

Südtirol Wein 
Vini Alto Adige

Our Path into the Future

The 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda



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Via Crispi 15, I-39100 Bolzano South Tyrol - Italy
Tel. +39 0471 978 528
info@suedtirolwein.com
www.suedtirolwein.com

Contents: Alfred Strigl, Hansjörg Hafner,
Eduard Bernhart, Barbara Raifer

Editor: J. Christian Rainer

Translation: Philip Isenberg

Photos: Benjamin Pfitscher, Maria Noisternig (page 5),
Florian Andergassen (page 24)

Graphics Areas of Action: Buero Medienagenten

Layout: Friesenecker & Pancheri

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“Life asks.
Our actions are the answer.”

(Viktor Frankl)

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Premise

The concept of sustainability is a paradox: everybody is talking about it, but hardly anyone knows what it really comprises. The vast majority uses the term as a synonym for environmental protection, but along those lines, sustainability in fact goes so much deeper. It has an ecological, an economic, and a social side. This becomes clear not least when the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations is viewed. It makes sustainability a necessity that is borne by all countries and which has been expressed in seventeen large goals that are to be achieved in the coming decades.

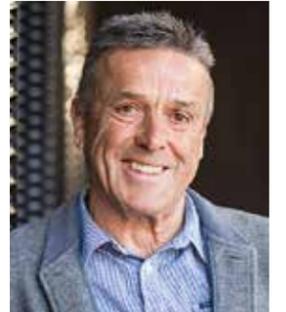
With our sustainability strategy, we wish to do justice to this depth, we shall approach the topic of sustainability in all of its facets – with concrete measures. In the end, we do not want to just carry on window dressing, but rather consistently and honestly pursue sustainability in all areas that are connected with winegrowing and the wine industry.

The goal of sustainable operation is to preserve for future generations the resources that we are allowed to use today. Precisely with winegrowing with its centuries-old tradition, this alone is already a must.

Added to this is the fact that in Alto Adige, the convincing striving for sustainability in the wine industry is a matter of survival. In the end, wine production worldwide exceeds consumption, and the consequence is extreme competition on the markets. We cannot compete based solely on price. Rather, the only way to assert ourselves on the market once again after the crisis and above all else in a long-term manner is through quality. In the eyes of the consumers, this includes not only the quality of the product, but also more and more the fairness within the entire value added chain – from the cultivation management of the grapevines to the production of the wine to sales. In short, the entire sustainability. Operating in a sustainable manner is therefore ethically a Should and economically a Must. The path to sustainability is not an easy one; it is a steep, rocky climb that will demand much of us. But it is the only one that can be traversed.

And it is our path into the future.

Maximilian Niedermayr
President, Consortium of Alto Adige Wine





Why Sustainability? And Why Now?

Operating sustainably is a matter of survival, because continuing to consume resources the way that we have over the past decades is plain and simply no longer possible. This long-term aspect is clear to practically everybody right from the get-go.

What is less obvious, though, is that for the Alto Adige wine industry, sustainability is also a medium-term matter, and specifically one of economic survival. After all, sustainability is one partial aspect of quality, which will play a more and more important role in the evaluation of a product by consumers. In the future, what will be purchased will only be that which has been produced sustainably.

DEVELOPMENT AND GOALS

As early as 2015, the wine industry in the province had already proposed the creation of a sustainability strategy for the first time; in 2017, the decision was made to develop one; and in 2018, a comprehensive process was started: on the foundation of scientific knowledge, with the assistance of representative data, with the know-how of experts, and with a close exchange with the base.

The 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda came into existence with the three goals that are to be achieved:

1. The Agenda shows the path into the future for the Alto Adige wine industry and creates a foundation that is necessary to be built upon.
2. The Agenda will do justice to sustainability in all of its facets, it will illuminate the ecological, economic, social, cultural, technological, and regional sides, among others, of the wine industry – in a blunt and honest manner.
3. The Agenda is not merely a statement of principles, but rather it presents clear goals, the measures that are necessary for achieving them, and, for most of them, a schedule as well.

On February 17, 2020, the Agenda was presented to the general meeting of the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine and was adopted unanimously by the members. Since that day, we have had a clear road map into the future – a sustainable future.

THE COVID CRISIS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The problem is that since February 2020, the world – and not just the world of Alto Adige wine – has become a different place. The covid-19 crisis pulled the rug out from under our feet, the markets for our sales collapsed, and new strategies, new structures, new organizational forms, and new channels of communication had to be conjured up practically overnight.

Does that mean that even the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda has become superfluous after covid? Isn't it no longer current, or in this period of crisis has it even become a luxury that we cannot, or can no longer, afford? On the contrary, since experts all agree that the path out of the crisis of the Alto Adige wine industry only leads through an even further building up of quality and sustainability. That path makes it possible for us to sharpen our image, to win (back) market share, and in spite of all of that to maintain our price level.

In short, it is the combination of quality with sustainability that will make it possible for us to get back on our own two feet again. Because both now and in the future, quality invariably also includes the topic of sustainability. It is therefore not a luxury, but rather a necessity.

After the covid-19 crisis even more than before.



The Economy of Attentiveness and Love: The View from the Outside

I would like to begin with the preamble to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations. The document, which was signed by all of the heads of state and heads of government on earth, is entitled with the demand, “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. In the preamble, it states: *“This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity... We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind.”*



Alfred Strigl

The 2030 Agenda of the UN has redefined sustainability. The old concepts have had their day. They had remained too rough, too fragmentary, and too ridden with clichés. This was to succeed with a new plan of the century. And it did succeed! With the establishment of the seventeen global Sustainability Development Goals, or SDGs for short. I know of no stronger vision, I see nothing kinder and more beautiful for the world than wishing to achieve these seventeen goals. They are comprehensive, often naive, and overly ambitious. And I mean that as a compliment. And sometimes they contradict each other, just as life is also contradictory.

