ### 4
- Citizens **learn** about cyanobacterial blooms (website, social media, magazines, radio, in-person events).
 - They **upload photos** of blooms or other phenomena in water bodies.
 - Researchers **take samples**, analyze their potential toxicity, and **share their findings** with citizens.
 - Citizens help **spread the word**.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



- ### 8
- The results show that citizens are interested in environmental issues when they are communicated to them in **understandable language** and by a credible source.
 - We believe that the project has helped **change public awareness** of cyanobacterial blooms.

CONCLUSIONS

