

Accelerating Sustainable Laboratory Transformation: UNIDO and EUROLAB Empower Laboratories to Cut Emissions and Strengthen Resilience

Vienna, 18 May 2026 – Laboratories play a decisive role in enabling countries to trade, innovate, and protect public health. Yet many laboratories, especially in developing and transition economies, face rising pressure to operate not only with technical excellence but also with environmental responsibility, social accountability, and strong governance.

To support this shift, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and EUROLAB are strengthening global efforts to embed sustainability into laboratory operations, helping institutions reduce resource consumption, cut emissions, improve safety, and reinforce trust in national quality systems.

Across sectors, from product safety to environmental monitoring and industrial testing, laboratories that adopt sustainable practices are demonstrating measurable benefits: lower operating costs, improved staff well-being, reduced environmental impact, and enhanced credibility with clients and regulators. These gains directly contribute to resilient national quality infrastructure systems and support countries in meeting global climate and development commitments.

As part of this broader effort, UNIDO and EUROLAB have released a new brochure, “Laboratories for a Sustainable Future: Best Practices for Responsible and Efficient Laboratory Management.” Developed under the Global Quality and Standards Programme (GQSP), a joint initiative of UNIDO and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the publication provides actionable guidance tailored to laboratories operating with limited resources.

The brochure outlines best practices across key environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions, including

- Energy and water efficiency: practical steps to reduce consumption and costs
- Chemical and waste management: safer, cleaner, and more compliant operations
- Air emissions control: minimizing environmental and health impacts
- Governance and leadership: building transparent, accountable, and resilient institutions

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It also introduces a methodology for calculating a laboratory's carbon footprint, offering a step-by-step approach suitable for resource-constrained settings. A set of ESG-aligned key performance indicators (KPIs) enables laboratories to measure progress and track improvements over time.

The central message of the publication is clear: sustainability strengthens competitiveness. Laboratories that invest in efficient resource use and responsible management practices not only reduce operational costs but also enhance their technical credibility, improve client confidence, and expand access to new markets.

The brochure is available for download on the UNIDO Knowledge Hub at hub.unido.org and on the EUROLAB website at eurolab.org.

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About UNIDO: UNIDO is a specialized United Nations agency with a unique mandate to promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development. It supports developing countries and emerging economies in building and transforming their industries. Its work evolves around three priority areas: advancing industries and local value addition, climate action and building fair and sustainable supply chains so that producers in developing countries get a fair deal and scarce resources are preserved.

About EUROLAB: EUROLAB is a European association representing laboratories and other conformity assessment bodies. Thanks to the expertise and experience of the national members, EUROLAB unites a vast network of laboratories, inspection, certification and notified bodies. EUROLAB positions the European laboratories and other conformity assessment bodies on policy and technical levels, contributing to important regulatory developments while sharing technical expertise. Among the key priorities, EUROLAB focuses on supporting the sector in their digital and sustainable strategies, through projects dedicated to capacity building and sharing of best practices, as well as contributing to the development of the European quality infrastructure.

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