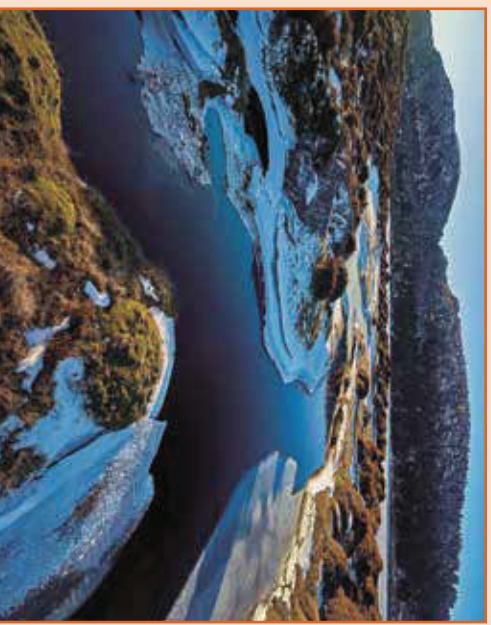
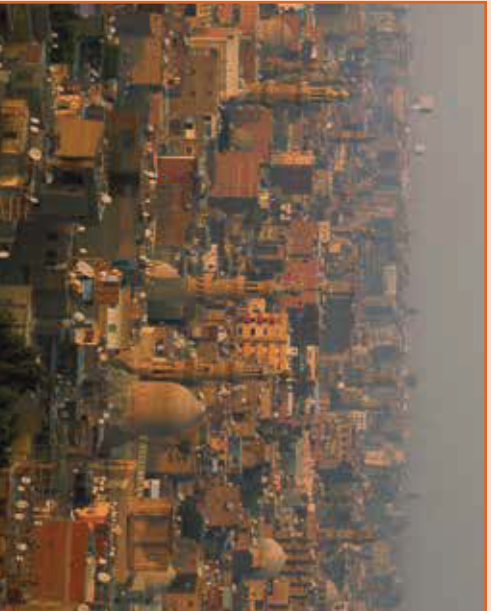


WORLD HERITAGE WATCH

World Heritage Watch Report 2018



International Appeal: The Case of Italian Prosecco DOCG Region



The Pesticide Action Network (PAN)

Pesticide Action Network (PAN International), a network of over 600 participating nongovernmental organizations, institutions and individuals in over 90 countries working to replace the use of hazardous pesticides with ecologically sound and socially just alternatives, appeals to the UNESCO world heritage to make sure that when singling out cultural and natural heritage around the world, the wellbeing and health of its habitants, of future generations and of the environment is not neglected or endangered by the use of highly hazardous pesticides.

The recent nomination of the region of Prosecco DOCG in Treviso (Italy) to become a UNESCO World Heritage in 2017 has revealed an urgency for action to be taken by UNESCO regarding the use of hazardous pesticides in the nominated sites.

The region of Prosecco DOCG is characterized by intensive wine production, where vineyards cover both urban and natural areas over the entire area, and where hazardous pesticides are intensely used. Citizens of Prosecco region have been active in community-based struggle against the use of hazardous pesticides in order to protect themselves from exposure. The intensive use of pesticides has already proven adverse effects on the health of the local population and the quality of life in the region. People living in proximity to wine growing areas are suffering from those effects day-by-day. (Annex: Testimonies of Pesticide Victims)

In fact, the danger of synthetic pesticides is explicitly recognized by local law, where access to tourist routes is prohibited during spraying periods, or when it imposes large spraying distances – that are often inapplicable – from dwellings, roads and sensitive sites (e.g. 50 meters). An example is given by the Regional law of Veneto No.1379 / 2012 inviting the Citizens to “close the doors and windows, cover the gardens and not stand close to the land plot that is going to be treated”.

The application of the Prosecco Hills as UNESCO World Heritage site started in 2008, in 2010 was recognised by Italy as a national heritage. Since then, citizens of Prosecco areas have intensified the struggle against the use of hazardous pesticides, strongly opposing the inscription of the region in the World Heritage List. Local citizen groups have been taking up a series of important initiatives to ask for a ban on synthetic

pesticides in the region. Among these initiatives, on 28 May 2017, a march was organized with more than 3,000 citizens and representatives of more than 120 local, regional and national associations. In May 2018, almost 5,000 people participated in the march calling for a pesticide ban.¹ ICOMOS Technical Evaluation mission visited the nominated property from 2 to 8 October 2017, upon which an evaluation report was based, and concluded that the Region of Prosecco DOCG **should not be inscribed** on the World Heritage List² highlighting factors of industrial wine production severely affecting the cultural landscape.³

Therefore, PAN International appeals on UNESCO to

- NOT confer World Heritage status on any region where highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) are used (and no binding obligation is made for a step-by-step exit of their use.)
- INCLUDE in their catalogue of criteria for the identification of World Heritage sites that the world heritage status conflicts with the use of highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs), that World Heritage regions must be free from their use or at least provide a scheme for a progressive ban of HHPs⁴ whose implementation is monitored by the UNESCO.
- USE the PAN International list of highly hazardous pesticides⁵ to identify HHPs. The List is based on the criteria set by The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Health Organisation (WHO) of the United Nations.

