Hydrology and Earth System Sciences

Discussions

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Interactive comment on "Monitoring surface water quality using social media in the context of citizen science" *by* Hang Zheng et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

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This is an interesting paper that addresses the question of using crow sourcing to obtain water quality reports and thereby identify pollution issues. The paper implements a platform on on We-Chat in China. It is generall well written (there are suggested wording changes in the marked up manuscript).

I found the introduction to be well written but there was little discussion of the many exisiting citizen science water quality programs. A quick scopus search revealed a number of papers with title that appear relevant. This context and the learning from those studies would need to be integrated in here.

While the ideas are sound, there is little evaluation data. The quality of reports is assessed using a small group of contributors with water quality expertise specifically recruited to the project and with experience of the site they were making reports from.

A wider group of reporters is also discussed but the quality of their reports can't be validated. I think this evaluation needs to be extended somehow, and in particular the reporting by general untrained users would need to be evaluated for this to be a publishable paper. I would encourage the authors to pursue that option as the platform and approach seems like a sound idea - but it needs better evaluation.

I have incldued a range of more detailed comments to help the authors improve their manuscript in the marked up version of the paper.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:
http://www.hydrol-earth-syst-sci-discuss.net/hess-2016-359/hess-2016-359-RC2-supplement.pdf

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., doi:10.5194/hess-2016-359, 2016.