



STUDENTS  
ORGANIZING FOR  
SUSTAINABILITY  
INTERNATIONAL

**green**impact



**WAGENINGEN**  
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH



# Green Impact at Wageningen University & Research

5th edition

**2021 - 2022**

**Impact Report**

# Green Impact in a nutshell

Wageningen University & Research is a **Green Impact partner**. Green Impact is a **change and engagement program** that helps people to understand sustainability in the workplace. It encourages staff and students to work in teams and take **concrete actions** around **socio-economic and environmental issues** in their office, lab and home (working) environment.

Green Impact was developed by the National Union of Students (NUS) in the United Kingdom **in 2006**. Since then, the program has been a massive success and has spread across **the UK** (delivered by SOS-UK), as well as to **Australia and New Zealand** (delivered by ACTS), **and Belgium, the Netherlands and France** (delivered by SOS International). In 2016, it was recognized with the **UNESCO-Japan Prize** on Education for Sustainable Development.

In 2021, **1003 teams** from **455 organizations** participated in Green Impact, realizing **25.547 actions** and involving **59.126 staff and 740 students**. Wageningen University & Research ran Green Impact for the **fifth time**. We are grateful for the energy, motivation and time participants and organizers have put into the program, and of course we are proud of what we have achieved together!

## Collective achievements of all Green Impact teams at WUR in 2021-2022

**30** changemakers registered in **6** teams...



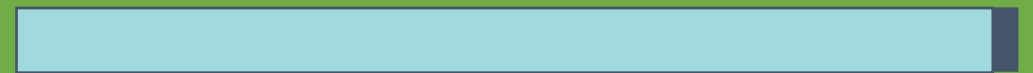
of which **27** active participants in **4** teams ...



implemented **186** toolkit actions, including...



**180** actions (=97%) as the direct result of Green Impact.



The teams won...

**2** silver awards and **2** gold awards. Congratulations!



**green impact**

**WUR**  
**2021-2022**  
*Fifth edition*

teams implemented  
**186** actions, or  
an average of **47**  
actions per team



**CIRCULAR PLASTICS**  
WINNER PRESENTS AT CIRCULAR@WUR CONFERENCE!

29/10/2021-30/10/2021  
**HACKATHON**

MAKE WAGENINGEN PLASTICS CIRCULAR

starthubwageningen.nl

UNIPLASTIC FabLab KADANS

green impact Witteveen Bos PLASTIC PLAYGROUNDS

**96** out of **160**  
available toolkit  
actions (or **60%**)  
were done by at least  
1 team



all teams ran at  
least **1** big  
project

all teams came up  
with and implemented  
**16** own actions on  
diverse topics



almost all actions  
(**97%**) were done  
as part of the team's  
engagement with the  
Green Impact  
program

**27** people in **4**  
teams were  
audited this  
edition

**7** students joined  
a team as Green  
Impact Project  
Assistant (GIPA)

Green lab initiatives across The Netherlands

**Green Labs NL**  
November 2nd  
15:00-17:00

Hear from fellow scientists across The Netherlands about their green lab initiatives

Institute Green Teams  
Green Lab Initiative Amsterdam UMC  
Green Lab Initiative Biomedical Research Erasmus MC  
Makina Green UvA  
Green Impact AFSG Wageningen University Research  
Green Lab Initiative Radboud UMC

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"circularity" was the  
most popular topic,  
with **18** actions  
done across all  
audited teams



Billie cup available on 22nd of April at ESG

Millions of disposable cups every day. They are not getting recycled.

The future is circular, welcome to our circle!

Safe the trees. We don't have to cut them down to make cups.

Share it. Deposit systems work, waste sucks.

Dump single-use. Reuse is the way to go.

Be part of the solution We've made it so easy.