PROTECTING AND HEALING THE PLANET

The UN 2030 Agenda is a universal agenda that is oriented toward realizing human rights for all and achieving justice, fairness, and self-determination for women. The seventeen SDGs concern all people. They wish to end poverty and hunger in any form, and they wish to ensure that all people can fully unleash their potentials

in dignity and equality. And these goals attempt to protect and heal the planet – by means of a management of natural resources that is friendly to life. Proceeding quickly against climate change and the extinction of species is striven for, just as the maintaining and expanding of prosperity and a fulfilled life is – in harmony with nature.

For me, this seventeen-dimensional sustainability is the noblest and most effective development and peace program that I know. Such an understanding of sustainability fosters peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. This sustainability provides freedom from fear and violence. Truly sustainable societies do not plunder the planet. They seek paths of attentive, affectionate cooperation and a partnership existence with all living things.

PARTNERSHIP AS THE MAGIC WORD

Within that context, for me “partnership” is the magic word when I arrive at the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda. With a team commitment and in respectful partnership, much will succeed more simply and even more quickly.

And over the long term, it is more successful and more joyful. The 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda is based upon this spirit of partnership in the willingness for dialogue and solutions. This attitude is geared toward the happiness and the satisfaction of all those who are occupied in winegrowing. And it increases the solidarity with others.

I would like to congratulate Alto Adige Wine for this deeply meaningful and productive program. Being able to participate in the ambitious goals and measures for the sustainable development of the Alto Adige wine industry fills me as a Tyrolean from Austria with pride and joy. The integrated, conciliatory, and yet mandatory character of this 2030 Wine agenda is of decisive importance for the achieving of the goals and the fulfilling of the measures.

ALREADY A CHAMPION OF SUSTAINABILITY TODAY

In this regard, I have to above all else refer to something significant for the residents of Alto Adige. Because within their own province, it is not sufficiently esteemed or even seen. Today, Alto Adige is already a champion of sustainability. In what regard? In the sustainability of its agricultural structures. The structures that have grown over the long term in the area of small-scale agriculture, the cooperatives, consortia, and associations; the trade schools and research institutions, the consulting services, the participants at the public and private level, and above all else the thousands of farmers and growers, all of them working together in a highly innovative and professional manner. That creates social prosperity, economic stability, and cultural intensity.

That has been confirmed at the highly official level by the FAO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. It describes the model of Alto Adige's agriculture and fruticulture as an innovative system that fosters sustainability. The FAO has been propagating this model for success as a so-called "learning and innovation network" using the name LINSa (Learning and Innovation Network for Sustainable Agriculture). Alto Adige as an example? Yes, as a network for knowledge management on a cooperative basis, where continuing education, innovation, and a wealth of ideas are just as much factors for success as are the deep attachment to culture and tradition.

I am certain that if many people who are occupied either directly or indirectly in Alto Adige's winegrowing support our ambitions, then the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda will be realized as a significant contribution to sustainable development. In so doing, we will fundamentally improve the life of all people in Alto Adige and throughout the world. And I am most deeply convinced that the profound transformation of the world into the good and the loving shall be successful.

Alfred Strigl

CEO, Plenum GmbH and director of the Austrian Institute for Sustainable Development at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna

The Team

The 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda is not a work of individuals, but rather the result of a whole series of work meetings and workshops.

Or, to word it differently, it was conceived and developed through teamwork, and specifically essentially by the following experts:

- > **Maximilian Niedermayr**
president of the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine
- > **Christian Fischer**
professor in the Department of Science and Technology of the Free University of Bozen - Bolzano
- > **Martin Foradori, Andreas Kofler, Hannes Baumgartner, Michael Bradlwarter, Christian Sinn, Peter Zemmer, Bernhard Pichler, Christian Werth und Leo Tiefenthaler**
members of the board of directors of the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine
- > **Georg Niedrist**
senior researcher at the Institute for Alpine Environment, EURAC research
- > **Eduard Bernhart**
director of the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine
- > **Alfred Strigl**
CEO of Plenum GmbH and director of the Austrian Institute for Sustainable Development at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna
- > **Hansjörg Hafner**
director of the Viticulture Department of the Alto Adige Fruitgrowing and Winegrowing Consulting Center
- > **Sylvia Brenzel**
CEO of Plenum Akademie, St. Pölten
- > **Barbara Raifer**
head of the Viticulture Department of the Laimburg Research Center
- > Representatives of the various wineries and working groups from the wine industry and Alto Adige agriculture

Alto Adige is Wine. Wine is Alto Adige.

Alto Adige is not only the northernmost winegrowing region in Italy, but also one of them with the richest traditions. Archaeological finds show that grapes were already being cultivated here thousands of years ago, and they have been grown systematically and successfully for around a millennium now. Today, around five thousand winegrowing families provide the raw material that is processed into white wines and red wines which are sold throughout the world and are most highly recognized and popular.

These families form the foundation of Alto Adige winegrowing, but they also form the foundation of the strategy for sustainability which the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine, the association of all those involved in winemaking, has drawn up. Together – as well as each for themselves – we are thus protecting that which makes wine: nature, the landscape, the people. For ourselves and for all future generations.

A PROFILE OF ALTO ADIGE WINE

Winegrowers: around **5.000**

Area under cultivation:
5.500 hectares (13,700 acres)

Elevations:
200 to 1.000
(600 to 3,300 ft.) above sea level

Days of sun per year:
300

Organic cultivation:
7 %

Average area per grower:
1 hectare (2.5 acres)

