

Exploring the Awareness of Mongolia's Young Generation on ICT-Supported Citizen Science and its Potential

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Citizen science is an effective approach that engages the general public in scientific research, leveraging collective knowledge and efforts to advance various research fields. Integrating information and communication technology (ICT) into citizen science can help expand participation, enhance public understanding of science, and strengthen environmental monitoring networks. This study investigated the potential of ICT-supported citizen science in Mongolia through a survey with university students. Given the size of Mongolia and its small population, ICT-supported citizen science can bring particular value, especially enabling the sharing of data from remote and underpopulated areas.

The survey, conducted in autumn 2024, focused on students' awareness and interests in citizen science, their use of ICT, and their technological preferences for citizen science applications. Around 170 undergraduate students from various majors participated. The findings reveal that while awareness of citizen science is currently low, students are open to participating in such initiatives. Their interests distributed fairly evenly across a range of fields, including social and environmental topics. Actively promoting citizen science through social media, university programs, and public events was viewed favorably as a means to raise awareness. Furthermore, the need for mobile-optimized applications with both online and offline functionalities was highlighted, as this would help reduce mobile data consumption and overcome sporadic Wi-Fi access. Educational materials and data validation/feedback mechanism were also identified as desirable features. These findings may help the development of ICT-supported citizen science projects in Mongolia that align with local needs and interests.