



FIRST BIRTHDAY INTERVIEW MAGAZINE



Interview Heleen
**“An organisation
in the making with
enormous potential”**

Interview Jan
**“KIN is in a unique
position to generate
real impact”**

Contents



- 3** **INTERVIEW SANLI**
"KIN must demonstrate how science can lead the way"
- 6** **INTERVIEW MARTIJN**
"We now have much greater knowledge of systems thinking, the landscape of climate knowledge, practical methods and collaborations"
- 8** **INTERVIEW HELEEN**
"An organisation in the making with enormous potential"

10 **INTERVIEW MICHIEL**
"The growth of KIN was jerky but steadily moving forward"



14 **HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES**
From the KIN team

16 **INTERVIEW GERARD AND LINDA**
"The KIN has successfully gotten of the ground, but is still learning every day"

20 **INTERVIEW JAN**
"KIN is in a unique position to generate real impact"

23 **COLOPHON**

Do you want to read more about the first year of KIN? Read the main birthday magazine at: <https://hetkin.nl/en/kin-1year-birthday/>



Interview Sanli

“KIN must demonstrate how science can lead the way”

Sanli Faez, physicist and researcher at the Debye Institute, has been involved with the Dutch Climate Research Initiative (KIN) since the first meeting in April 2022. As a member of the Taskforce and later the steering committee, Sanli played a key role in the development of KIN. He is an exceptionally well-suited team member to consult about what KIN was, what it is now, and where it is heading in the coming years.

The beginning: hope and excitement

When Sanli became involved with KIN, he immediately felt a sense of 'excitement,' which he shared with many of his colleagues. “There was a great deal of

enthusiasm because climate solutions were finally receiving the national and institutional support they deserved, with scientific organisations joining forces,” Sanli explains.

The sentiment at the time was that previous scientific efforts had been too fragmented. According to Sanli, there had been little to no collective commitment to addressing the urgency of the climate crisis. Sanli recalls how KIN's early days were dominated by a desire to better connect scientists and create a unified front to accelerate transitions and work towards a climate-resilient and climate-neutral Netherlands. "The idea of giving science a leading role in proposing climate solutions felt like a necessary step."

KIN today: a collective effort

When asked how he would describe KIN today, Sanli responds: "KIN is a collective effort to position the scientific community so it can truly contribute to solving major climate challenges." According to him, science should play a leading role rather than merely following societal developments. He sees KIN as a crucial link that facilitates this shift by fostering collaboration and bringing together various disciplines of learning.

Sanli emphasises that KIN is charting a new course in the field of climate research, involving both science and society. "It's about finding ways to accelerate systemic transitions with as much impact as possible," he explains. Sanli views KIN as an example of how science can achieve greater impact by working more closely with other sectors, such as NGOs, businesses, and citizen movements.

Growth: energetic and determined

If Sanli had to describe KIN's growth in three words, he would choose 'energetic, determined, and reflective.' He praises the young KIN team for maintaining constant dialogue with a broad network of scientists and societal partners. "They work carefully and steadfastly, with a sharp focus on KIN's impact," he says. Despite the challenges inherent to a young initiative, Sanli sees that the KIN team is determined to make significant strides.

A particular highlight for Sanli over the past year was the announcement of KIN's scientific figurehead. "Derk has been a connecting force between research, policy, and practice for years as an enterprising transition researcher. Appointing him was a key moment because it firmly established KIN's credibility as a serious institution," he says.



KIN's potential and future

While Sanli believes that KIN has firmly established its focus and mission, he admits that the scale at which it operates is not as large as he initially hoped. "KIN should have been ten times bigger to leap from our collective lagging position to leading the way and tackling the immense climate challenges we face," he says. However, he remains optimistic: "The team and network of dedicated people are expanding their capacity, despite financial constraints."

For the future, Sanli hopes that KIN can further disseminate its methods and approach across the institutions within its network. "We need to prepare to scale up our activities beyond KIN's core team."

A message for the next generation

Sanli concludes the interview with a call to action for the next generation of researchers: "Young researchers look to initiatives like KIN for inspiration and guidance. They expect us to facilitate academic projects that can genuinely contribute to addressing the greatest crises of our time."

His vision for KIN is clear: "I want us to continue growing KIN and demonstrating how science can lead the way towards sustainable and just solutions."

