Living in the Northern Apennines: Scenarios and Strategies for the Future

Results of the Foresight Exercise
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Alta Versilia, Tuscany, Chestnut flour

The foresight exercise for the North Apennines required the identification of several key variables, including public expenditure, local governance capacity, forest and chestnut groves management, demographic trends, and declining biodiversity. Of these, the two most critical variables, based on their uncertainty and importance, are demographic trends and the maintenance of chestnut groves. These two, named long-term forces, were used to develop four scenarios, with the preferred scenario being a synthesis of "Market Utopia" and "Wild Land." This preferred scenario envisions an influx of new residents from the urban areas due to factors like rising temperatures and pollution. New residents stimulate the local economy but also boost tourism and locals collaborate to develop infrastructure and activities that highlight the region's natural qualities while preserving local resources and supporting small-scale farming.

To realize this preferred scenario, the regional strategy focuses on several critical areas. A major initiative is the establishment of a technical committee at the inter-municipal level dedicated to overseeing improvements in public basic services such as transportation and healthcare. Additionally, there is a concerted effort to reclaim and sustainably manage abandoned or underutilized lands, transferring them to new owners committed to re-use. The strategy emphasizes fostering a sustainable living model that reduces dependency on external resources and minimizes environmental impact. This involves nurturing a collaborative relationship between new and existing residents, who work together to take care of forests and other communal resources. Traditional agricultural practices are not only preserved but also largely embraced and shared, creating a vibrant, self-sufficient community.

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