**MiniSASS biomonitoring reaches UN Water**

As early as 2004, Dr. Mark Graham and Dr. Chris Dickens (then at Umgeni Water) recognised the importance of enabling wider participation in water quality issues (Graham, Dickens & Taylor, 2004). Working with multiple partners, including WESSA, and more recently SAEON, a range of citizen science tools were developed. Dr. Mark Graham now at GroundTruth, supported by the Water Research Commission, developed the Stream Assessment Scoring System (miniSASS) and ten other key citizen science tools (Graham and Taylor, 2018). From the outset MiniSASS gained popularity in South Africa as well as in other southern African countries. Since then it has been applied in various other countries across the World. Lately, the miniSASS has seen some interesting developments. UN Water contacted the miniSASS team recently to explore how well miniSASS could work in all countries of the world. This first led to the publication of a joint journal article, [*Social change innovations, citizen science, miniSASS and the SDGs*](https://protect-za.mimecast.com/s/VHdTC1j735fkWkM7CyBOAK?domain=iwaponline.com), led by Dr. Jim Taylor and published in Water Policy in 2021. Following this article, UN Water have now included the concept in the [UN Water Manual 2021](https://protect-za.mimecast.com/s/LI-3C2RJD6SRyRpNs0tHqZ?domain=unwater.org). The manual recommends the miniSASS for the SDGs, Target 6.3, as a level 2 indicator, as well as for SDG 6b, stated as follows “miniSASS has the potential to complement physico-chemical data currently used for indicator 6.3.2 to provide a comprehensive picture of water quality” and ”The use of the miniSASS biomonitoring approach developed in South Africa [...] and in situ physico-chemical approaches shows that if properly designed and implemented, such initiatives can provide greater spatial coverage than traditional laboratory-based monitoring networks [...].”

**References**

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