“We need to make preparations to scale up our activities beyond KIN's core team”

Sanli Faez

Associate professor at the Debye Institute for Nanomaterials Science, Co-founder of Lili's Proto Lab, and Open Science Lead at KIN

Physicist Sanli Faez is a researcher at the Debye Institute for Nanomaterials Science, Open Science Lead at the Dutch Climate Research Initiative (KIN), and a board member of The Young Academy. He is a co-founder of the Climate Helpdesk and advocates for a fair and sustainable academic system, partly through the development of open-source hardware in diagnostics, energy storage, and nanophotonics. Sanli has been involved with KIN since its first meeting in April 2022, initially as a member of the Taskforce and later the steering committee.

“We now have much greater knowledge of systems thinking, the landscape of climate knowledge, practical methods and collaborations”

Martijn Bart has been involved with KIN since 2022, initially in a supporting role from the KNAW (Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences, a co-initiator of KIN) and later as secretary of the programme committee and the steering committee during the initial phase. Now that KIN has been officially established, he remains actively involved. In this interview, Martijn reflects on the launch of KIN and looks forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for KIN.

A tentative start: the formation of KIN

When Martijn became involved with KIN in 2022, the initiative was still in its early stages. “At that time, we were still figuring out the right structure and approach,” he explains. “The idea was clear: with KIN, we wanted to create more societal impact through science, but exactly how and with whom we should do that was something we struggled with.” Martijn recalls the discussions about how the Pact should operate: “Should the programme be defined by the Pact, or should the Pact work based on a fixed programme? And how can we measure whether we are truly achieving systemic transitions when these changes are often only visible in the long term? In short, you inevitably run into the limits of a system when trying to effect change from within.”

Substance, network, and practice

Since KIN's establishment, significant progress has been made, according to Martijn. He summarises KIN's development in three words: substance, network, and practice. “There is now a dedicated team that has built up substantial knowledge about systems thinking. We have a clearer understanding of the societal and scientific climate landscape in the Netherlands. And we are gradually finding our way with practical methods for shaping new ideas and collaborations.”

Martijn highlights the launch of the first working groups within the Pact and the collaboration with the THRIVE Institute, which resulted in the Purpose Accelerator pilot, as examples of successful initiatives. A standout moment for Martijn was the Crutzen workshop, which led to

the ACT work programme. Both concepts are explained in this magazine. "That was a real turning point. It brought people together and resulted in concrete plans, such as the work programme on climate justice in cities. Another milestone was bringing on board Derk Loorbach as our scientific figurehead. He has truly brought systems thinking to life within KIN, drawing on his knowledge and best practices in transition science."

The future: more concrete application

When asked whether KIN has become what he envisioned, Martijn offers a nuanced response: "We started with the ambition to establish an institute with a structural budget of €100 million per year from the Climate Fund. That didn't happen. But that doesn't mean we can't make an impact. There are things that have emerged which we couldn't have planned in advance, and that shows we can achieve a lot even without €100 million!"

Martijn sees the coming period as a phase in which KIN must become even more concrete and practical: "I hope we can bring all the ideas we've developed so far into more practical application and that unexpected outcomes arise that we can't foresee yet."

A call to the KIN team

Martijn has a clear message for the people within KIN: "We must constantly remind ourselves that we are part of the very system we aim to change. Working on systemic transitions requires a creative, open mindset, self-reflection, and above all, perseverance." For the coming year, he hopes KIN will continue to evolve, leveraging diverse forms of knowledge—scientific, philosophical, practical, and more—to address concrete societal challenges: "We need to move away from fossil fuels, but I hope KIN spreads like an oil slick—though, of course, in the most positive sense of the term."

Martijn Bart

Senior policy officer at KNAW

Martijn is an ecologist with a background in research on deep-sea corals and sponges. He has now been working for the KNAW for 2.5 years, where he is responsible for the activities the KNAW organises in the field of climate. This includes the establishment of KIN, as well as various webinars and meetings.



“An organisation in the making with huge potential”

Heleen de Coninck has been closely involved with KIN since its early stages. As chair of the NWO-KNAW Taskforce, she was at the foundation of the first proposal for KIN and played a key role in shaping KIN as an institution. In this reflection on the past and look ahead, Heleen shares her experiences of KIN's launch and her vision for the future.