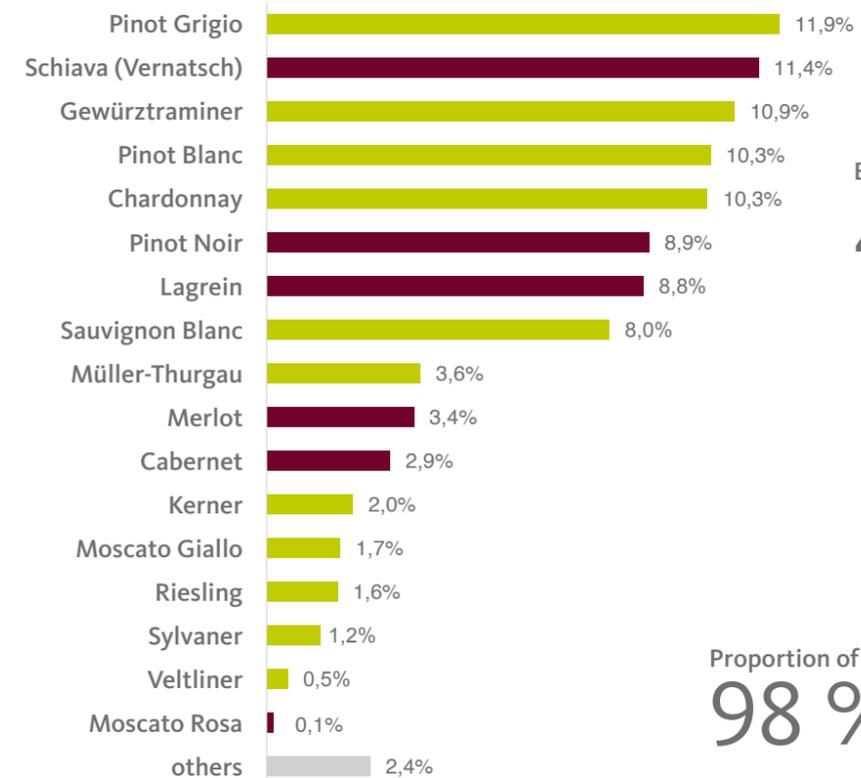
Wineries:
200

Employed in the wine industry:
10.000

White wine production (2019):
62 %

Red wine production (2019):
38 %

Current percentages of grape varieties:



Bottles per year (still wine):
40.000.000

Bottles per year (sparkling wine):
400.000

Proportion of DOC wines in the production:
98 %

Where Do We Position Ourselves? And How?

Sustainability is far more than pest control, even if many in agriculture would be pleased to have it reduced to that. Sustainability is also more than environmental protection. Sustainability is a comprehensive concept that includes all areas of life – for the simple reason that business, environment, and people cannot be taken into consideration in isolation. One without the other? That is inconceivable, at least not in the long run.

THE FIVE AREAS OF ACTION

The same consideration also of course holds true for the Alto Adige wine industry. It is for that reason that the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda has been structured into five areas of action. But these areas of action are most closely connected: they interact, they communicate, they have an effect upon each other, they influence, and they depend upon each other.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. Soil: | sustainable soil care and water management |
| 2. Vines: | pest control and biodiversity |
| 3. Wine: | CO ₂ footprint and climate protection |
| 4. People: | consciousness raising and communications |
| 5. Territory: | regional circular economy |

MILESTONES AND TIME HORIZON

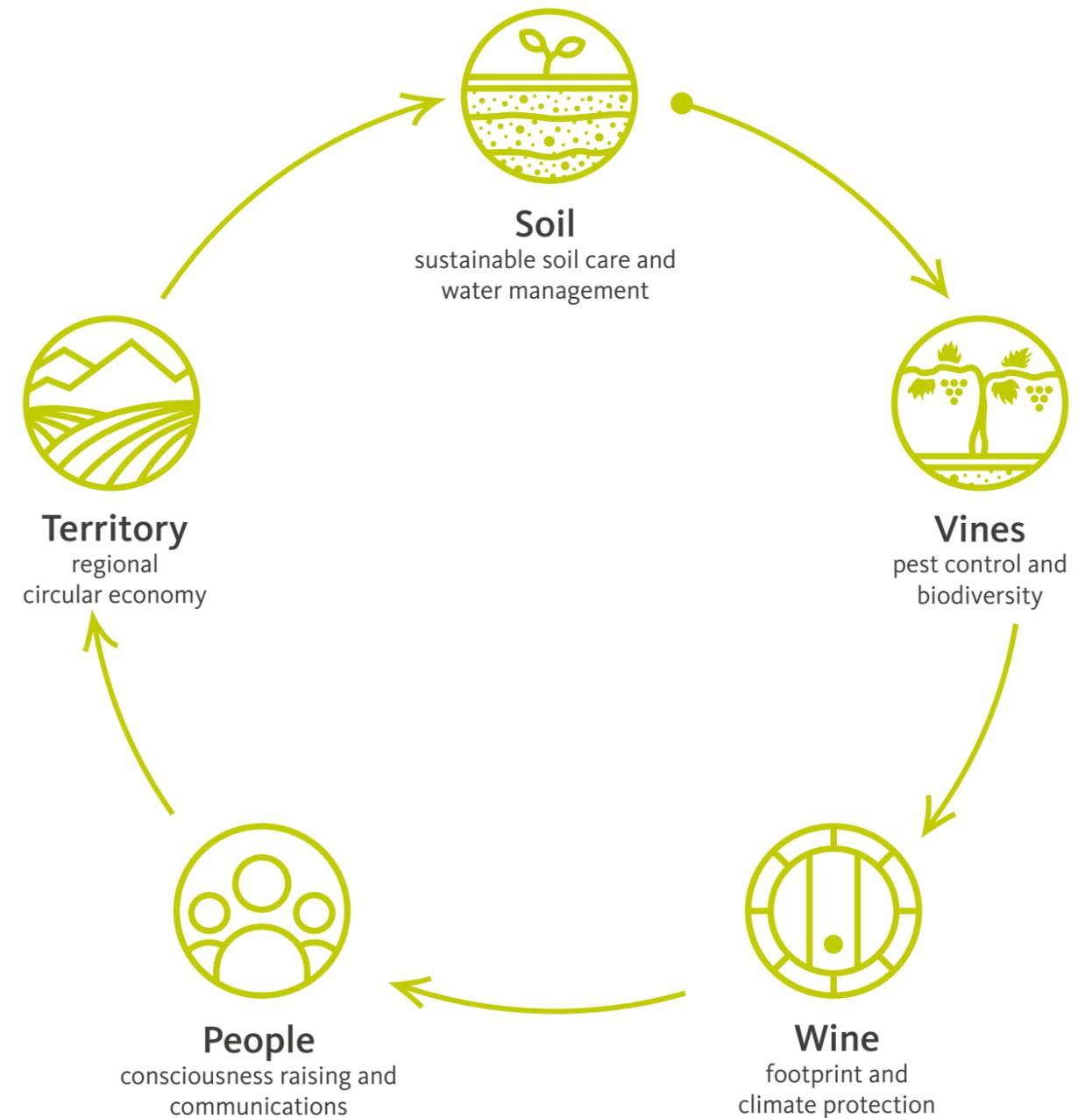
The division of the creative work, and in fact the entire essence of the Alto Adige wine industry, into five areas of action is something that serves classification, clarity, and understandability. In practice, it is only seldom that they can be clearly separated.

