



SOGRAPE PRESENTS A WEATHER FORECAST PLATFORM FOR THE WINE INDUSTRY

**Developed under the scope of the European MED-GOLD project,
companies are now testing the new tool**

Press Release 06/06/2022 – A platform that will help the agricultural industry face the challenges of climate change is now operational, with the help of Sogrape. Developed under the European MED-GOLD project, the new platform provides access to historical and future weather information to manage the main Mediterranean crops, such as vines, olive groves and durum wheat better.

Sogrape was the only entity from the European wine sector and the only Portuguese company to participate in the project, helping the scientific partners' knowledge and creating services that allow access to historical climatic and cultural data.

According to António Graça, *"participation in MED-GOLD was an excellent opportunity to confirm climate's great impact on the wine industry, specifically on the taste and value of wine. This tool will be fundamental for agricultural managers to make the right decisions so that the vine grows and produces the best possible quality despite increasing climate change,"* Sogrape's Head of Research & Development said.

Climate has become a significant factor affecting the profitability of agriculture, making MED-GOLD an unprecedented European Union project aimed at improving forecasting and agricultural management planning. It will help save resources such as fuel and water, reduce the pesticides that are needed, contribute to reducing global warming and ensure the industry's sustainable development.

Over the past four years, MED-GOLD has collected and assessed historical climate and crop data. Its mathematical models can now analyse the climate in the past and make predictions about how it will change in the coming decades. The tool shows changes in temperatures and precipitation since 1951 and creates forecasts for up to 2100.

This information will help managers, directors, and technicians make decisions about planting vines, the choice of grape varieties and rootstocks, the operational planning for each campaign, and provisioning or harvesting.

Sogrape collected historical climate data through its network of weather stations and institutional partners such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Portuguese Sea and Atmosphere Institute, and the

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University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro and provided crop data such as records of harvest dates, phenological states and vine disease pressure.

"The services we have developed in prototype form provide seasonal forecasts that allow us to look into the future up to seven months in advance. This helps producers understand if the risk of pests and diseases will be high or if there will be a need for irrigation. They become more efficient and resilient, opening up new planning possibilities hitherto out of their reach. After this project, agriculture now has less uncertainty and a better capacity to manage the effects of climate on its profitability in the medium and long term," adds António Graça.

Aware of the impact of climate change on the wine sector, Sogrape has been investing for over 10 years in pioneering Research and Development projects that enable it to anticipate the factors that most affect its activity and integrate measures to adapt to the new global circumstances.

A pioneer in this area and with strong global awareness, Sogrape has long since implemented a set of sustainable practices throughout the value chain, from the vineyard and winery to the consumer, in a virtuous cycle of increased resilience that protects the company's activity and the value of its wines to consumers, actively contributing to the Group's Global Sustainability Approach.