



SWR Press Release

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Benchmarking sustainability standards in wine: Creating the ultimate, global guide to navigating sustainability in wine

The [Sustainable Wine Roundtable](#) (SWR) is today launching a tool which will enable transparent benchmarking of wine sustainability standards around the world. The '**Global Reference Framework**' (GRF) is the first comprehensive statement of what sustainability means in the wine sector.

At present there are as many as 70 sustainability standards globally with relevance to the wine industry. On one level, this makes sense as most have been developed to respond to the particular environmental and other specifics of different wine regions. We talk of the importance of 'terroir' in wine, why should there not also be diversity in wine sustainability standards?

Yet, the sheer number of wine sustainability standards causes confusion since there is no straightforward way of seeing how they compare with one another. In what ways are they the same? And in what ways do they differ?

This situation poses a real risk to the sector. The EU and other jurisdictions are introducing supply chain due diligence regulations, and pressure is growing to address 'greenwashing'. In September, financial service firm DWS was fined \$25 million in the USA for making false sustainability claims.

The SWR '*Global Reference Framework*' has been developed to ensure that the wine sector is able to address these challenges, and enable a transparent cross-comparison of all of these existing standards. It is the first definitive statement of what 'sustainable wine' means. It:

- Builds on knowledge and insight of existing standards in wine, and of industry bodies like OIV and FIVS.
- Incorporates analysis of sustainability requirements in other similar sectors and products like consumer goods, for example palm oil and cocoa.
- Considers the whole wine supply chain. To date, most attention on sustainability in wine has focused on practices in vineyard and winery. The GRF also considers factors such as packaging and logistics.

Over the next 15 months, the SWR will use the GRF to benchmark existing wine sustainability standards, which will provide huge benefit to the whole of the wine value chain:

- **For retailers:** This benchmark will, for the first time, allow retailers to make direct comparisons between the claims made by different sustainability standards that

exist in wine. This will allow them to communicate better on sustainability with their customers, and with their buying teams.

- **For growers:** Those growing grapes and making wine which certify to one or more standards will be better able to understand how the certification they have chosen is regarded by others in the supply chain, and to demonstrate the credibility of those standards.
- **For standards owners:** These organisations will be able to better understand how they compare with others, where they lead in what they require, and what gaps may exist which need to be addressed.

ABOUT SWR

The Sustainable Wine Roundtable (SWR) is a global platform for collaboration to advance sustainability across the wine industry. The only independent multi stakeholder roundtable with over a hundred members to include the whole wine value chain. The SWR catalyses and drives collective action and knowledge sharing. Working together, the SWR is developing practical tools which include a Global Sustainability Reference Framework. With academic bodies, NGO's and key stakeholders in all links of the wine value chain, the SWR is uniquely placed to support the wine industry's drive to greater environmental, social and economic sustainability.

SWR is engaged in work to deliver real progress on sustainability in the wine sector. As well as developing further work in wine packaging, the SWR is also working on vineyard inputs, workers' welfare and transport and distribution.

If any wine business or organisation associated with wine are interested in learning more about the SWR or getting actively involved, they should contact Tom Owtram, General Manager - tom@swroundtable.org