

Green Office Wageningen

Learning – Linking – Innovating

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Inspired by: Green Office Maastricht

Executive Summary

Green Office Wageningen (GOW) is an organisation, ran by students, aiming to further sustainability at Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR). The GOW will be a central actor in the sustainability network of the WUR, and will support individuals and organisations by connecting them to other stakeholders within the network. The GOW will have four main functions.

The important function of the GOW is being a liaison office connecting the facility departments on the one hand and the research and education departments on the other hand. This offers for example the facility department the advantage that expertise and knowledge can be acquired easily. The second function of the GOW is to create a WUR wide support platform for the exchange of information and to connect stakeholders with interests in sustainability. This is not limited to organisations that are operating in Wageningen. Thirdly, the GOW aims to facilitate the realization of ideas and initiatives regarding sustainability at WUR and wants to support existing projects related to this field. Lastly, the GOW tries to promote a cultural change and to reinforce the sustainability strategy at WUR.

Particular attention has been paid to the embedding of the GOW in existing structures. For the GOW, it is important to draw upon the knowledge of the Taskforce Sustainability which will be disbanded at the end of 2012. Another important institution is the Science Shop. The GOW can benefit from its experience and connections. In the end, sustainability questions from parties within WUR could be addressed through Academic Consultancy Training, theses, internships or as part of a course. The GOW is being supported by the student council and the Wageningen Environmental Platform. It has to be seen whether the GOW functions best if it is legally owned by the Centre for Sustainable Development & Food security or under the Facilities and Services/Education & Research departments.

Regarding the launch of the GOW, it is important to position it as a unique organisation offering different benefits to a great variety of stakeholders, and to make students and staff aware of its existence and its benefits in a variety of ways. Moreover, it is vital that the GOW gets an office that is easily accessible. A plan to get the GOW started is presented. In the beginning the focus will be on the linkage between the facilities department and research and education. In the end the GO will employ several students for at around eight hours per week and a university employee will be involved to anchor knowledge and experience in the organisation.

Description of the organization

History of the organization

In 2011 the Taskforce Sustainability has been established to empower changes for sustainability at Wageningen University and Research centre (further Wageningen UR). One of the long term objectives was to set up a structure that would stimulate and coordinate the cooperation between research, education and Wageningen UR's facility services. A diverse and interdisciplinary group of committed Wageningen UR students has in consultation with the Taskforce Sustainability decided to issue this proposal for setting up the Green Office Wageningen (further GOW). This concept finds its inspiration in the Green Office of the University of Maastricht¹, which has been chosen among several concepts from different universities in the Netherlands.

This business plan is the first proposal for the GOW. It is a product of the cooperation of the Student Council of Wageningen UR, the Wageningen Environmental Platform (WEP), the Green Office of the University of Maastricht and the Taskforce Sustainability. One of the staff members from the Education and Competence Studies chair group (ECS) facilitated the process as a coach. The target of the GOW in 2012 will be to involve multiple students and staff members to develop the concept for the establishment of a Green Office. This Green Office initiative will start in February 2012 by raising support among students and within the organisation. The GOW initiative is very ambitious as its role as a liaison office requires the commitment of various stakeholders. It should therefore be a priority of the initiative to align different interests by involving students, teachers, research institutes and staff members in the conceptual planning of the GOW. The GOW initiators believe this to be realizable through an open and constructive dialog which creates a sense of ownership. Until September 2012 the GOW initiators will carry out pilot projects, for which the proposals will predominantly be delivered by the Taskforce Sustainability. These pilot projects can be used as examples to show the benefits of the GOW and of course to develop experience for this young organisation.

Mission, Vision and Philosophy

It is the mission of the GOW to coordinate and incubate sustainability within and around Wageningen UR. The vision of the GOW is to achieve higher sustainability standards and to reinforce the efforts dedicated to sustainability at Wageningen UR by including these in a well-coordinated, on-going process of change towards sustainability, which would expectantly become self-propelling.

