

Costs and benefits of citizen science

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Citizen science is an approach which is useful for undertaking research and monitoring, while engaging a wider range of participants than 'conventional' science. One of the reasons why citizen science has been increasing in popularity is its potential to be cheaper than relying on contracted staff. However, citizen science is not free, and citizen science is also very diverse - encompassing a wide range of approaches. Therefore for citizen science to be used an effective tool for a particular purpose it is necessary to evaluate the benefits and the costs of any particular approach. We will consider the diversity of citizen science approaches, and will show how evaluation can be undertaken with different economic tools, in order to support best practice in citizen science for ecology and environmental science.