Happy 2017 from miniSASS

In this edition we take you down memory lane to some of our most successful miniSASS stories in 2016.
The miniSASS team thanks all its users for participating in assessing the condition of your river systems using miniSASS. You have contributed to the global network of citizen science and expanded the miniSASS footprint globally. In 2016 the miniSASS website received a staggering 331 new miniSASS observations, slightly higher when compared to observations submitted in 2014, just after the miniSASS website was launched. The miniSASS team has witnessed an overwhelming growth of interest from individuals, schools, academic institutions, corporate and importantly, government institutions joining the miniSASS community. This has resulted in 125 new users registering on the miniSASS website in 2016.
The miniSASS team recognises the efforts made by individuals / organisations in contributing to the growing miniSASS database. The map below shows miniSASS users who uploaded the most observations in 2016. We are often asked “I have collected and uploaded my miniSASS data, now what?” So why is all this data important? As the general public, we play a part in making a difference to managing freshwater resources in our communities. miniSASS has the potential to be a powerful “red flag” indicator to identify aquatic pollution sources. By using miniSASS we can actively take an interest in the management of the health of freshwater ecosystems in our communities. Some of our miniSASS users are not only contributing a significant amount of data to the miniSASS website, they also use the data to find pollution sources and mitigate these challenges together with their local municipalities and the general public. A lot of effort is also made in using the miniSASS data for education and research purposes. In the upcoming issues we will share some of the case studies where people are using miniSASS data to address issues impacting on their river systems.
miniSASS is expanding its footprints beyond southern Africa’s borders! This is great news, as it strengthens efforts to build and develop transboundary collaborations and to grow an international community of practice. The use of 13 taxa in miniSASS allows for simpler identification & understanding, irrespective of where you are in the world. It also means that most of these taxa are widely distributed and are found in most rivers across the globe.

Professor Grimes (Chief Scientific Adviser form the UK) with a group of enthusiastic students and volunteers identifying the “nunus” in their miniSASS sample, Gauteng, South Africa.

Delegation at the Global Participatory Water Management Networks’ Conference in Brazil conducting miniSASS in the Sao Joao River.

Trainees translate the dichotomous key from English to Swahili with help from the Facilitator, Tanzania.

Dr. Jim Taylor (WESSA) and workshop delegates conducting miniSASS in Mexico City.

North Darfur delegation learning how to conduct miniSASS in Mpophomeni, KwaZulu-Natal.
miniSASS is starting to reach the international community. This growth has made it necessary to make miniSASS more accessible and easily understood, both locally and internationally. English, French and Zulu are amongst the 10 most spoken languages in Africa, while English and French are among the most spoken globally. Until recently, the new miniSASS pamphlet has only been available in English. The good news is we have managed to translate the pamphlet into isiZulu, French and Afrikaans. The Water Explorer programme, based in France and Switzerland have found the French translation very useful in their work. The French and Afrikaans pamphlets will be available to download for free on our website soon, the isiZulu translation is currently under review and will be made available as soon as the review is complete!
Healthy rivers = Healthy society!

The message on Mandela Day in 2016, from a water perspective, was to emphasize keeping rivers clear of solid waste, allowing river to fulfil their ecosystem functioning and support healthy societies. Several corporates, NGOs, government agencies, consulting firms and communities joined forces to spread the message to the general public. miniSASS, as well as other water related citizen science tools were at the forefront of these collaborations, educating people on how clean rivers support life!!!
Amanzimtoti Primary School learners with their homemade miniSASS equipment before the miniSASS fun begins.

Friends of the Faerie Glen Nature Reserve and Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum identifying macroinvertebrates found in their sample to determine the state of Moreletaspruit. This was also an opportunity to educate students and local residents about river health!

The UKZN (PMB) IAIAsa group along with their younger siblings learning about miniSASS together.

Fields College Environmental Club in Rustenburg conducted a miniSASS assessment of the Dorpspruit River on the boundary of the school grounds.
Upcoming events

There are currently no upcoming events.
If you know of any event that may benefit the miniSASS community, please share the details with us info@minisass.org

Do you want us to feature your miniSASS story? We would like that too, so send your interesting story to info@minisass.org

Contact Us:

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To order miniSASS field kits, Clarity Tube and TVHR send an email to: info@minisass.org

This illustrated field guide contains information about miniSASS as well as descriptions and images of the miniSASS nuns.