Given the many programs and specializations within the university that focus on sustainability, there is a large problem-solving capacity within the organization for issues related to sustainability. The GOW believes that a more sustainable Wageningen UR can be

¹ More information on the Green Office Maastricht and their projects can be found at www.greenofficemaastricht.nl

realised through linking knowledge and research expertise present at the University and Van Hall Larenstein (VHL) to practical issues with respect to learning objectives (education) and operational needs (facility services).

The GOW commits to a broad approach to sustainability including environmental, social, cultural, health and economical aspects and the efficient application of academic knowledge. The philosophy underlying the activities of the GOW is to be linked with the idea of knowledge valorisation (academic work that is relevant for practical applications regarding sustainability) and knowledge co-creation (input of the community of students and staff for academic research and education).

Strategy

The GOW intends to meet its vision and mission, by focusing on four main functions:

- First: to provide a linkage for sustainability questions within the operations department and research and education.
- Second: to create a Wageningen UR wide support platform (including VHL) for the exchange of information, and to connect stakeholders with interests in sustainability.
- Third: to facilitate the realization of ideas and initiatives and to support existing projects related to sustainability.
- Fourth: to promote cultural change and a reinforced sustainability strategy at an institutional level of Wageningen University and VHL.

Operational Goals

While being a liaison office as well as an incubator, the GOW provides a number of services which all have the aim to increase sustainability standards within or around Wageningen UR. Through the combination of its function as a liaison office and its central position in Wageningen's sustainability network, the GOW supports individuals and organizations that provide services to other stakeholders within the network. As an example, GOW could support various forms of student initiatives, which work on sustainability projects concerning Wageningen UR. In Maastricht, the Green Office successfully implemented the Control-Alt-Delete-Emissions project, initiated by national organisation Studenten voor Morgen (Students for tomorrow). Moreover, a climate action report has been compiled and the Green Office is cooperating with other organisations in the organisation of activities. The GOW could take part in similar projects, adapted to the specific needs and constraints of Wageningen UR. The incubator approach will create a dynamic process in the community of Wageningen UR as barriers for ambitious organizations and individuals in this field are reduced. Through its function as a liaison office, the network structures that are needed for such a dynamic process are established. While being a meeting point of the various interests embedded in all those organizations it embraces, the GOW offers the unique possibility of combining the stability deriving from an institutionalized organizational structure and a permanent place on the one hand with the enthusiasm and innovative potential of rotating student generations on the other hand.

The central functions of the GOW can be subdivided in three main categories. The first function of the GOW is to support services that will be delivered by the front door office.

Consulting services and other support is given to students and projects that create some form of value in the field of sustainability for the university and its community. The second central function of the GOW consists of activities that are initiated and executed by the GOW itself, in support to its general functioning, and as a foundation of all other activities of the first and third central role. The third central function includes for a part the role that the Taskforce Sustainability is fulfilling currently. It entails the general sustainability transformation of the University itself with a technical and organizational focus. This would include the translation of the University's knowledge and research subjects into practice at the university. All these efforts combined will allow the GOW to operate as an incubator, creating a vibrant and dynamic environment for sustainability. It also demonstrates the interlinked effectiveness of the different roles of the GOW, because a more sustainable University can only be achieved through all three roles, which are all supported by one and another.

Operational functions

1. Liaison and support for students, student organisations, and university employees:

- Using the Green Office network to link project owners with relevant stakeholders. Special attention will be paid to connecting questions within the facility departments to research and education and the other way around, to facilitate researchers and students with ideas by bringing them into contact with the relevant people within the facilities department. For the facility department this means that expertise and knowledge on sustainability topics can be acquired easily.
- Sharing best practices amongst organizations within Wageningen University-VHL and with external organizations like the Green Office in Maastricht and the projects that it cooperates with.
- Establish continuous communication channels with projects in order to build a comprehensive and updated knowledge base about all ongoing initiatives through the use of the database.
- Inform interested students about various sustainability projects, from activities to actions being done by the facilities department, in Wageningen and encourage students to actively participate in them by making these projects known and accessible through the establishment of an online database.
- Meet project leaders in order to consult, share practices and coordinate efforts of different projects.
- Stay in contact with other organizations committed to sustainability at universities regarding their projects and their successes and failures.
- Create access to information for all issues concerning sustainability through the use of the website, a newsletter and the announcement of events.
- Encourage students to make a difference by actively contributing to environmental projects. Facilitate the cooperation amongst students, projects and university by organizing workshops and meetings.
- Advising students and initiatives how to have a maximum impact with their projects.
- Facilitate starting projects and initiatives by helping projects to obtain funding and to provide the skills of the Green Office team to projects if necessary and feasible. Achieve this through cooperation with other organizations, such as WEP, SIFE to bundle our expertise for an effective project guide and track.