**green impact**



**8** students were  
trained and  
conducted an  
audit in pairs

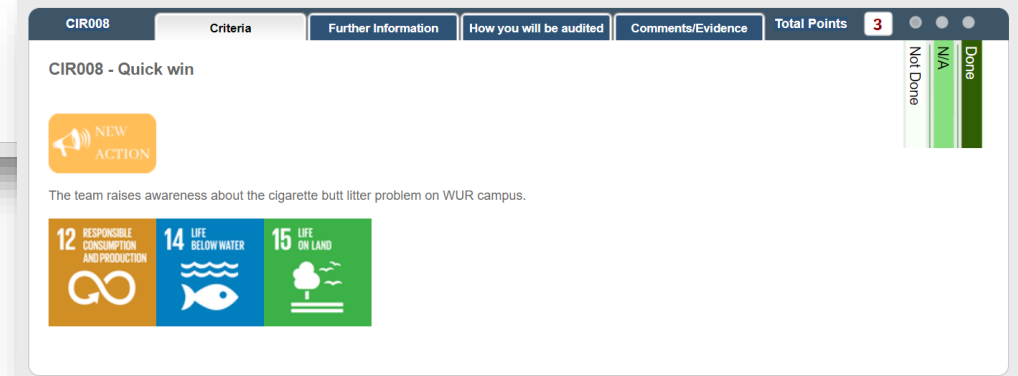
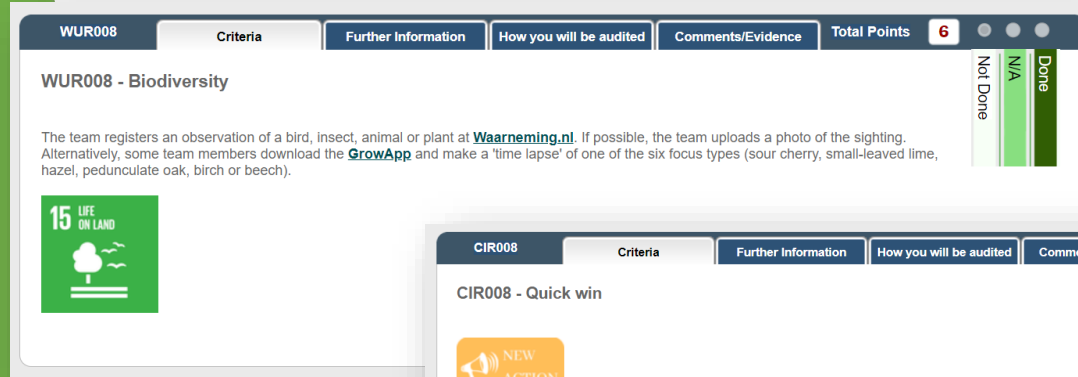


Green Impact encourages staff and students to co-create a sustainable environment and lifestyle.

The program fosters awareness and behavioral change in the workplace, on campus and at home.

# Impact teams at WUR in action

The online toolkit offered participants **160 concrete actions, to be implemented** in the **work and study place, in the lab, and at home**. Actions were organized according to topic: **WUR priorities (biodiversity, climate change & adaptation, education), Society & Wellbeing, Procurement, Mobility, Circularity, Food & Drinks, Energy & Water and Collaboration**. Every category featured own actions, quick wins and high impact actions. Teams were also invited to run their own **project**, for which the toolkit provide a guideline. All actions were labeled with Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**).



# Green Impact supports sustainable change

- WUR took part for the **fifth time**. The same **four teams** from last edition continued. Two more teams have been active previously but did not participate in the program this time. Inactive users from 13 other teams were automatically removed this year to comply with GDPR requirements. Over the course of **five years, 19 teams and an estimate of 100 people** took part in Green Impact.
- **186 toolkit actions** were implemented, fewer compared to last year (204). However, with one more own action (16 in total) and one more project (5 in total), teams were more **proactive** in their approach. Over 5 editions, WUR teams implemented **726 actions**.
- Teams are organized per building. Based on WUR's employment and enrolment numbers, Green Impact teams' activities potentially reached **1200 staff and students**.
- **16 students** were closely involved, developing important professional skills in the process:
  - **1 student** was one of the organizers in her role as the Green Office's Community Coordinator
  - **7 students** engaged themselves as **Green Impact Project Assistants (GIPA)** for at least 3 months. In this volunteer position, they joined the teams as full-fledged members. GIPAs received a [digital badge](#).
  - **8 students** were trained as student auditors and conducted an audit in pairs. They received a [digital badge](#) as well.
- Teams implemented actions from all categories. The most **popular topic** was **"Circularity"**, with 18 actions done in that category. Least popular were "Procurement" and "Energy & Water".
- The bilingual toolkit offered **17 new actions**, based on own actions the teams designed and implemented in the last edition, and new initiatives at WUR. 9 actions could be adapted for the **home environment**.
- WUR teams excel in **long-term projects, team work and collaboration** with multiple stakeholders within and outside of the university. The **monthly workshops and exchange sessions** we organized were well attended, and a source of inspiration.