At its recent symposium on agroecology (April 2018) FAO promised to promote agroecology throughout the UN system. By denying such sites of the status of “UNESCO world heritage”, where HHPs are in use and contribute to people’s illness and environmental pollution, UNESCO would contribute not only to

1 Local News in Italian, “Follina, 4.700 in marcia contro i pesticidi” <http://tribunatreviso.gelocal.it/treviso/cronaca/2018/05/14/news/follina-4-700-in-marcia-contro-i-pesticidi-1.16834458>

2 ICOMOS Evaluations of Nominations of Cultural and Mixed Properties, 2018, WHC -18 /42.COM/INF.8B

3 *Ibis.*, p.235

4 THE UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recommended a global progressive ban of HHPs in 2006.

5 http://pan-international.org/wp-content/uploads/PAN_HHP_List.pdf

the FAO's promise but also contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The use of highly hazardous pesticides is not necessary to safeguard wine production⁶ and to secure the cultural heritage of the Prosecco region. Italy has a good track record with regions/towns going without pesticides and a bad track record of adverse health effects from pesticides that reaches from acute poisonings to cancer. A very recent report by Italy's environment agency ISPRA has revealed that Italy's surface and ground water resources suffer from severe pesticide contamination⁷.

In the run-up to the upcoming decision on the Prosecco region, PAN calls on UNESCO **not to certify the monoculture of the 15 municipalities of the Prosecco DOCG in Treviso (Italy) as a human heritage until they stop the use of HHPs**. PAN offers to UNESCO and the Prosecco body to work with the later to stop the use of HHPs and move towards agroecological practices instead.

Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHP)

The PAN HHP list⁸ includes pesticides with high levels of acute or chronic hazards to health or environment according to internationally accepted classification systems. With the HHP list, PAN provides authorities, cultivation organisations, advisers, farmers and other interested parties with a tool to identify highly dangerous pesticides and then to replace them with safer and more sustainable alternatives.

Testimonies of Pesticide Victims

"My name is Gianluigi Salvador and I live in Refrontolo, in the Province of Treviso, Italy. When I moved there, the ecosystem in Refrontolo was still mostly uncultivated and there were only a few farmers in the area. Gradually, the prosecco's trade, the most famous local wine, exploded and the demand increased. The entire area was transformed into a monoculture of vineyards for the production of prosecco. My home and my orchard were constantly contaminated because of the drift of neighbours' pesticides. My family is forced to remain home when we hear the spray nozzle and we cannot enjoy our garden for five months of the year. I wanted to start cultivating vegetables in my small hectare but it is no longer possible. Conventional Prosecco vineyards--and the pesticides that they apply--are everywhere and the paradise that wel-

comed me and my family to the area became just a memory."
Gianluigi Salvador

"My name is Viviana and I live in Cappella Maggiore, in the Province of Treviso. In September 2015 I've sent a letter to the major of the town complaining about the massive quantity of pesticides used in vineyards situated next to the local private houses. Since several years, mainly between May and August, I've started suffering of nausea, I have had a strong feeling of dizziness and I have been forced to rest in bed for many hours. Syncopes have also occurred and I had to go to the hospital. Analyses have not found any pathological causes but, during the annual ultrasound scanner, doctors have found two thyroid lump which I didn't have the previous year. Those thyroid problems have later increased: one of the two lumps became bigger and two new ones have been diagnosed. The doctor told me that this kind of disease is spreading around the area of Conegliano-Valdobbiadene, the core of prosecco's production. He advised me to contact ARPAV, the Regional Agency for the Prevention and the Protection of the Veneto Region's environment, and to aware them about the pervasive problem. When I've started complaining about the local harmful situation, several doctors and other employees of the local Preventive Department, responsible for the general public's health, did an inspection of my house and the surrounding area. According to their considerations, the reason of all my health issues was an arthritis of the dorsal disc that has been caused by a accident I had 40 years ago, whose symptoms apparently has never arisen before. Nobody referred to my complaints about the incidence of pesticides or the frequency of sick people in the area where I live. I'm not a doctor but I think it's quite unrealistic that this arthritis of the dorsal disc causes pain only in summer and for a short amount of time and I still think it's bizarre that also my neighbours are affected by similar symptoms. Few days before the doctors and the other employees of the Preventive Department came, the vineyards bordering with my property have been eradicated and that year, during the usual months of pain, I had no more problems: is it a chance or is the arthritis of the dorsal disc that has mysteriously disappeared?" Viviana X

6 See the interviews of organic wine producers For learning more about organic prosecco production please watch our interviews with producers: <https://youtu.be/zRZ2fRZUWKM>; <https://youtu.be/pJnN0QSUppA>; https://youtu.be/OtlzMHCcN_M.

7 http://www.isprambiente.gov.it/files2018/pubblicazioni/rapporti/Rapporto_282_2018.pdf

8 PAN HHP list, visit http://www.pan-germany.org/download/PAN_HHP_List.pdf