2. In-house activities

- Seek opportunities to achieve the sustainability standards of Wageningen UR faster
- Investigate what kind of approach is suitable to assess the integration of sustainability in the education, organization and research at the Wageningen UR. An This could be done in cooperation with the Centre for Sustainable Development & Food Security and VHL, which both have experience with the so called AISHE-approach.
- Organizing an annual conference related to sustainability. The theme(s) for this event could be aligned with specific fields of interest in research and education, in cooperation with the Centre for Sustainable Development & Food Security, and others research schools at the WU-VHL
- Organize networking events for students and University (of applied sciences) employees together with external experts in the field of sustainability.
- Review and promote the Eco-map guide for student that is developed by WEP.
- Reach out to media to arrange publicity for sustainability at Wageningen University (and university of applied science VHL), including material production and distribution by the GOW itself.

3. Managing the University's internal sustainability

- Implement or follow the Wageningen UR policy on sustainability of operations through every task of the GOW.
- Setting and managing the agenda of necessary changes and improvements within the University.
- Direct management of- or close cooperation with projects.
- Project creation
- Continuous evaluation of the university's sustainability situation by publishing progress reports.
- Reflect on the sustainability efforts of the University by offering constructive feedback.

Market Analysis

Existing structures regarding sustainability

Taskforce Sustainability

In 2008 PriceWaterhouseCoopers concluded that sustainability as a theme was very integrated in Research and Education, but not yet in Wageningen UR's business operations. As a result the Executive Board decided that sustainability should become an integral part of Wageningen UR and that this should be visible for the outside world. Short and long term goals were formulated and the Taskforce Sustainability got the task to give sustainability a structural place within the operations

On the short term, the Taskforce Sustainability already facilitated the realisation of more sustainable operations on the following issues. Some examples are:

- For its own use Wageningen UR buys 100% sustainable produced (wind) energy. All the electric energy that is used by whole Wageningen UR is delivered back to the network by its windmill parks in Lelystad.
- Wageningen UR is using less working space, despite the rising number of students. This results in a decrease of gas and water use.
- Wageningen UR is digitalising which resulted in a 28% decrease of the total waste between 2009 and 2011. Moreover, the organic waste of the greenhouses and canteens is now composted internally.
- For the development of new buildings and the maintenance of the existing ones Wageningen UR applies strict sustainability criteria. CO₂ emissions are reduced through ATES-installations at Forum, Radix, Atlas en Orion.

The Taskforce has been put into place in order to speed up the process of making Wageningen UR's operations more sustainable. Its aim has been to bring together existing initiatives and safeguard a sustainable future for Wageningen UR. One of the Taskforce's aims for 2012 is to link Education and Research with Wageningen UR's own facility practices. To realise this goal the GOW could be of main importance.

Through stimulating and monitoring initiatives all over the organisation the Taskforce developed a more structural attention for sustainability. This has resulted in a clear documentation about existing projects, criteria for financing projects and a communication plan which could be used by the GOW as a starting point. During 2012 the Taskforce will be the main commissioner of questions from the operational departments, which will be linked by the GOW to existing knowledge/research results or motivated and skilled students and staff. The close cooperation of the GOW with the taskforce will help to transfer essential knowledge between these two organisations. The Taskforce will be disbanded at the end of 2012 so it is important that the knowledge within the Taskforce will be incorporated within the GOW. From 2013 onwards continuation of this cooperation could be guaranteed by giving one of the Taskforce members a seat in the advisory board of the GOW.

