**Unbeatable quality of life, thanks in part to the intact environment**

**BALANCING DEVELOPMENT WITH PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY**

**In Trentino, over 30% of the land is protected thanks to three natural parks and an extensive network of protected areas. Natural forest management has contributed to the exceptional quality of forestry land in this territory, while mountain agriculture itself is strongly geared towards sustainability**

In Trentino, protecting the integrity of the environment and preserving biodiversity have always been important factors in development, in order to improve quality of life both for those who live there permanently and those who enjoy spending their holidays there. It’s obvious from a visit to the territory that life is good in Trentino: its landscapes combine beauty and wholesomeness, from the UNESCO World Heritage Dolomites, the 297 lakes with no fewer than 15 beaches boasting the European Blue Flag, and its little towns proudly flying the Orange Flags of the Touring Club.

Protection of the land and of natural resources has ancient roots in Trentino. As early as the Middle Ages, the forests and meadows were considered “common goods”, as set out in the laws of such centuries-old institutions as the *Regole*, *Consortèle* or *Magnifiche Comunità*, local authorities which manage resources to this very day. Over time, this tradition also developed into trail-blazing environmental policies. Over 50 years ago, in 1967, the Autonomous Province of Trento adopted a **Provincial Town Planning Model**, Italy’s first regional planning tool for such a vast area, and in many ways a forerunner of concepts that were beginning to take hold in Italian society at the time, which was then in the middle of an economic boom. One of these concepts was a strong focus on the environment: in fact, the Model identified **two provincial Natural Parks** — **Adamello-Brenta** and **Paneveggio-Pale di San Martino**. These can thus be considered the first regional/provincial Parks created in Italy, joining the earlier **Stelvio National Park**, which has been managed directly by the Autonomous Province of Trento since 2016.

Alongside the three parks, a full-scale “**System of protected areas in Trentino**” has developed over the last 30 years: 75 provincial biotopes and nature reserves, 222 local reserves, 135 SCIs (Sites of Community Importance), 19 SPAs (Special Protection Areas) and many river protection zones, all making up a truly **safe haven for biodiversity**. What’s more, there are **over 120** animal species protected under the European Habitats Directive.

The entire system of protected areas has worked with local actors on matters of sustainable tourism, becoming certified under the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (**ECST**).

Travellers across this treasure trove of biodiversity can make their way from the intense Mediterranean scent of Alto Garda to the majesty of high-altitude glacial scenes in just a few dozen kilometres. Along the way, they will discover rich endemic flora (particularly in certain zones in the Ledro Alps and on Monte Baldo) and a wealth of nesting birds and wildlife without equal in the Alps: 36,000 roe deer, 12,000 deer, 30,000 chamois, 90 bears, 70 pairs of golden eagles, 400 ibex, plus vultures and lynx that have recently re-appeared.

These protected areas, which collectively represent over **30% of the territory**, are today at the heart of a **green proposal** that strikes a balance between conservation and the opportunity to experience these priceless natural oases in a fully sustainable way. This is thanks to **organised activities** like guided tours at various periods of the year, environmental education initiatives and informational workshops aimed especially at the youngest inhabitants and visitors.

This green heritage also includes the “**UNESCO-designated Ledro Alps and Judicaria Biosphere Reserve**”, a vast swathe of land that stretches from the Brenta Dolomites to Lake Garda, where sustainability has become a fundamental element of growth.

**GREEN AT HEART**

The need to safeguard Trentino’s extraordinary environmental heritage has, over time, developed into a strong incentive to come up with new ways of conceiving of, producing and selling goods and services that can combine innovation with environmental sustainability. The result is that Trentino can now boast a network of first-rate technological and productive know-how in the field of **green technologies**, particularly in relation to **sustainable** and **wooden construction**, **renewable energies** and so-called **smart technologies** linked to sustainable mobility.

On the premises of the former Tobacco Factory in Rovereto, **Progetto Manifattura - Green Innovation Factory** has brought together 50 companies, mainly start-ups, in the sectors of eco-sustainable construction, renewable energy, technologies for the management and monitoring of the environment and natural resources, and the circular economy.

Another point of pride is **Habitech**, the Trentino Energy and Environment District, which works to integrate the know-how of universities, laboratories, research groups, businesses and institutions. The organisation has **over 300 members including businesses**, research groups and public agencies.

**The forests** of Trentino, 76% of which are publicly owned, reveal a landscape moulded by centuries of mutual reliance between the local community and its woodlands. Dense and homogeneous, they **cover over 63% of the land** and yield 43% of national timber production. Forest types in order of surface area covered are: spruce (32%), beech (14%), larch (13%) and silver fir (11%). For years, Trentino has benefited from a consolidated system for the management and certification of the forest-wood chain, which documents wood sourced from sustainably managed forests. Over 270,000 hectares of forests in Trentino have **PEFC certification**. Thanks to wide-ranging and sustainable forestry management, wood from Trentino’s forests offers high quality because of its particularly compact and sturdy fibre. This makes it especially suitable for use in construction: indeed, the city of Venice is supported by trunks of larch trees from the forests of Val di Fiemme to this very day. When it comes to wooden buildings, Italy’s National Research Council supports the Institute for the Promotion of Wood and Tree Species (known as IVALSA in Italian); at its San Michele all'Adige headquarters, the **Sistema Costruttivo Fiemme** (SOFIE) research project into sustainable construction was conducted, with surprising biological and anti-seismic criteria. Also originating in Trentino is **ARCA** (***AR****chitettura–****C****omfort–****A****mbiente*, or Architecture, Comfort and the Environment): the first Italian system for the certification of constructions and components in **high-quality wood**.

**Sustainability on screen**

In 2017, the Trentino Film Fund and Commission launched **T-Green Film**, a new tool to encourage environmental sustainability in the world of cinema. Thanks to T-Green Film, Europe’s first regional fund was set up to reward and certify film productions that respect the environment.

**Bike-sharing**

Having created a network of over **450 kilometres of bike and pedestrian paths**, Trentino enthusiastically adopted projects to foster eco-sustainable mobility. In fact, the “**Trentino e.motion**” bike-sharing project promoted by the Infrastructure and Environment Department of the Autonomous Province of Trento has been in operation since June 2014. E-bikes and charging stations are available in the municipalities of **Trento**, **Rovereto** and **Pergine Valsugana**. Other municipalities and areas which have embraced bike-sharing projects are: **Predazzo**, **Riva del Garda**, **Comunità di Valle Valsugana** e **Tesino**, **Primiero**, **Magnifica Comunità degli Altipiani Cimbri**, **Comunità delle Giudicarie**, **Altopiano della Paganella**, **Val di Fiemme** and **Val di Sole**. Thanks to e-bikes with pedal-assist, the aim is to increase opportunities for residents and tourists to explore the beauty of this land by bike.

Information available on the website [www.provincia.tn.it/bikesharing](http://www.provincia.tn.it/bikesharing).

**Trentino: tailor-made for cycle tourists**

Bike tourism is the quintessential form of soft, sustainable tourism. Between the 1990s and the present day, Trentino has developed a network of over 450 kilometres of bike and pedestrian paths that cover the entire territory, and criss-crossing its valleys thanks to 11 bike trails featuring campsites, fountains and 19 “bicigrill” rest stops where travellers can fuel up with local produce, carry out minor repairs and get information. In 2021 the prestigious “Italian Green Roads Award”, presented to the most beautiful green roads in the Italian regions every year, went to Trentino and its “Green Road dell’Acqua”, a cycle path which takes riders from Cadino to Trento via Rovereto, Lake Garda and Valle dei laghi.