# Green Impact projects at WUR

## The Three Sisters Sowing Challenge by Team Actio(n)

**The idea:** A WUR-wide challenge for people to grow vegetables at home. Participants can win a prize.

**The aim:** With this challenge, the team encourages colleagues to grow their own food, facilitates learning about sustainable techniques, and engages the WUR community hands-on.

**The approach:** In the last edition, team Actio(n) organized a tomato and pumpkin challenge. This edition, they introduced the Three Sisters Method: an agricultural technique dating back to pre-Columbian times in North America. Corn, bean and squash are cultivated together because they protect and nourish each other. For those with less space at home, the team provided an alternative: tomatoes, basil and Indian cress.

**The implementation:** The team promoted the initiative on the Intranet and via leaflets. Interested colleagues were asked to sign up. Based on the response, they ordered an adequate amount of organic seeds. Earlier, a budget to purchase the seeds and prizes was granted by the supervisor. Participants could pick up the seeds and instructions in April, and get started at home.

**The results:** 21 people signed up for the challenge. The audits took place before the end of this challenge, which means that results are yet to be reported. The goal is that most participants succeed in growing their vegetables and keeping the plants alive for the duration of the project. The team did evaluate the previous sowing challenge at the end of 2021 and found that it did draw quite some attention from colleagues. It is largely due to this success, that they decided to repeat the project.



### De drie zusters



De indianen planten hun maïs, bonen en pompoen in één veld. Eerst wordt de maïs aangeplant in aardehoopjes van 30 cm hoog en een diameter van 50 cm. In sommige gebieden werd er aan deze aardehoopjes ook rotte vis toegevoegd als extra voeding voor de bodem.

Wanneer de maïs 15 cm hoog gegroeid is, zaait men de bonen en de pompoen uit, afwisselend van maïsplant tot maïsplant.

De drie gewassen bevoordelen elkaar. De maïs geeft hierbij steun aan de bonen. De pompoen kruip over de grond en weert daardoor onkruid. Doordat de pompoen niet plat tegen de grond ligt creëert ze een microklimaat dat meer vocht vasthoudt. De bonen brengen nitraat in de grond dat de maïs en pompoen uit de grond halen.

(Bron: Wikipedia)



# Green Impact projects at WUR

## The Plastic Pilot by Team AFSG

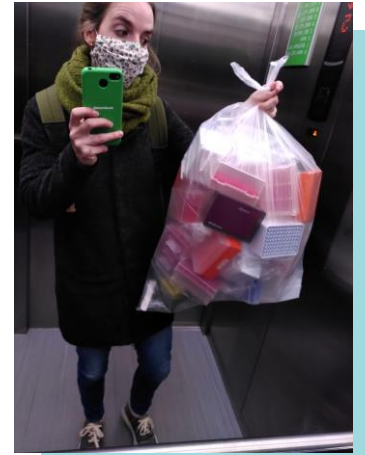
**The idea:** How to make smarter use of plastic waste within WUR?

**The aim:** Give non-contaminated plastic waste a second life, and raise awareness of plastics wasted in labs.

**The approach:** In Spring 2021, the team started to collect plastics in waste bins of the laboratory of Microbiology, in order to get an insight in how much plastic was wasted and what portion of it was useful for recycling. It was estimated that 6 to 8 kg of plastics is discarded on a weekly basis in 1 lab. 50% of these materials can be recycled. In the follow-up of this project in 2021-2022, the AFSG team did not only look for products for which the clean plastic could be used, but tried to implement the 7Rs on all plastic waste within AFSG: reduce, recycle, reuse, refuse, repair, refine and repurpose. The team presented the Plastic Pilot as a topic for student pitches during the Hackathon.

**The implementation:** Clean plastic waste is separately collected in the lab, stored by Ecosmart and picked up weekly by Uniplastic, who sorts the plastics based on type and color. Uniplastic is a day care activity for mentally challenged people. Recycling plastic waste (i.e. collecting, cleaning, sorting, shredding and melting) is one of their core activities. To realize this project, the team works closely together with co-workers, managing staff, technicians, cleaning personnel and affiliated companies such as the above. Currently, they are investigating for which useful objects to repurpose the plastic waste. An option is to print 3D materials for labs.