Wageningen Environmental Platform (WEP)

WEP is an organisation of students that aims to make the university and its students behave in a more sustainable way. WEP is part of the student union and student council party PULSE. WEP is actively involved in the establishment of the GOW. WEP could be one of the most important partners for the GOW, especially with regard to activities aimed at the students.

Recently, important projects of WEP have been mostly focused at the student community. In April 2011 a new version of the ECO-map was released. This is a map that shows all shops in Wageningen and surrounding that sell organically or locally produced goods, fair-trade products or products that are in another way sustainable. Moreover, attention has been paid to beer in the beer week. At the moment, an action to point students (and staff) at the waste of plastic cups is in preparation.

WEP also has experience as a research commissioner, which will be an essential component of the GOW's work. In 2010 they commissioned an ACT group to find out... Together with Studenten voor Morgen.

Science Shop

The Science Shop is one of the major links between society and research executed at Wageningen UR. Every organisation, action group or association with a research question or problem, but without funding to solve the problem independently, can contact the Science shop. The only condition is that the question or problem should be related to the domain of Wageningen UR. According to the Science Shop sustainability is an important theme within Wageningen domain. The role of the Science Shop is to link the organisation, action group or association to the right researcher of Wageningen UR. The Science Shop also helps with the formulation of a research proposal.

The GOW could use the Science Shop as an example and learn from its experience in linking the knowledge and research capacity of Wageningen UR to problems concerning sustainability. The GOW would thereby not take over the function of the Science Shop as it is very specialised on sustainability issues and focuses on problems/questions that are rooted in our own organisation. After a first orientating meeting with the coordinator of the Science Shop it is clear that the GOW can learn and partly take over the network approach of the Science Shop. The coordinator underscored that the persona aspect is very important for the maintenance of such a network, which confirms the need for creating a stable factor in the GOW, which could be a staff member. From the Science Shop the GOW will be able to collect information about key persons in the organisation with a special interest for sustainability. However this is very useful, the GOW also needs to try to develop new routes for knowledge. Whereas the Science Shop is staff oriented, the GOW will also use existing student structures, like study associations, to reach different people.

ACT, courses, thesis and internships

The Academic Consultancy Training has been developed by Wageningen UR to enhance the abilities of students to function in professional teams, show leadership and apply their academic knowledge in complex contexts where both technical and non-technical arguments and processes should be considered. An ACT team executes an assignments commissioned by external professional organizations – businesses, governmental organizations and NGO's. ACT projects are often acquired by university staff, through their network in external professional organizations. Staff of these organizations will commission the project. Commissioners indicate the mix of expertise they would like within the project team. Commissioners pay for any project costs (10%), not for the hours the students or their supervisory staff (90%). Students can consult staff of Wageningen University about (trans)disciplinary issues and for sparring about the content of their work and best approaches to be followed to get to a final product.

The ACT courses could be used by the GOW as knowledge generators. Problems or questions in the field of business operations could be translated by the GOW into research questions for an ACT group. Through ACT, the GOW would optimally use the consulting capacity of students and get a nuanced and multidisciplinary analysis of the problem and options for improvement. The Science Shop has very positive experiences with using ACT for a problem analysis and had linked the GOW initiators to the ACT coordinators. When these coordinators are gathering projects they regularly ask the Science Shop for input. The GOW will try to develop a similar relationship in order to directly link its data base with questions to the supply of multidisciplinary group.

Besides ACT also regular courses could be used by the GOW. An example from the Taskforce's experience is the case study that was performed on sustainable catering in the course Life Cycle Analyses from the Environmental Systems Analysis Group. In order to find

matching courses the GOW will need to discover which courses offer room for case study analysis with sustainability as a theme. An overview of such courses could be created through contacting students from program committee's and program coordinators at the relevant study programs.