But because the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda wishes to be more and has to be more than just a statement of principles, we will accept the artificial division. Only in that way can clear, tangible, and measurable goals be defined which were expressed in twelve milestones.

Among the milestones are those that can be implemented quickly and, to a large extent, trouble-free. Others, on the other hand, require a fundamental change in thinking. And for yet others, clear implementation strategies first have to be developed.

It is for that reason that there are different schedules for achieving the milestones. They range from one to ten years. And this span of time already tells us that there is also maneuvering room in order to improve where necessary to be able to conceive of new solutions, to have individual cogs drive the wheel.

Therefore, the milestones that the agenda lists are not chiseled in stone. They are target specifications. And the measures that are provided for attaining them are approaches which correspond to the current state of knowledge. No more than that, but also no less.





1. Soil: Our Foundation

The basis for life of the wine industry, and specifically in the truest sense of the word, is formed by the soil and, closely connected with it, water.

Target Image

We safeguard and increase the vitality of our basis for life – fertile soils and clean water – through careful management.

Activities

- > Sustainable soil care and organic fertilizing
- > Minimizing persistent active and artificial substances
- > Optimized water management

SUSTAINABLE SOIL CARE AND ORGANIC FERTILIZING

Where Do We Begin?

With wine, you can (also) taste the soil – not only its composition, but also the management of it. After all, the grower has an effect upon the supply of water and nutrients through soil care and fertilizing. These influence the growth of the grapevines which, in turn, has an effect upon the quality of the grapes. And thus upon that of the wine.

Because of the fact that in most of the winegrowing regions of the world, there is no irrigation, there is also a lack of covering with greenery. For that reason, the soil must be worked. In Alto Adige, on the other hand, most of the grape growing areas are irrigated, and therefore for decades there has been winegrowing with greenery.

Where Do We Want to Go?

Promoting lasting greenery has proven itself as a process that protects the soil and the environment. And furthermore, adapted soil care can foster the building up of humus, the natural fertility of the soil, and the diversity of species.

By intentionally sowing seeds for greenery and organic fertilizing, the soil can be provided with more structure. Within that context, the grapevines are not directly provided with nutrients, but rather the fauna in the soil are nourished by root exudates and organic starting masses.

Milestone 1

Replacement of Mineral Nitrogen Fertilizer by 100% through the Use of Organic Fertilizer and Green Manure (starting from 2021)

If mineral nitrogen is eliminated, then the input of resources that are foreign to the system is also eliminated. The nitrogen requirement is covered exclusively by adapted soil care, organic fertilizer, and purposeful irrigation.

In that way, the vines remain in balance, as a result of the removal of foreign influences it because even more greatly bound to the location, and the wine reflects the terroir in an unadulterated manner. In addition, the use of organic fertilizers strengthens the circular economy.

MINIMIZING PERSISTENT ACTIVE AND ARTIFICIAL SUBSTANCES

Where Do We Begin?

In recent decades, artificial substances have gained acceptance in numerous areas of winegrowing. That has to do with, on one hand, their nearly unlimited availability and their comparatively low cost and, on the other hand, on the fact that alternatives are often lacking. But it is only in recent years that the detriments of the massive use of artificial substances has become evident. The problem of microplastic in the environment – in the soils, in the water, in the air, in organisms, and even in people – is just one of these. Sustainable winegrowing ought to not only not contribute to these problems but also solve the matters better.

Where Do We Want to Go?

Where there are alternatives, artificial substances in general and one-way plastics in particular are to be replaced by biodegradable materials. That concerns first and foremost binding materials, but also, for example, brushes, dispensers, or the cutting lines of mowing equipment. In this regard, investments are to be made in research and experimentation. But as is the case with the green treatment of the soil, who is to lead the way as the forerunner if not the Alto Adige winegrowers?

Milestone 2

Replacement of One-way Plastic Materials with Biodegradable Materials

While there are already biodegradable materials today for many areas of use, for others these first have to be developed. It is for that reason that a timing deadline has been avoided for the implementation of this milestone. Rather, the goal is to search for and test new solutions for replacing plastics as soon as a practical and financially feasible opportunity to do so presents itself. Thus in coming years, Alto Adige winegrowing can reduce the production of unusable waste step by step, the output of microplastics will be minimized, and installations will be created that have an even greater aesthetic appeal than today. As a result of this, the services provided by the winegrowers as caretakers of the landscape are underscored even more substantially. And Alto Adige wine edges ahead internationally once again.

OPTIMIZED WATER MANAGEMENT

Where Do We Begin?

For wine production as well, climate change is regarded as one of the great challenges in coming decades. Within that context, climate researchers are not only reckoning on constantly climbing average temperatures, they are also expecting longer and even more prominent dry phases – up to genuine droughts – during the summer months.

It is for that reason that an efficient irrigation of the vineyards becomes increasingly more important. For decades now, Alto Adige's winegrowing has already relied upon targeted drip irrigation as a remedy against drought stress. In spite of that, even more targeted and even more careful dealings with the resource of water is necessary, above all else with a view toward the changing climate.

Where Do We Want to Go?

If the grapevines are irrigated, then the emphasis is on the principle of moderate deficit irrigation. That means that a lack of precipitation is not compensated for by irrigation, but rather only that the drought stress on the grapevines is eased. It is actually the case that during phases of drought stress, important constituent substances (such as aroma substances) are formed and stored.

Therefore, if irrigation occurs too early or to too great a degree, then not only is unnecessary water consumed, but the quality of the grapes is also diminished. The protection of the resource of water is therefore not only a part of sustainability policy, but also of quality policy.

