

# German Pavilion – EXPO Milano 2015

The concept



## Germany at EXPO 2015

EXPO 2015 in Milan showcases the theme “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life”, offering answers to the major future challenges of human nutrition. In the context of a conceptual master plan, this world exhibition introduces a clear paradigm shift by dispensing with prestigious monumental buildings, and by presenting itself rather as a “sustainable AgroFood Park”.

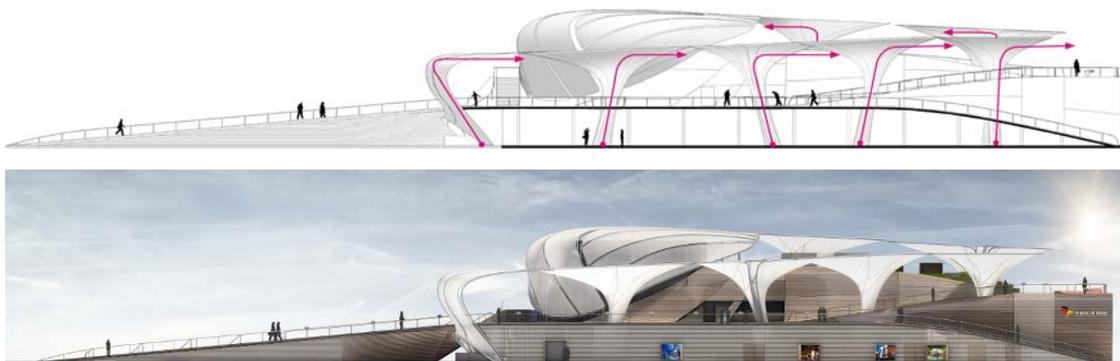
Germany takes the EXPO 2015 theme seriously, making a credible and authentic contribution. As a pioneer in environmental protection and energy policy, Germany calls for a different way of thinking and creates awareness of the forces of nature as essential sources of our food, which must be protected more effectively and used more intelligently in the future. The focus is not only on strong environmental policy and cutting-edge companies, but also on an exceptionally committed civil society.

The German Pavilion offers visitors to EXPO 2015 insight into innovative and at times surprising approaches from Germany in human nutrition in the future, and invites visitors to take action themselves. Germany depicts agriculture as a strong, modern sector and an intrinsic aspect of its unique cultural landscape.

At EXPO 2015, Germany presents itself as a vibrant and fertile landscape filled with ideas and solutions – evolved from a new and respectful relationship with nature. The pavilion offers visitors a new and quite unexpected Germany: open, warm, friendly and whimsical – clearly bringing the pavilion’s motto to life: “Fields of Ideas”.

### The big picture – the pavilion as a walk-through landscape

The German pavilion translates the German field and meadow landscape into its architecture in a striking and surprising way: a building consisting of a gently sloping landscape level with a freely accessible surface and a thematic exhibition inside. In this landscape, with clearly discernible fields, stylised plants grow as "idea seedlings" up from the exhibition to the exterior surface, creating a large, protective canopy. These are the connecting elements, dovetailing the exterior and interior, the architecture and the exhibition itself. The organically flowing design language – floating leaves hovering over the landscape – creates a distinctive and unforgettable image.



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With its open and freely accessible landscape level, the German pavilion doesn't feature explicitly prestigious architecture. Rather, it is a meeting place for fascinating encounters and exchanging ideas – clearly communicating “Fields of Ideas”. The pavilion is welcoming and lively, uniquely reflects Germany's attitude towards environmental protection, and communicates its messages with authenticity. With a multifaceted spectrum of inspiration, interaction and participation, visitors to the German pavilion themselves become part of the large, vivid picture of Germany.



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### **A field and meadow leitmotif – structural implementation and sustainability**

A very modern design language flowing into traditional materials, a natural climate concept, the economic use of resources and space, lean technologies and intelligent design and construction all converge in the German pavilion. As early as in the pavilion's planning and construction phase, “Fields of Ideas” provides sustainable, creative answers to the questions showcased at EXPO.

Formally, the architecture is reminiscent of a “supplanted landscape” set in the pavilion's premises which gradually slopes upward to a height of 10 meters. The German pavilion then applies the concept of stylised fields and meadows in great detail. The use of different native woods, with varied grains and tones, creates a highly distinctive design. The fields and

meadows evolve into a walk-through wooden deck. Wood is not only warm and inviting, it also attests to the deliberate use of renewable resources with a balanced CO2 audit. The façade design, which also focuses on wood as a building material, consists of a horizontal lamellar structure. It follows the sloping landscape and façade openings, reminding viewers of horizontal earth strata. The façade is as simple as it is “intelligent”. Its permeability and natural ventilation – achieved through a lamellar structure – are part of a simple yet very effective interior climate concept, which, in combination with energy-efficient technologies, ensures comfortable temperatures in all exhibition areas.