The foundation: a radical idea with strong commitment

The Taskforce turned the much more modest brief from NWO and KNAW into an ambitious and radical idea.

“It was fantastic to work with the 22 other members of the Taskforce and with the people from NWO and KNAW,” says Heleen. “Together, we formed a shared vision that significantly deviated from the original brief. That collective drive was crucial in convincing the NWO board to fund the KIN pilot.”

Heleen recalls the start-up phase as a time of great commitment and motivation. “Our idea was to make scientists part of accelerating system transitions to address societal challenges. But how exactly this should happen was still uncertain,” she explains. Nevertheless, there was widespread enthusiasm to make KIN a success.

A turbulent, exploratory development

Heleen describes KIN's development as turbulent,

exploratory, and strengthened.

“KIN has rapidly evolved from an idea into a governance body that questions and challenges the scientific establishment,” she says. She recognises KIN's determination but also acknowledges the challenge of ensuring inclusivity: “The KIN team is doing its best to involve everyone, especially from the scientific community. But engaging truly relevant societal actors (the problem owners) and putting them in the lead is much more complicated.”

Nevertheless, Heleen sees a great deal of support for KIN, both from the scientific community and societal groups. “When you explain what KIN aims to be, everyone sees that KIN is crucial for the future of climate policy and system transitions. The awareness still needs to be broadened.”

Key highlights and lessons

One of the highlights Heleen mentions is the first meeting of the Global Transitions Programme Committee, of which she is co-chair.

“We have gathered an excellent international group of transition practitioners who not only focus on system transitions but also prioritise justice and the realities faced by vulnerable countries. For example, the pilot of Global Transitions is in Mozambique, a country that suffers greatly from climate change but has contributed little to it. That confirmed for me the necessity of involving critical outsiders in our work.”

However, Heleen emphasises that KIN has not yet fully become what she had envisioned. “The living labs and deep collaboration between society and knowledge workers that we had in mind are still lacking. And with the Taskforce, we hoped for structural funding from the government to accelerate system transitions and make the 2050 goal in the Climate Act possible. At present, little policy is being developed for that. The reality is more difficult, but thanks to the KIN

pilot, a first step has been taken. Many people have been mobilised, but we are still far from where we need to be.”

The future of KIN: impact and service

Heleen is clear about what KIN must strive for: “KIN should not belong to the scientists or to NWO, but to society. It must deliver societal impact, not scientific publications. We need a service-oriented approach, especially from the knowledge workers.” For the future, Heleen hopes that KIN can realise true system transition projects and that societal actors will come to recognise the value of KIN.

“*I hope that the government recognises that structural funding for KIN is crucial for its continued growth*”

Heleen de Coninck

Professor at Eindhoven University of Technology and Radboud University, deputy chair at the Scientific Climate Council.

Heleen is a Professor of Socio-technical Innovation and Climate Change at Eindhoven University of Technology. She is also a Professor of System Transitions and Climate Change at Radboud University. Her research focuses on international climate policy, energy technology and innovation, and system transitions, with a focus in the Netherlands on climate policy for energy-intensive industries.



Interview Heleen

Michiel van den Hout

General director at KIN

Michiel is responsible for the day-to-day operations, the multi-year strategy, and the representation of KIN. With a background in bionanophysics and extensive experience in project management, public-private partnerships, and strategic advising, he bridges the gap between science, policy, and innovation. Michiel has been involved since 2021 when the PCNI (Permanent Committee for the National Institutes) advised NWO and KNAW on a 'new-style institute' for climate research. He initially served as a facilitator and has been the managing director since early 2024.



“The growth of KIN was jerky but steadily moving forward”

Someone who has been closely involved since the early stages and still plays an important role at KIN today is our general director, Michiel van den Hout. When reflecting on and looking ahead to KIN, of course he cannot be left out.

The Permanent Committee for the National Institutes (PCNI) advised considering a 'new-style institute' for climate research. From that point, Michiel became involved. He was part of the team that worked on the Taskforce's advisory report. "KIN has truly been a joint project from the very beginning. We met weekly with the steering group, and there was a strong sense of camaraderie – we really built it together."