A third very useful way to conduct research questions from the operational department would be through thesis and internships. Yearly thousands of students are looking for a thesis and internship projects and a considerable number of them is interested in sustainability. Whether a thesis or an internship would be more suitable will be discussed with the commissioner and supervisor of the student and depend on the type of work that is requested. If a request extends the limited amount of time a student has, the work could be spread over multiple projects which are executed by different students. In order to get an overview of the demands from the University's sight (academic level, intensity, supervision, etc) the GOW will contact thesis/internship coordinators throughout the university, to start with Environmental Sciences.

Student and study associations

Wageningen UR is characterized by a rich landscape of student and study associations. This shows that students in Wageningen take initiative and are very motivated to work for what they find important. The GOW is not supposed to be one among the other organisations, but rather be a formal part of Wageningen UR as an institution. It will be embedded within the structure of the organisation and the future GOW employees should be motivated by a personal interest for sustainability. It would nevertheless be a pity to ignore the existing social network, because the GOW could use them in order to find enthusiastic people who can carry out research and education projects. The GOW already works on its connection to the network by incorporating the Student Council and WEP in the starting up process. These are organisations which both have a big supporters group and affinity with sustainability.

Legal status and ownership

The positioning of the GOW within Wageningen UR and its legal status will need to be investigated during the start-up phase. The GOW aims at bringing together stakeholders from all over the organisation so that existing knowledge and experience can be linked to concrete sustainability-related problems. The GOW will facilitate the contact between different departments and different science groups, which request a central and accessible position in the organisation structure. Until 2013 the GOW can be a formal part of the Taskforce Sustainability. Thereafter experience has to teach whether the GOW could be functioning under the Centre for Sustainable Development & Food Security or under the Facilities and Services/Education & Research departments, concerning its legal ownership

Benefits provided by the Green Office

The GOW shall thus function as a meeting and information point for Wageningen UR's employees, students and visitors who are concerned with sustainability at Wageningen UR through a physical as well as an online representation. Thereby, the continuity and longevity of student initiatives can be fostered and collaboration between university bodies and

external partners can be facilitated, while maintaining institutional responsibilities. More specifically, the GOW would:

For the Wageningen UR

- Contribute to the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Wageningen UR sustainability strategy, related projects and initiatives.
- Stimulate and facilitate cross-disciplinary sustainability research projects.
- Contribute to sustainability education by giving feedback on existing course concepts as well as by providing additional ideas and contacts with experts .
- Facilitate the organization of debates, conferences and seminars concerning sustainability.
- Provide a contact point for environmental organizations from Wageningen and elsewhere (Studenten voor Morgen, other universities and universities of applied science).

For Students

- Give students the opportunity to combine theory and practice by promoting and facilitating student engagement in the field of sustainability.
- Advice and support existing organizations regarding funding and administration.
- Support new organizations and initiatives in their formative stages.
- Create a bridge between different generations of socially and environmentally engaged students, improving longevity and continuity of student initiatives.
- Offer support to students, interested in and participating in courses regarding sustainability.

For Wageningen UR and Students

- Attach student initiatives to the university, creating mutually beneficial relationships while maintaining institutional independence.
- Reduce transaction costs in the search and distribution of information for university and students, by using each other's knowledge.
- Provide a facility for student initiatives and university employees to meet, exchange ideas and collaborate.
- Maintain a sustainability documentation repository for theses, thesis proposals, internship reports, and other academic documents relating to sustainability, possibly in cooperation with the library or an online platform like 'Plado' or Gaia Space.
- Improve the reputation of Wageningen UR and its graduates/alumni.

