

# **Green Lab Practices in the Netherlands – From Local Grassroots Initiatives to a National Ambition** (Dr. Thomas Freese)

## **1. Origin: Grassroots in Groningen**

Green Lab initiatives in the Netherlands **initially emerged bottom-up**:

- Researchers identified environmental hotspots in everyday laboratory practice.
- At the University of Groningen, laboratory energy, water, and waste data were systematically assessed.
- Measures such as freezer management, waste separation, and ventilation optimization resulted in measurable impacts.

These local activities formed the foundation for institutional programs and national networking.

## **2. From Local to National: Green Labs NL**

**Green Labs NL** is now the national platform for sustainable laboratory practices in the Netherlands

### **Goals:**

- Accelerating the transition toward sustainable laboratories
- Supporting local Green Teams
- National coordination and international exchange

### **Activities:**

- Knowledge platform (resources, guidelines, data) and community networking
- National projects (e.g. Freezer Challenge, Green Science Festival)
- Integration into European networks and contribution to funding policies and subsidy frameworks (policy making)

## **3. Success Factors**

- Making sustainable options easy and practical to adopt
- Working through examples and support rather than enforcement
- Actively involving researchers (co-creation)
- Making progress visible and celebrating achievements
- Institutional backing and commitment from leadership

## **4. Conclusion**

What started in cities such as Groningen has developed into a national ambition:

- Sustainable laboratories are no longer a niche topic
- Bottom-up engagement combined with top-down support enables systemic change

**Green Labs are a key enabler of credible, future-oriented science.**