Looking back: the founding of KIN

In the early period of KIN, from the advisory report in January 2022 to its establishment in November 2023, the focus was primarily on collaboration and coordination between the various stakeholders. Michiel recalls how the team worked intensively together, which really fostered a sense of connection: "Because each steering committee member was also the chair of one

of the broader working groups, we ensured good cohesion and kept everyone informed about developments. The sense of 'we are KIN' was essential, and we wanted to maintain that." Michiel looks back on this period as an exciting and dynamic time when the foundations were laid for what KIN would become.

Activities that showed our national impact


Over the past year, KIN has made significant strides, including the launch of the first working groups within the Pact, the establishment of a Community of Practice for transdisciplinary collaboration, and a session that supported the IPCC process. These activities and tools are further elaborated on in the magazine. The initiation of various new initiatives and working groups within the KIN Pact also indicates, according to Michiel, that KIN is increasingly playing an impactful role in national climate policy.

Michiel is proud of all the activities, which he believes demonstrate national added value, but highlights the project for the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management as a particular example. This project, which has already been explained earlier in the timeline and is summarised in the magazine, focused on the development of adaptation pathways for the national adaptation strategy. "We brought together a very

broad group of experts, which led to cross-pollination and inspiration. The beauty of it is that this process not only combined scientific methods but also delivered concrete results in the short term that guide policymakers. The fact that these top experts are contributing to developing these pathways shows how seriously we are taken and how important our work is," he proudly explains.

Has KIN become what he imagined?

When asked if KIN has become what he initially envisioned, Michiel responds that it depends on how you look at it. "We haven't become an institute, as I originally thought, but rather a coordinating body. That's quite different in terms of objectives and approach," he admits. "But in some ways, it's more interesting; we don't conduct research ourselves, but we do play a very substantive role – we really sit between the roles of funder

 *"Some things are progressing incredibly quickly and well. Other things are moving much slower than I would like"*

and implementer. It's sometimes very exciting, but also absolutely necessary."

KIN as a young adult or student

So, where is KIN now? Michiel compares KIN to a young adult or student: "We are standing on our own feet and are still developing. We have the curiosity and boldness of youth,

“KIN is like a young adult: full of curiosity and development, enjoying life, and paying attention to those around us”

and at the same time, we are learning how to best fulfil our role.” While there is still much to be done, Michiel sees KIN growing and evolving in the right direction. “Some things are progressing extremely quickly and well. Other things are going much slower than I would like.”

This also requires a critical eye from KIN, something Michiel is thankfully open to: “Stay involved; we are doing our best, but sometimes we might miss things or make the wrong choices. Let us know if you see that, because we are always eager to improve.”

KIN is (and hopefully will remain) ‘by us, for us’

Michiel’s wish for KIN in the coming year is to start several compelling new projects that use scientific knowledge to solve concrete problems for non-scientists.

“I also hope that the collaboration between research institutions will be further strengthened, so that various climate initiatives in the Netherlands will be even better connected.”

And now? “I hope people continue to see us as ‘by us, for us,’” Michiel shares as his wish for KIN. “Because the most important added value is that KIN is a place where people with the same goals can find each other and collaborate. Without these kinds of people, we can never make a difference!”

▼ *The project, also known as Make-atons, for the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management focused on the development of adaptation pathways*



HAPPY BIRTH

LIZANNE

"My birthday wish is that KIN can support change agents in other parts of the world who contribute to climate resilience and adaptation. I also hope that we, as KIN in the Netherlands, can make visible the impact our footprint has on vulnerable parts of the world. Here's to more equitable and just collaborations in the coming year!"



SANLI

"My wish is to expand the name KIN and the KIN method to institutions within the network and prepare ourselves for scaling their activities beyond the core team."



JELTE

"I wish KIN a successful first Global Transitions programme in Mozambique in the coming year! A programme that strengthens collaborations between various stakeholders and contributes to a climate-just and resilient society."



NINAROSA

"It would be amazing if we have already made real connections next year that wouldn't have happened otherwise – and of course, that communication has been able to make a significant contribution to that!"



MARTIJN

"I hope that we move towards a more concrete and practical implementation of everything we have conceived so far, and that unexpected positive things emerge that we cannot foresee right now. We need to move away from fossil fuels, but I hope that KIN spreads like an oil stain."



