



# A mountain hotel as a driving force for innovation and sustainable development, Switzerland

The 100-year-old Berghotel Alpenblick hotel in Tenna  
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*Rebecca Göpfert*

In 2019, a regional development project<sup>38</sup> was initiated in the Safien Valley under the state support programme for the agricultural sector, focusing on regional development and cross-industry cooperation. Through sustainable tourism, the Safien Valley in the Grisons canton of Switzerland aims to position itself as a model region for sustainable development. The initiative will provide long-term security for existing jobs as well as create new ones.

The Hotel Alpenblick in Tenna serves as a hub for this initiative. For over 100 years, it has been the place where people from the valley meet and where events and dialogues with guests from near and far occur. The hotel will function as a central pillar, a driving force for innovation and a hub for a flourishing regional economy.

An Alpine FoodLab will be set up in the hotel to promote product innovation in Alpine agriculture. In addition to traditional products such as cheese and meat, new products and those from other cultures will be tested or revived, such as mountain potatoes, quinoa and stevia. To create incentives for these experimentations in the fields, meadows, pastures and stables of the mountain farms, agriculture, research and development will be brought together in the Innovation and Competence Centre for Alpine and Mountain Agriculture, to enable sustainable, profitable agriculture in mountain areas. The exchange of knowledge with practice is to be strengthened, and practical questions on specific, location-related problems of interest to the whole of Switzerland will be answered.

<sup>38</sup> For further information, see <https://www.blw.admin.ch/blw/de/home/instrumente/laendliche-entwicklung-und-strukturverbesserungen/laendliche-entwicklung.html>

**It is a great pleasure to work in a valley where there is a lot of room for creative and innovative projects that are implemented with a lot of passion and commitment.”**

**Jolanda Rechsteiner,**  
Managing Director, Safien  
Valley Tourism



The project is initiated from the 'bottom up' and is supported by the entire population. All stakeholders, locals and part-time residents are aware that perseverance and consistency are needed to guide the valley towards a prosperous, sustainable future. Government funding is an important provider of finance and thus an enabler, especially in the planning and initial phase. The success of such projects will depend on additional donors and supporters.

Mountain regions can only be conserved and further developed if local economic and cultural initiatives are developed and widely supported. In doing so, the focus is deliberately set on the interaction between local and national activities. This interaction creates a sense of belonging to one's homeland and cosmopolitanism, tradition and innovation, tranquility and inspiration. It is from here that approaches for sustainable development and for the long-term conservation of a unique mountain valley like the Safien Valley emerge.



The "land version" of "Null Stern Hotel"  
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