



The foreword in the September 2024 WUR Alumni News is provided by Rens Buchwaldt, Wageningen University & Research's Executive Board member

What does Budget Day 2024 (Prinsjesdag) mean for WUR?

Dear alumna, alumnus,

The demand for our knowledge and graduates remains high. They are essential to tackle the challenges in our field. In our role, we can contribute to achieving the necessary transitions globally, in Europe, and the Netherlands, and the urgency to do so is increasing. In this edition of the Alumni News, you can read examples: the water theme at the Opening Academic Year, our role in research on marine pollution, the courses for professionals, and the places where our alumni end up after their time in Wageningen.

On the other hand, other political ambitions and societal challenges are reducing the Dutch government's willingness to spend money on our themes and our role in them – and that of universities in general – in the coming years. After presenting the outline agreement and the coalition programme, the Schoof-cabinet presented the Budget Memorandum on Budget Day. Its content clarified the financial impact universities, including Wageningen Research, will face in the coming years. However, little is concrete, as the planning agencies have also concluded.

In the coming years, our organisation can expect around 10-15% less income, meaning that WUR will have at least €80 million less to spend annually over several years. Continuing to do the same with fewer resources is, of course, not possible. So how will WUR deal with this new financial challenge?

€80 Million less in income means we must cut back our spending. Over the past five years, we have grown by more than 30%. Over that period, we have strengthened our financial position, allowing us some time to respond to these financial developments. But even then, we will have to choose what we will and will not do, and we need to start working on that now. We will take on this challenge with our Strategic Plan as our guide.

[Rens L.A.C. Buchwaldt, MBA](#)