MIRKO

"That we have set up programmes of which stakeholders can say, 'That was really helpful!'"

BIRTHDAY WISHES

LISA

"My wish is that, with effective communication tools, we manage to reach the right people, thereby contributing to a climate-resilient Netherlands"

STEPHI

"I wish for KIN that we can make many valuable connections and continue to enjoy our work."

ROSA

"My wish: that KIN becomes unnecessary and has brought about world peace!"



ANNA

"It would be fantastic if, in a year's time, all the transitions we have helped accelerate are shaped and implemented through the lens of climate justice. This applies to transitions in climate research, transitions in implementation, and transdisciplinary transitions."



BJÖRK

"I wish for the Pact to be a vibrant network where people from diverse backgrounds are able to connect, and for various active working groups to be making progress on important transition themes."



MICHEL

"I hope that we succeed in launching a number of compelling new projects, where we help solve concrete problems faced by non-scientists through the application of scientific knowledge and expertise. I also hope that we can further strengthen collaboration between various research institutions by bringing together different climate centres and initiatives across the country."



“The KIN has successfully gotten off the ground, but is still learning every day”

Gerard van der Steenhoven and Linda Steg both play an important role within the KIN. As chairman of the KIN steering committee (Gerard) and chair of the Strategy and Advisory Board (SAR) (Linda), they are closely involved in the strategic direction and further development of KIN. A great duo to conduct a joint interview with about the startup phase of KIN, the growth of the organisation, and their expectations for the future.

The founding of KIN: enthusiasm and boldness

Gerard and Linda were both involved in KIN from the beginning as vice-chairpersons of the NWO-KNAW Taskforce on Climate, playing a crucial role in its establishment. Gerard explains: “The taskforce fully embraced a transdisciplinary approach aimed at accelerating system transitions to a sustainable society. This was a radical idea, fundamentally different from what we were used to in Dutch science. It was an adventure where we knew there would be resistance, but we still managed to get many colleagues on board.”

Linda also recalls the energy and enthusiasm during that early phase. “We had a group of highly motivated people who all understood that the impact of research needed to be increased in order to reduce the negative effects of climate change. We really wanted to do things radically differently, which fostered

an innovative, outside-of-the-box mentality. It was an inspiring time during which we developed plans together on how to better connect science and society.”

Growth through learning

Both agree that KIN has made significant progress since its founding, but it is still a process of learning and exploration. Linda explains that KIN is still searching for the best way to combine impact with inclusivity. “It’s a challenge to achieve quick impact while ensuring that no one is excluded, especially in the scientific community, but we are increasingly succeeding at this. The broader involvement of societal partners in the SAR is also an important step forward.”

“For me, it was fantastic to see how many young people were willing to commit themselves professionally to KIN”

Gerard van der Steenhoven



“Sommige dingen zullen mislukken maar dat is prima, want daar leren we van en daardoor kunnen we het daarna nóg beter doen”

Linda Steg

Gerard describes KIN's growth as 'growth through learning.' He elaborates: "One of KIN's core principles is that we listen to the needs of our societal partners. What do they need to accelerate the transition to a sustainable society? Through this approach, we are learning more and more about how to structure our work, and we are continually developing new working methods." A highlight for Linda was the dedication and commitment of the SAR members, despite their busy

schedules. "The SAR members bring broad expertise and strong networks, and they are all incredibly motivated to make KIN a success. This gives me great confidence in the future."

KIN: not finished yet, but full of potential

While KIN has made great strides according to Gerard and Linda, they both agree that the initiative is still not where it needs to be. "KIN has become what I expected, but also not," says Gerard. "I anticipated the enthusiasm and innovative working methods, but the way those methods have evolved is very different from what I had foreseen. And that's probably for the best. We've laid a foundation, but now we need to be more concrete with projects and programmes."

“Not everything will work or prove possible, but ultimately, by having the courage and boldness to fight for our concepts, we will truly contribute to a new – much better – society.”

Gerard van der Steenhoven

Gerard van der Steenhoven

*Special advisor at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK),
Part-time professor at the University of Twente,
Chair of the steering committee at KIN.*

Gerard van der Steenhoven led the KNMI until 2023 and has since been active as an executive, supervisor, and advisor at a number of organisations such as KIN, DCC, TNO, Sonnenborgh, and Springtij. Additionally, he is involved in assessments and gives public lectures and courses on climate change. Gerard has been involved since 2022 as vice-chair of the Taskforce, vice-chair (and later chair) of the 'steering committee in formation', and is now the chair of the 'steering committee post-formation'.