Milestone 3a

Setup and Operation of a Measurement Network and Assessment of the Data (Starting in 2021)

Efficient irrigation is only possible if the moisture in the soil is known in detail. For that reason, a province-wide, comprehensive measurement network will be built for the determination of the course of soil moisture in winegrowing. With the assistance of the data that have been obtained, the irrigation can be controlled and thus it can be essentially optimized in comparison to today. Since 2018, within the framework of a pilot project by the Laimburg Research Center, the Alto Adige Fruit and Winegrowing Consulting Center, Alperia, and various wineries, experience is collected with a network that is extensive but at the same time energy saving. Data on soil moisture are currently collected at fifty winegrowing locations at depths of 30, 60, and 90 centimeters.

Milestone 3b

Documentation of Irrigation in the Operation Log (Starting from 2021)

Because irrigation that is efficient and saves resources has to be comprehensible, the documentation of the irrigation in the operation log has already been provided for today, but it is currently still on a voluntary basis. Within the framework of the implementation of the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda, however, this documentation is to be obligatorily recorded.





Vines

2. Vines: Working with Nature

Grapevines are a product of nature and a means of production in one. They provide the raw materials for the wine but they are subject to the laws of nature. It is necessary to observe this and not work against it.

Target Image

We preserve and protect the naturalness and life force of our vineyards – through sustainable crop management.

Activities

- > Mandatory regulated pest control
- > Protection and expansion of species diversity in the vineyards of Alto Adige

MANDATORY REGULATED PEST CONTROL

Where Do We Begin?

If the interests of producers and consumers in winegrowing threatened to drift apart in recent years, then it was in the area of chemical pest control. In spite of enormous progress, consumers fundamentally continue to distrust chemical compounds in food and gourmet items. For that reason, elevated residues may grow into an enormous image problem.

With this in mind, five winery cooperatives, in cooperation with the Alto Adige Fruit and Winegrowing Consulting Center and with the support of the Laimburg Research Center, already began a joint pest control program in winegrowing as early as 2011. In the meantime, on this basis it has been possible to implement in practice a sustainable pest control strategy. And because technical developments do not stand still, the pest control strategy will also be adjusted continuously.

Where Do We Want to Go?

Mandatory regulated pest control is a must not only for reasons of sustainability, but also with a view toward the image of Alto Adige winegrowing on the global markets. It is for that reason that one goal of the 2030

Alto Adige Wine Agenda is the development of a mandatory pest control program including a list of active substances, a time line, the search for alternatives, measurements, and inspections. The aforementioned winery pest control program, which currently comprises around 1,700 growing operations, is the force behind this.

On top of that, the residue monitoring will be continued which has already been carried out by the consortium of Alto Adige Wine since 2010.

Milestone 4

Start of the Mandatory Pest Control Program (Starting from 2021)

Reducing the residue in the grapes and in the wine as well as optimizing the protection of the environment and the user: those are the goals that the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine has set with a mandatory pest control program that is supported by it. The program is to be on its feet in 2021 and is to be made accessible to all interested parties in published form. For members and grape suppliers of participating operations, the program will of course be binding.

The pest control program reduces the allowable active substances, thus representing a restriction above all else in the first phase. In the meantime, though, nothing with this is changed by the fact that the use of pesticides must be most precisely documented. Not only does that fulfill legal regulations, it also makes controls possible that are strengthened even further by the residue analyses. If errors are ascertained, then the winegrowers are required to attend continuing education, while gross violations of the program will be sanctioned more severely.

Milestone 5

Ban on Synthetic Herbicides Starting in 2021 and Limitation of the Width of the Use of Herbicides to 30 cm

As has already been explained in the “Soil” field of action, covering with greenery is a way to feed the soil. It provides the soil fauna – and thus indirectly the grapevines – with necessary nutrients. For that reason, in the future the use of synthetic herbicides is to be avoided in the area below the canes, in order to preserve the greenery and thus to not threaten the natural exchange of nutrients.

An exception to this ban is valid for young plantings up to five years of age and in areas with difficult yields. In those areas, herbicides may also continue to be used, but in any case exclusively in autumn and only in a narrow band of 30 centimeters. And here, as well, the agents that may be used are restricted and are only allowed as long as there are no workable alternatives to them. These are being actively worked on, for instance, with a spray film made of biodegradable and renewable raw materials that is being developed by the Centre of Excellence for Renewable Resources in Straubing, Germany – in collaboration with the research institutes in Klosterneuburg, Austria; Veitshöchheim, Germany; and Laimburg in Alto Adige, Italy.

PROTECTION AND EXPANSION OF SPECIES DIVERSITY IN THE VINEYARDS OF ALTO ADIGE

Where Do We Begin?

Finding ourselves in the midst of the struggle against the continuing extinction of species is as similarly central to global balance as strategies against climate change. And just as these strategies encompass everything, everyone must make his or her contribution toward the protection and preservation of biodiversity. In winegrowing, this is not “only” a moral obligation. Rather, as has already been touched upon in the “Soil” field of action, a healthy, vital soil essentially depends upon the covering with greenery and abundant soil fauna – and therefore, in the end, upon the maintaining of diversity.

Where Do We Want to Go?

With the matter of biodiversity, it is demonstrated just how interlinked all areas of winegrowing are. After all, it is anything but obvious how a multitude of living things in the soil leads to a high-quality wine. But because that is the case, the protection of the diversity of species and, indeed, their expansion is a central pillar of the sustainability strategy of Alto Adige winegrowing. For that reason, existing landscape structures must be preserved, and the vitality of the soil must be supported. This is to be set about above all else with consciousness raising, sensitization, and continuing education. A corresponding manual can provide growers with important tips for the fostering of biodiversity, while purposeful competitions can be an incentive to intensely devote oneself to this topic.

