



The foreword in the March 2025 WUR Alumni News is provided by Rens Buchwaldt, Wageningen University & Research's Executive Board Member

'WUR sets compass for the future with fewer available resources'

Dear alumna, alumnus,

As spring brings its first warm days, with the occasional winter chill in the nights, the campus is coming back to life as it were. The sun is giving us extra energy, if only through the many solar panels on the roofs of our buildings in Wageningen and our locations elsewhere in the country.

During our Dies Natalis at the beginning of March, we presented our new Strategic Plan: '[Shape responsible change](#)', with which we set our compass for the future and continue to fulfil our mission 'To explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life'. The [Dies](#) focused on the role that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can play in this, and we heard from three young scientists how AI is already influencing their work.

Unfortunately, it is not all sunshine and we see dark clouds gathering in the world, in Europe and in the Netherlands. Academia and scientific research are under pressure. In the US, crucial research programmes that often take years to complete are under threat and university funding is being tied to improper conditions or even withdrawn.

In the Netherlands, political choices are being made that affect the funding of education and science. And this while the need for WUR's work in our domain, in the Netherlands, in Europe and the rest of the world, is greater than ever. We at WUR are resisting these political decisions and trying to change politicians' minds. At the same time, we must be realistic and anticipate the consequences for our university and for Wageningen Research.

We are facing cuts of around 80 million euros per year. Fortunately, not all of these cuts will be implemented immediately and we are in a solid financial position, so we can take our time to make balanced decisions on how to deal with these cuts. We want to have adjusted our operating and cost base to these cuts by the end of 2027.

The challenge for this year is not an easy one: we must set and maintain our course and ensure that we can do with fewer available resources. I have every confidence that we will succeed in the Wageningen way, and look forward to the sun that is undoubtedly hiding behind those dark clouds.

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