Looking to the future

For both leaders, the focus in the coming period is on concretising KIN's plans and initiatives. Linda hopes that in the coming year, KIN will start more concrete projects that truly contribute to accelerating system transitions. “My wish is that societal partners will recognise the value of KIN, and that we will launch projects that have an impact,”

Linda agrees: “We are still in development. Because we want to do things radically differently, not everything will work immediately. But that's fine, because we learn from failures, and that allows us to do better next time.”

Linda Steg

Professor of environmental psychology at the University of Groningen (RUG)

Linda Steg is a professor of Environmental Psychology at the University of Groningen. She researches the factors that influence sustainable behaviour and the acceptance of strategies to promote it. She is a member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the European Academy of Sciences, and the Dutch Scientific Climate Council, and was the lead author of the IPCC report on 1.5°C and AR6.



she says. She is pleased with the dedication of everyone involved in KIN and expresses her gratitude for their commitment. Gerard hopes particularly that more progress can be made internationally and in the field of biodiversity. "The concepts and structures are in place, now we need to get concrete projects and programmes off the ground," he states. "KIN has managed to establish a different, more inclusive (co-creation) way of conducting research, but we are still learning from that every day."

A message for KIN: keep fighting

Both have a clear message for the people within KIN. Gerard calls for courage and determination: "Keep fighting for our concepts and continue to trust each other and the programmes we are developing. There will be setbacks, but ultimately, in this way, we will really contribute to a new and better society. Linda concludes with a call to the next generation of researchers and stakeholders: "We must continue striving for scientific and societal impact. KIN should not only belong to scientists, but to society. We must collaborate with practice to have a greater societal impact."

“KIN is in a unique position to generate real impact”

Jan de Boer has been involved with KIN from the very beginning and has played an important role in the establishment of the initiative with his vision and dedication. As a professor of theoretical physics and chair of the Exact and Natural Sciences (ENW) domain within NWO, Jan has always viewed climate research as an integral part of both the scientific and societal agenda. He is an interesting person to ask about his reflections on the creation of KIN, the growth the initiative has undergone, and his expectations for the future.

The early steps: a vision and ambition

Jan had already begun thinking in the autumn of 2021 about how climate research in the Netherlands could be better organised. “It all started with a discussion within the ENW domain. The question I asked at the time was simple: ‘If we consider climate research so important, why don’t we just start doing it?’ This led to a vision paper in which we proposed organising national, integrated climate research,” he explains. This vision paper, written together with Pieter de Witte and Josef Stuefer, laid the foundation for what would later become KIN.

Shortly afterwards, the advisory report from the Permanent Committee for National Institutes (PCNI) was published, recommending national cooperation

in climate research in the form of a ‘new-style institute’. The reason was simple: there was (and still is) a need for rapid pooling of resources and coordination in climate research. The aim of such an institute was to connect existing strengths in the country, bring together scientists from all disciplines, and stimulate national coordination.



Jan explains: "We then made a proposal to work along three tracks: the Pact, the programme, and the centre. We suggested establishing a Taskforce and pitched it to the Board of Directors (RvB). The RvB was enthusiastic, and that's how the KIN adventure began."

KIN at the beginning: great ambitions

The first steps of KIN were taken with a taskforce, a broad plan, and big ambitions. Jan remembers this time as a period of enthusiasm and collaboration. "It was a time when we had many ideas, but little was concrete. With KIN, we not only wanted to connect science but also make societal impact. That was an ambitious goal, and the path to it hadn't been fully mapped out," he explains.

"Some short-term and impactful projects would never have come about without KIN"

Jan de Boer

Professor of theoretical physics at the university of Amsterdam (UvA), Chair of the ENW domain at the Dutch Research Council (NWO), Member of the executive board (RvB) at NWO, Portfolio holder for KIN.

Jan de Boer is a Professor of theoretical physics at the University of Amsterdam (UvA), and, funnily enough, his research has nothing to do with climate. He studied in Groningen, completed his PhD in Utrecht, and spent nearly six years as a postdoctoral researcher in the United States.