Milestone 6

The Development of a Manual (Workbook) for the Fostering of Biodiversity in the Vineyard (2023)

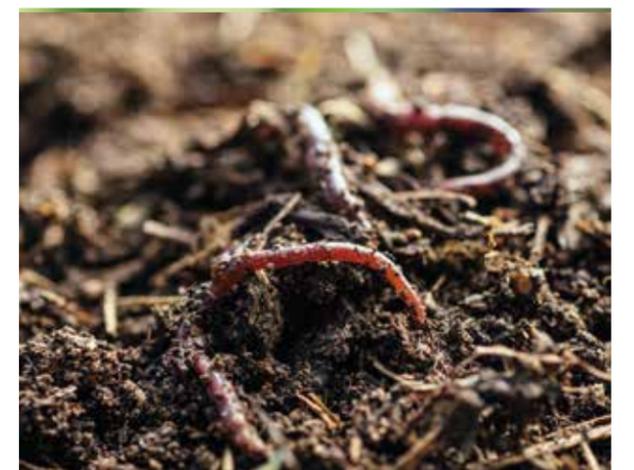
Because the preservation of biodiversity in the approximately 5,500 hectares (13,600 acres) of vineyards in Alto Adige entails far more than “only” intentionally sowing seeds for greenery and organic fertilizing, a workbook will be drawn up in 2023 as a practical aid for winegrowers. In it, concrete – and practicable – measures will be shown as to how biodiversity can be supported in the vineyard.

Milestone 7

The “Most Ecologically Valuable Vineyard in Alto Adige” Competition: Judging and Event (2021)

Comparisons can be an impetus, especially when these comparisons are made public. We will make use of this simple law of human nature with the introduction of a competition within the framework of which an award will be presented for the “Most Ecologically Valuable Vineyard in Alto Adige”. The prize and the media work that are associated with the event will not only guarantee a great deal of attention to the winner, it will also focus the efforts of winegrowing toward the preservation and expansion of the diversity of species in the consciousness of a broad public at large.

The competition is to be carried out for the first time in 2021, but there are already projects now with which a similar goal is being pursued. For instance, as ordered by the province, the diversity of species is being scrutinized over the course of several years in various winegrowing locations (both on slopes and on the valley floor) within the framework of a monitoring program. With the support and consultation of the forestry industry, a pilot project is being carried out on the sustainable management of the border zones between wooded areas and cultivated areas.





Wine

3. Wine: Something to Enjoy and a Cultural Good

Wine is the product that we produce, with which we do business, from which we live. But it is also a part of the culture of this land and thus so much more than just a commodity.

Target Image

We prepare wine at the highest level – innovative winemaking techniques, excellent quality, and a living closeness of nature and close customer relations are the demands that we place upon ourselves.

Activities

- > Determining the CO₂ Footprint of Alto Adige Wine
- > Alto Adige Climate Program throughout the Entire Value Added Chain

DETERMINING THE CO₂ FOOTPRINT OF ALTO ADIGE WINE

Where Do We Begin?

If humanity wishes to put the brakes on climate change and stabilize the climate that has already heated up, then the greenhouse gases that are generated by humans have to be cut by more than half by 2030 and reduced to zero by 2050. Every sector has to make its contribution to these global efforts – even, and specifically, the Alto Adige wine industry which has positioned itself as a forerunner.

It is not currently known, though, how much greenhouse gas is emitted by our sector at all, or how large the portion of greenhouse gas is emitted through the entire value added chain – from the cultivation, production, and sales all the way to the closed loop cycles. Experts currently estimate that for every liter of Alto Adige wine, from 0.7 to 2.0 kilograms of CO₂ are emitted. The global average is around 1.08 kilograms per bottle. The greenhouse gas balance sheet therefore currently speaks more for greater realities and mass production than for a small-structured wine industry like our own.

Where Do We Want to Go?

The initial step toward a climate-friendly wine industry lies in first creating the basis for data to obtain detailed, scientifically based knowledge. Only when these data and this knowledge are available can a concrete climate strategy be developed. For that reason, as early as 2021, the environmentally relevant data for the calculation of our CO₂ footprint will already be gathered – throughout the entire value added chain. And once these are available, measures will be indicated as to how the CO₂ balance sheet of every single winegrowing operation as well as the entire sector can be sustainably improved.

Milestone 8

The Determined CO₂ Footprint and the Derivation of the Essential Leverage Points and Measures for the Protection of the Environment and the Climate (2021–2022)

In order for individual measures for the reduction of CO₂ emissions to not remain merely fig leaves along the entire production chain but rather to actually have an effect and for us to thus make our contribution to the containment of global warming effective, the

necessary data will be collected in 2021 and 2022. From them, measures will be derived in turn which it will be necessary to then implement in later years.

One example of this: work with a tractor currently consumes seven liters of diesel per hour, thus creating the emissions associated with this. If we want to reduce consumption and emissions, three possible ways are conceivable. Tractors with lower diesel consumption can be used, tractors with different types of drives can be employed, or alternative work methods can be implemented which do not require the use of a tractor. The path that it is necessary to adopt, and which will be indicated after the processing of the necessary data, is probably a combination of all three options.

ALTO ADIGE CLIMATE PROGRAM THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE VALUE ADDED CHAIN

Where Do We Begin?

In order to cut the emission of greenhouse gases in the production of wine from Alto Adige by (at least) half by 2030 and to reduce them even more drastically in subsequent decades, it is more than just winegrowing that must be contemplated. Rather, it is necessary to implement measures for the reduction of CO₂ along the entire value added chain: from suppliers to the work and technology in the vineyard, in the wineries, and in the warehouses all the way to sales and all of the logistics including closed loop cycles.

Where Do We Want to Go?

Only when it is successful to integrate the entire value added chain into the climate program of the Alto Adige wine industry is our promise for sustainability honest and credible to our clients. For that reason, we are not restricting the program to the winegrowers and their work, but rather defining leverage points and measures for every single link of the chain.

Perhaps you have already noticed: we are speaking here

of a “climate program” and not of a “climate protection program”. The reason for this is that in addition to climate protection, the climate program has a second pillar: the adaptation of the Alto Adige wine industry to the consequences of climate change. That, too, is to be consistently pursued in coming years.

