

# WUR STARTS EDUCATION PROJECT IN IRAQ

**WUR will help six Iraqi universities to introduce climate-smart farming and efficient water use in Iraq. Wageningen experts will be training Iraqi scientists in partnership with the Institute for Water Education (IHE) in Delft and ICRA Global.**

Iraq is one of the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs' focus countries. That is why the ministry asked WUR in 2018 to examine the options for development cooperation with Iraq. A high-rank-

ing Iraqi delegation visited Wageningen last year to flesh out that cooperation. The two-year project is intended to resolve several issues at Iraqi universities.

## **TEACHING METHODS**

Firstly, the participants plan to use the project to modernize the dated teaching methods used at Iraqi universities by introducing group work and practicals into the curriculum. A second project aim is to encourage joint research programmes across the six universities. The Iraqi univer-

sities will send one researcher each to Wageningen to jointly work on an article on water management and climate-smart agriculture. The participants may also develop massive open online courses (MOOCs) as a way of transferring knowledge to other universities and partners.

## **SAFE**

Iraq is still recovering from the war against ISIS. Some universities are badly damaged, while others face the challenge of tackling Iraqi agriculture's shortage

of water and salinization in cooperation with the country's farmers. As many parts of the country are not yet safe, the training sessions will be held in the Netherlands and the project partners will meet up in the Kurdish part of Iraq, which *is* safe. Karrar Mahdi, an Iraqi researcher in the Soil Physics and Land Management chair group in Wageningen, is coordinating the project. The participants will receive a budget of 1.3 million euros. One third of this will be for the Wageningen researchers and trainers. **AS**