Marketing Plan

Marketing plan

In Wageningen there are various organizations lead by students or university staff but it is only a few that are well known to students. The GOW has to build up its image and separate from the crowd, establishing itself as a unique platform with important benefits to a variety

of stakeholders. The GOW is an organization with a sustainability cause and with many stakeholders from inside and outside the university involved in it. For this reason it should be promoted in a way that would make its benefits well known to all the stakeholders. Although the Green Office is focused on students involved in their studies, for example by connecting them to a thesis opportunity or an ACT project, it is important to think of its name in the same pool as the names of other organizations. From a branding point of view, it is the name that has to be known by students, and has to stand out. Before categorizing and promoting the benefits of the GOW, the idea of its existence has to be spread out. In the promotional activities the GOW has to stand out to students and teachers as a part of the university and it has to differentiate itself from all other organizations led by students. The aim of connecting stakeholders inside Wageningen UR is unique and the benefits of the GOW are not provided by any other organization in Wageningen. These points should stand out in the promotional activities to make GOW a popular organization where the different stakeholders voluntarily come together.

Location

A place for the GOW on the campus is mandatory. As students are the ones working on the projects offered by the Green Office or even the initiators of their own projects, a location with maximum visibility to them is of fundamental importance. University staff has easy access to buildings like Radix or the non-educational parts of Leeuwenborch, but students very rarely or not at all, visit buildings of the university staff. An example from Wageningen, of an organization which offered benefits for students, is the Future Point. It used to have its office at the ground floor of the Forum, right near the reception desk, and thus it made itself known to all students of Wageningen University. This was until this academic year, 2011-2012, when the office was closed and as a result a lot of “freshmen” students are not aware of the existence of the Future Point.

Online

1. Website

It is obvious that also a virtual presence of the GOW has to be set up. A website that is frequently updated is the simplest way for a diverse group of actors to interact. Either related to the “WUR” website or not, the GOW website should be promoted on the University’s website.

2. Social media

Students are active on Facebook and the Wageningen University Facebook page has over 2500 members. Updates on the offers of the GOW should be posted on this page regularly, like the updates on some “Resource” articles that are already promoted in this way.

3. E-mail

In the launching phase of the GOW, university staff should be updated on its existence by email. This would be one of the few opportunities to announce the GOW to the staff.

4. Intranet

As this platform provides information for all the people with a Wageningen UR account (students, employees, teacher), it is a main access point to all the developments of GOW. The advantage is that all the new actions and projects can be posted as news on the intranet, attracting the interested people on each of them.

Direct promotion

Both bachelor and master programmes have a number of information evenings throughout the year. These evenings are organized by the study advisors and involve a number of presentations and discussions. The purpose is to help students in choosing their thesis subject, finding an internship or in other study related future activities. AIESEC is one of the organizations that is present at the information evenings of various master programmes. It is a perfect example to follow, as the GOW could also present its projects to students in this way.

A different way to spread information about the GOW externally, while encouraging Word of Mouth communication, is the organization of a series of lectures on the topic of sustainability. Organizing presentations by business leaders, government representatives, and NGOs would help to associate the GOW brand name with excellence in sustainability and would lend credibility to the organization. In order to reduce costs and draw from the experience of others, collaboration with student organizations are considered as a desired possibility.

Operations

Operational growth

In order to achieve the self prescribed targets of the GOW initiative an organizational structure is needed that guaranties transparency, a sense of ownership and sustainability in the structure itself. A step by step start-up plan is described below, that represents the process that the GOW will go through until its full operation. The fundamental goals mentioned in the chapter “Operational Goals” are included from the beginning, with further functions of the GOW introduced gradually.

1. The authors of this plan will act as initial GOW part-time employees. As they are students, the first step is to find support from Wageningen UR employees. In the beginning this support comes from the Taskforce Sustainability. Until 2013 the GOW can use the Taskforce as an advisory board for building up its networks and the execution of pilot projects, so that afterwards the set of operational functions can be expanded.
2. A linkage is made with the facilities department “Safety and Environmental Services”. In the beginning a contact person will be Fennet van de Wetering, who will be the commissioner or introducer of the first project proposals. These proposals are reviewed by the current authors/employees. If the authors/employees conclude that the knowledge necessary to conduct the research for the projects might be present within Wageningen UR, than they accept the proposals. In order to make this judgement the GOW can ask the advice of the Taskforce, the Science Shop and ACT/thesis/internship coordinators.