Milestone 9a

Development and Presentation of the Alto Adige Wine Climate Protection Program (2021)

As we have seen, the climate protection program is one pillar of the climate program of the Alto Adige wine industry. Its development has already been kicked off, and in 2021 it will be ready and presented to the public. The program is to contribute to slowing the progress of climate change and preventing the tipping point from being crossed. It will therefore contain all leverage points and measures that will show the Alto Adige wine industry the path toward working in a climate-neutral manner.

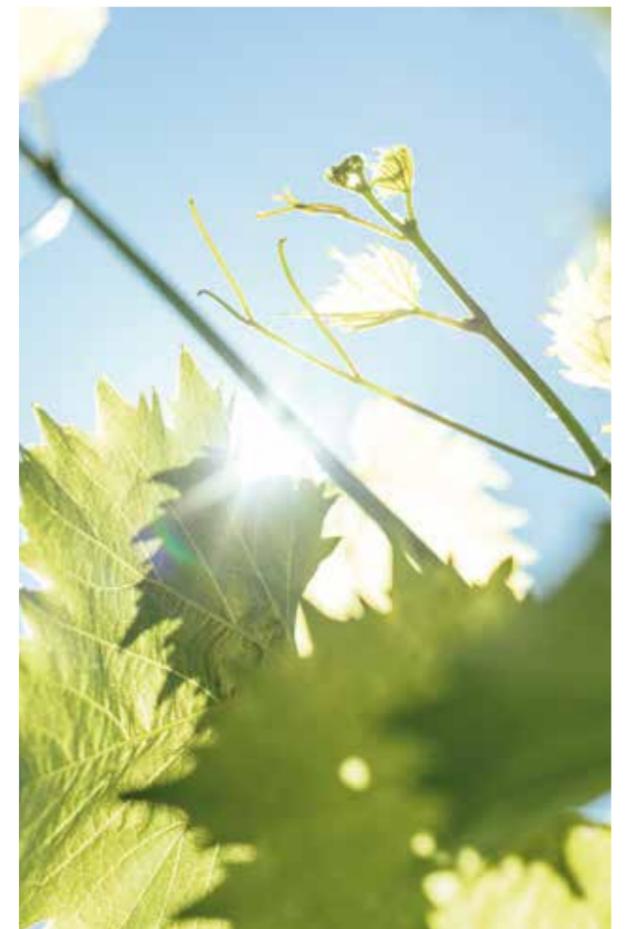
The program is not just an important building block of the sustainability strategy in our sector, it is also the central content of our communications toward the outside. In the end, it must be reckoned with that once the covid crisis has faded away, climate protection will once again be the central topic of society. And thus it will also be decisive for purchasing decisions.

Milestone 9b

The Start of the Implementation of Coordinated Measures for Climate Protection and Adaptation to Climate Change (2022)

In order for our measures for climate protection to be possible to at all be effective, we have to implement them as quickly as possible. So we are not wasting any time. As has been indicated, once the climate protection program is ready in 2021, its implementation will already be introduced in the following fiscal year.

But because climate change is already a fact, it is furthermore necessary for Alto Adige winegrowing to adapt to its consequences. For that reason, the second pillar of our overall climate program is a specific program for adaptation to climate change. This, too, will not be merely a statement of principles, but rather it will contain concrete measures on how Alto Adige’s winegrowing can deal with rising average temperatures, longer dry periods, and mounting extreme weather events in the best feasible way and, wherever possible, how it can even make use of these changes to its own advantage.





4. People: Supporting the We

The fact that grapes turn into wine in Alto Adige is due to over five thousand winegrowing families. And the fact that they are able to live from this is due, in turn, to their consumers. And thus on both sides stand people whose wellbeing it is necessary to respect.

Target Image

A beneficial, attentive cooperation characterizes our actions – and the main focus is on happiness, satisfaction, and successful dialogue with all of the people who are involved in winegrowing.

Activities

- > Internal communications: consciousness raising and the support of members with subjects of sustainability
- > External communications: active dialogue with customers, stakeholders, and the public

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS: CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING AND THE SUPPORT OF MEMBERS WITH SUBJECTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Where Do We Begin?

In a representative survey which the Business Research Institute of the Chamber of Commerce carried out in the summer of 2019, all of the wine producers who were surveyed named sustainable production as the greatest challenge in winegrowing. The sensitivity to this topic is therefore already high today, but in any case it is hardly manageable for winegrowers and wineries at the current time. The topic is too broad, the contents are too complex, and the reworking is too scant and general.

Where Do We Want to Go?

It is necessary to overcome the information deficit on sustainability and all of its aspects within the framework of the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda. With targeted internal communications and offers of dialogue, the consciousness about sustainability – which is fundamentally already present – is to be heightened even further. In addition, the individual goals, activities, and

measures of the agenda are to be disseminated in a suitable form as widely as possible among the members of the Consortium so that they do not just pursue the procedures of the agenda reluctantly, but rather help to carry them forward with conviction and implement them with commitment.

Milestone 10

Preparation of the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda for the Members of the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine

In order to convince the members of the Consortium of the necessity for a sustainability strategy and to also win them over for, in a first step, drastic measures, the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda must be conveyed with its goals, activities, and milestones in detail.

The brochure which you hold in your hand is a first step, and a dedicated website is a second. In contrast to the brochure, the website can be continuously updated, the latest developments can be found on it, as can observations on how the steps for implementation have already been executed and a listing of those that are imminent. The same purpose will be served by a series of internal

events that will still be initiated in the course of this year and at which the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda will be explained in detail. It is precisely these events which will offer the opportunity to get a dialogue going and therefore to gather impetus on the part of the members, to answer questions, and to dispel doubts.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS: CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING AND THE SUPPORT OF MEMBERS WITH SUBJECTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Where Do We Begin?

The sustainability strategy is not just a moral obligation, it is also an economic opportunity. But in order to be able to seize this opportunity, the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda has to make its goals, activities, and measures transparent, as well as their implementation. Customers, stakeholders, and, more generally, the public at large ought to learn of this first hand.

The communications toward the outside that have already been carried out today on the part of the individual winegrowing operations and the Consortium of Alto Adige Wine must therefore be expanded around the main focus of sustainability. Only in that way can it turn into a weighty argument in purchase decisions and bring us a competitive advantage.