Nevertheless, there was a strong determination to make KIN succeed. Jan emphasises that the idea of KIN was supported from the beginning by a broad group of scientists and stakeholders. "It was amazing to see how many people were willing to contribute to this initiative, and that gave us the energy to continue, even when we were still searching for the right structure."

The growth of KIN: ambition, necessity, and urgency

If Jan had to describe the growth of KIN in three words, he would choose 'ambition, necessity, and urgency.' These words, he says, speak for themselves: "The ambition to make a real impact on the climate with science, the necessity to do this quickly and effectively, and the urgency that climate change brings with it."

KIN has gained a strong position in Dutch climate research in a short time. "We have gained significant

recognition in a relatively short period and are now in a unique position to truly generate impact," Jan proudly states. However, he also sees challenges.

"It's a success that we've generated so much engagement, but there's still much work to be done to achieve concrete results."

Highlights and challenges

When asked about the highlights of the past year, Jan mentions several important milestones. "There are constantly new milestones, such as the appointment of our scientific figurehead, the launch of new instruments, and the development of the Theory of Change and multi-year strategy. But a highlight was definitely the first Crutzen workshops. So much is happening that it's sometimes hard to keep track," he laughs.

Jan also praises the dedication of Michiel van den Hout, the managing director of KIN and former initiator. "Michiel has been instrumental in building KIN. He has made a huge contribution to getting us to where we are now."

The future of KIN: becoming more concrete

Although Jan is pleased with KIN's progress, he acknowledges that there is still room for improvement. "Yes and no," he replies when asked if KIN has become what he had in mind. "We've achieved so much in terms

of recognition and engagement, but I might have hoped that we would be further along with concrete results. Perhaps, looking back, that wasn't realistic given the scale of the challenge."

For the coming year, Jan hopes that KIN will continue to develop and create even more impact. "We must continue working on a portfolio of short-term, impactful projects that could not have existed without KIN."

A message for KIN: stay ambitious

Finally, Jan has a clear message for those within KIN: "Stay ambitious and continue working on projects that truly make an impact. We have already achieved a lot, but the challenge is great, and there is still much to be done. For example, also show that the pledges of the Pact partners really mean something in practice. But most importantly, keep up the good work!"

"KIN is a great success in terms of name recognition and the engagement of a very large group of scientists and other stakeholders"

With these words, Jan looks to the future of KIN with confidence and optimism. The ambition, necessity, and urgency that define KIN will, according to him, continue to be the driving forces behind the success of the initiative in the coming years.

Colophon

KIN's first birthday interview magazine is a publication of the Dutch Climate Research Initiative (KIN), a part of NWO.

Adress: PO Box 3021, 3502 GA Utrecht

Contact: contact@hetkin.nl

Authors and design:

- Ninarosa Juffermans (communication advisor; text editing and project management)
- Lisa Berkouwer (communications; design)
- Michiel van den Hout (general director; text editing)
- Nick Boer (communications; text editing)

Photography:

- Studio Oostrum (portrait Linda Steg)
- Jasmijn de Lange (portraits KIN-team members, Pact launch, THRIVE)
- Denise Roggeveen (portrait Martijn Bart)
- Bastiaan Heus (portrait Sanli Faez)
- Bart van Overbeeke (portrait Heleen de Coninck)
- Martien Versteegh (Crutzen workshop)

Thanks to:

- Heleen de Coninck, Gerard van der Steenhoven, Jan de Boer, Linda Steg, Martijn Bart, Sanli Faez (contribution to the interviews)

Do you want to read more about the first year of KIN? Read the main birthday magazine at: <https://hetkin.nl/en/kin-1year-birthday/>

© Climate Research Initiative Netherlands (KIN), Utrecht 2024
Some rights reserved / Creative Commons licence [Attribution 4.0 Netherlands].

The content of this publication may be used and reproduced (partially) for non-commercial purposes. Modifications to the content are not permitted. Citations must always be credited.

With KIN, we aim to increase the contribution of science in accelerating system transitions. Our ambition is to accelerate the transition to a climate-neutral and climate-resilient world through the optimal use of existing scientific knowledge and the development of new knowledge.



KIN

Dutch Climate
Research Initiative



Accelerating transitions together

1 year!