3. The authors/employees contact the appropriate programme or department, for each project proposal. All Education and Research department will be informed of the existence of the GOW in the future when it will be publicly announced; for now the GOW concept will be explained to each programme that will be contacted.
4. When the specific programmes/departments accept the project, they find for example one or more students to do the research and finish the project. The results are presented to the GOW and the initial commissioner. The GOW recommends entrusting the first projects to ACT groups, as they can finish it in a couple of months and a process evaluation can be done by the summer.
5. The GOW starts a database with the projects related to sustainability at Wageningen UR and makes the results available to the facilities department. In the future, when the employees of the GOW are not also the authors of this plan, that database will be updated with past projects (theses reports, ACT reports, etc) that are related to sustainability at Wageningen UR.
6. A database is created, which in the future will be available on the GOW website. This starts being checked and updated by all the stakeholders involved: facilities department, education and research department, students, etc.

Steps 2 through 6 are followed more times, either by the authors/employees or by the first real employees of the GOW. Next to this step by step plan that the GOW will execute in order to run the first projects, the GOW authors/initiators will also pay attention to the development of an enthusiastic core group of students which in the future can run the GOW.

Operational structure

On the long run a more stable GOW structure will be established. Ideally this will take a similar shape as the Green Office of the University of Maastricht, as this proved to be a successful concept. The GOW will consist of a:

- Core team: a small group of students which are working on a part-time basis in the Green Office. In Maastricht seven students are employed for eight hours a week in the Green Office. It has to be decided at a later point, depending on the exact tasks of the GOW, how many students are going to be employed in the GOW, how they are going to be rewarded and how long they will work the GOW. In order to ensure the continuity and the building of experience for the GOW it is important that the GOW is not tied to individuals. Moreover, the core team should change gradually. Students should be motivated to stay for approximately two years, so that every year not more than half of the team changes. A continuous inflow of people is nevertheless desirable for ensuring maintained entrepreneurial spirit as well as novel ideas and experiences. The core team should contain a set of skills that guarantee a minimum of dependency to external resources. The skills should include ICT programming,

web design, marketing, finance and accounting, management, media editing and journalism. These skills can be easily required from the diverse skill pool of Wageningen UR's student community.

- **University Representation:** a university employee, knowledgeable in sustainability and university structures, who is employed by the GOW on part time basis and contractually obligated to the GOW and the WUR. This employee can guarantee that knowledge and experience is safeguarded in the organisation. Moreover, he or she will be the 'know face' to whom commissioners, staff and students know how to find their way.
- **Board of Advisors:** The board is consisting of three to five stakeholders from the community of education in sustainability and operational departments of Wageningen UR. The board can be used by the GOW as a think tank. All members of the board will have an advisory function and serve as an institutionalized link to different departments and organizations within the university
- **Voluntary student body:** a group of voluntary students will support projects and tasks of the GOW. In order to create a dynamic process and working environment, the hierarchy will be flat with exception of the university employee who is also accountable to the advisory board for the operations of the GOW.
- **Development Budget:** a budget for project-based payments may be available to allow for flexible management of high priority projects that require expertise that is not readily available in the Green Office staff.

Annual Plan

For the official start of the GOW an annual plan will be established (2013) to function as a guide and a form of self-assessment at the end of each calendar year. Even though the GOW could not structurally function without an annual plan, a high degree of flexibility regarding planning and fulfilling goals will be necessary during the first terms due to the starting up nature of the GOW. For the first four months until the end of the year 2012, the overall goal is to mostly pursue the establishment of the GOW within the University framework and the wider public as a recognized institution through building networks, contacts and media campaigning. However, the GOW tries to combine short-term achievements along with a long term strategy of becoming an established entity in order to further emphasize its presence and effectiveness as a sustainability incubator.

Until September 2012 the main focus of the GOW will be on linking up the demands for knowledge within the facilities and operations department to research and education. The GOW will as a first step commission an ACT-project and possibly find students that want to write a thesis for the GOW on a subject related to the operations of the university. This will help to make the GOW known and it can help to show its added value.