Where Do We Want to Go?

The 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda – or, in more general terms, the efforts at sustainability by the Alto Adige wine industry – must become the permanent, massively communicated contents of public relations work and marketing. It has to take on a central role in the dialogue with customers and stakeholders and play this role consistently in sales.

In addition to the communications channels of the Alto Adige wine industry that already exist – access to the classic media, its own websites and those of others, social media channels, but also tradeshows and events

– additional offerings for dialogue and communications will be offered for customers through which the message of sustainability can be spread in a targeted manner.

The basic principles of our communications, as for the entire strategy, are to be regarded as authenticity, transparency, and honesty.

Milestone 11a

Public Presentation of the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda (2020)

In the course of this year, the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda will be publicly presented via a press conference and it will therefore also be made accessible to the media and thus to a broad public. The presentation was supposed to have already taken place last spring, but because of the covid crisis and the general lockdown, it was delayed and is now expected to be rescheduled for this autumn.

Until then, selected media in the sector will already be provided with the necessary information and materials so that the dialogue about the sustainability strategy of the Alto Adige wine industry can already get an early start in circles within the industry.

Milestone 11b

What is also to have already started is a series of dialogue events with PR, marketing, and sales. They will serve the most efficient possible coordination of communications with all participants. In the end, the sustainability strategy can only be efficiently conveyed and the communications strategy can only unleash its full force if the same messages are communicated in a bundle through all channels.

But because of the covid crisis, these events, too, had to be delayed, and they will be picked up again in the coming weeks.



Territory

5. The Territory: Shape It, Care for It, Protect It

Winegrowing cares for the landscape, it shapes it, it gives it an unmistakable face. In every aspect, it is a part of our province and bears responsibility for it.

Target Image

Embedded winegrowing creates a timeless cultivated landscape and deals with local and global resources with a sense of responsibility. We support sustainability in our province and in our world.

Activities

- > Building a regional circular economy for the strengthening of sustainable added value

BUILDING A REGIONAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF SUSTAINABLE ADDED VALUE

Where Do We Begin?

In hardly any other place in the world are the natural landscape and the cultivated landscape so tightly interwoven as in Alto Adige. And in fact, in hardly any other spot does the cultivated landscape that has been created over centuries shape the collective image of a place to such a high degree – while, in addition, still being perceived as “natural”. Just from that alone, it is shown what a contribution winegrowing makes to the image of Alto Adige, how much it shapes it, cares for it, and protects it in its intermeshing and how great the responsibility is that results from it.

At the same time, the responsibility of winegrowing for the land is not restricted to just the landscape. It goes far beyond that, also including the economy and indeed the society as a whole. If we take this responsibility seriously, then it is necessary to increase even further our contribution toward the development of business and society. And that means: we must increase the regional circular economy even further – to the advantage of all.

Where Do We Want to Go?

Sustainability has many faces. Under the overall control of the United Nations, the international community of nations developed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with seventeen large-scale global sustainability goals. We have already made repeated references to that. Specifically in the field of action “Territory”, it is clearly shown how much these various sides work together. In the sustainable closing of regional circulation, all of the facets of sustainable development are disclosed: short pathways protect the environment and people, the added value stays in the area, jobs are kept or even newly created, and much, much more.

For that reason, our attention is aimed at not just the preservation, protection, and care of our unique cultivated landscape, but also the building or closing of regional material circulation and value added chains.

Milestone 12a

Development and Presentation of Measures for the Regional Circular Economy (through 2022)

Which local resources can replace those from the outside? For which are there providers within the region? Which pathways can we shorten? And which materials can we recycle, and how and where can we do so, or for which can we supply other purposes of utilization? These questions will be delved into in coming months on a scientific basis. Through 2022, they will flow together into a program in which measures for the development of a regional circular economy will be bundled together. Within that context, we do not comprehend the term “regional” in such a way that it ends at provincial or national borders. Rather, “regional” for us means the wise inclusion of people, resources, and energies in the macroregion of the Alps.

These measures do not just encompass the supply chain, and not just our consumption of materials and resources. Rather, a regional circular economy is also targeted at our sales, at the regional wine market and its expansion. And thus it also concerns matters of unused potential, new markets within the country, and new sales channels.

Milestone 12b

As with all measures in the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda, for the program for the development and support of a regional circular economy, it is necessary that this is not drawn up merely to be left in a drawer. Rather, the measures that are provided in it will be implemented step by step and consistently beginning in 2023.

There are already lighthouse projects. Thus in the “Wood Up” project, it is being studied how with the gasification of local wood, efficient biocoal and other high-quality green products can be obtained. These can be used to increase the fertility of the soil, as a result of which the natural circulation is closed and a climate-neutral utilization chain is created. This example vividly shows how ambitions for climate protection can be consolidated with those for the development of a circular economy into a total strategy. The only thing that is necessary is the will to act.

And where does it go from here:

This brochure only basically shows how comprehensively the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda will shape the future of winegrowing in Alto Adige. Its implementation is without a doubt as radical as it is ambitious, but it is also necessary if we wish to correctly understand the sign of the times. The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides the rough terms of the path for us, and our own 200 Agenda supplies the details. The fact that this is not to merely remain on paper is already shown by the tight time constraints that we have set. In the end, milestones are not just to be realized at some point, but rather within clearly defined deadlines.

The development of the Agenda was already a community project in which experts from the most varied of areas were brought in to whom we would once again here and now like to give our heartfelt thanks for their commitment and their expertise. As a community project, we will then also proceed with the implementation, we will integrate all of the stakeholders into the dissemination and implementation, we will clearly communicate all steps, clear up all doubts according to the best knowledge and belief, and also combine our measures with all those that are otherwise being done in our province in the area of sustainability.

And as we have already said elsewhere, the 2030 Alto Adige Wine Agenda is not chiseled in stone, but rather it has to be dynamically adapted to developments. For that reason, as soon as the expiration of the first three years, and thus it is anticipated in 2022 and 2023, there will also already be a first comprehensive evaluation. In the end, “working sustainably” also means remaining open to innovation and development.

Partner



Südtirol Wein
Vini Alto Adige