**The results:** The pilot is still ongoing. Due to its complex nature, the team is regularly meeting with stakeholders to be able to make well-informed decisions. From September 2022 onwards, they want a thesis student to conduct in-depth research on the topic of plastic waste in labs.





# Green Impact projects at WUR

## Sustainability Bingo by SSG Green Team

**The idea:** A bingo game to energize the WUR community on the topic of sustainability in a fun way.

**The aim:** Raise awareness, while at the same time make sustainability a fun game. The goal is that people look around in their environment in a playful way and find already sustainable things that they can further improve.

**The approach:** One member had the initial idea of a Bingo card. She reached out to a colleague, who designed the card. The bingo is meant to be an online initiative, with no need for equipment. Individuals as well as teams can participate. Whoever submits a picture for each of the 12 items on the bingo card first, wins a prize. There was also a prize for the most creative bingo card.

**The implementation:** The full team discussed the Bingo card in multiple meetings, always changing and improving the titles/actions on the card. At the "showcasing initiatives" exchange session, other Green Impact teams gave valuable input to further improve the card. Two members wrote the instructions and promotion texts and had it revised by the CSR policy officer. The Bingo card was published in May 2021 on the Green Impact Microsoft Teams channel alongside detailed instructions. It was also published on the Intranet. The SSG department provided a budget for prizes. The team recruited WUR's energy coordinator and the Green Office Manager as an independent jury.

**The results:** The final winners were announced in June 2021 and received shopping bags made from recycled banners. The AFSG Team was the quickest to fill out the bingo card. They showcased their achievements of the last year. Team Actio(n) won a prize for the most creative card. They took a more individual approach and divided the different items among their team members.







# Green Impact projects at WUR

## The Butt in the Drain by Team Green ESG



**The idea:** Since WUR implemented a smoke-free campus policy in July 2020, cigarette butt litter has increased. How to tackle this unwanted side-effect?

**The aim:** The project focuses mainly on raising awareness among smokers about the correct disposal of cigarette butts, while at the same time investigating structural solutions for the prevention and clean-up of this type of litter.

**The approach:** In May 2021 “litter scavenger” Marjolijn collected 8,591 cigarette butts in three weeks. All butts were logged with the app Litterati, which allowed her to map hotspots. The distribution pattern suggests that smokers are aware of the smoking ban but find hidden spots to smoke and discard of their cigarette butts on the grounds or in the drain.

**The implementation:** Marjolijn wrote a report about her findings, in collaboration with WUR researchers. This started a discussion on this topic within the Green Impact network. Thus far, the team has created visuals highlighting the negative consequences of cigarette butts in nature, and the effects on human health. They also handed out portable ashtrays (“peukenpockets”) on No Tobacco Day (May 31<sup>st</sup>). The next step is to create a project team with employees and students, including smokers, to tackle this issue.

**The results:** As the project is progressing, the team seeks to continue the monitoring of hotspots. If cigarette butt litter increases even further, they will suggest a change in the smoke-free policy, such as providing special bins at these hotspots.



# Congratulations to all participants!



This fifth edition of Green Impact at Wageningen University & Research resulted again in **impressive teamwork, inspiring projects** and **a high level of engagement**. We are happy to see the teams take sustainability to the next level in their work and study environment, and activate other staff and students along the way.

Green Impact at Wageningen University & Research was organized by Erna Maters, CSR policy officer at WUR and Clara Tassinari Alves, community manager at Green Office Wageningen. The program was delivered by Ann-Sofie Van Enis, program manager at Students Organizing for Sustainability International.

Want to know more about Green Impact? Feel free to reach out.



[annsofie@sos.earth](mailto:annsofie@sos.earth)  
[www.sos.earth](http://www.sos.earth)  
@sos\_dot\_earth  
@sos.dot.earth



[greenimpact@wur.nl](mailto:greenimpact@wur.nl)  
[www.wur.nl](http://www.wur.nl)  
@uniwageningen  
@WUR



[greenoffice@wur.nl](mailto:greenoffice@wur.nl)  
[www.greenofficewageningen.nl](http://www.greenofficewageningen.nl)  
@greenofficewageningen