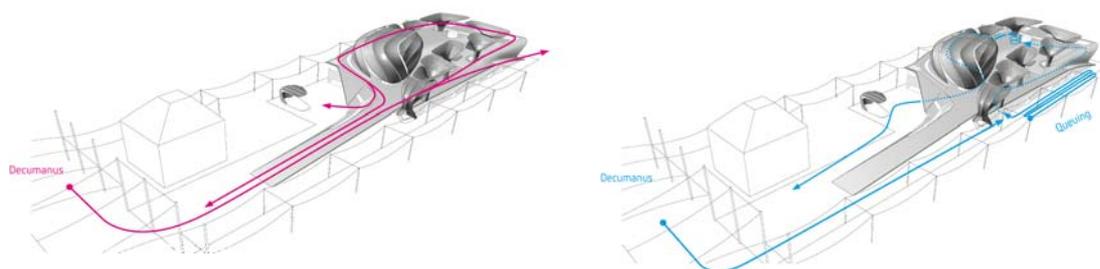
The expressive membrane roofs in the shape of emerging plants, inspired in their construction and bionic design language by nature, represent one of the pavilion’s key design elements. The modern steel and membrane structure reduces materials and makes for an extremely lightweight construction. The unusual, organic flowing lines express pioneering innovations inspired by nature.

### Visitor routing – two pathways, two experiences

The German pavilion can be explored in two different ways:

1. The visitor route, which is available to anyone independently from a visit to the exhibition, leads visitors towards a wide ramp to the upper-level landscape, inviting them to stroll and linger. Here, visitors experience Germany as a vibrant place where people can relax and enjoy what life has to offer.
2. The guided route runs through the exhibition inside the pavilion, along the rich exhibits, displays and presentations with which Germany showcases its ideas and solutions to the EXPO theme. This route culminates in the German pavilion’s big, final show.

This new and unique routing concept with two different pathways not only allows us to show more facets of Germany, it also enables a significant increase in the pavilion’s capacity.



## The outdoor pavilion experience – enjoyment and relaxation

From the EXPO site's large main boulevard, the Decumanus, visitors first arrive at the forecourt of the German pavilion, where an impressive overall view of the pavilion unfolds, before the gently sloping landscape level pulls them upwards.

Visitors who take the route to the top of the landscape deck also encounter Germany's 16 states with opportunities to experience their regional highlights and culinary specialties.

On the landscape level, the visitor embarks on a pleasurable and stimulating journey marked by exciting perspectives onto the textile leaf canopy – an intriguing interplay of light and shade, of relaxation and discovery. This is where visitors are offered the first “teasers” – from above down through the planting “holes” right into the heart of the exhibition where stories, stunning excerpts and interactions wet their appetite for the more in-depth content of the exhibition. Even visitors with little time can quickly take in rich impressions of what goes on inside, and look forward to discovering more. The spatial metaphor comes to life through the organic structures rising up from the planting holes and creating a protective canopy over the landscape.

The highest point of the open visitor route offers an impressive panoramic view of the pavilion, the vibrant visitor activities taking place below, and the sweeping EXPO grounds all the way down to the EXPO lake. With its attractive picnic area and selection of regional specialties on offer, the German pavilion invites guests to take a break, relax and simply enjoy – just like in a public park.



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The German restaurant for 350 guests with a freely accessible outdoor seating area is located in the southwest corner of the German pavilion. From the restaurant, visitors have an unobstructed view of the event stage and the outdoor cultural program. Adjacently, a sweeping landscape tribune invites guests to take a seat. This area, the “German Piazza”, is the central and very lively spot where people can meet and interact. The gastronomic and cultural offers are highlights expressing Germany’s hospitality and openness to Italian and international visitors to EXPO 2015.

### **The route through the interior of the pavilion**

The second route into the German pavilion’s exhibition first leads visitors along the building’s exterior façade. Containers, integrated into the façade, offer visitors first insight into the exhibition and Germany’s many innovative research projects.

Visitors then make their way to the interior of the pavilion – embarking on a journey through Soil, Water, Air and Biodiversity and experiencing their significance for our food supply. The exhibition presents ideas and projects spotlighting these natural resources and, in a compelling and entertaining way, advocates their protection and intelligent use – in order to ensure the most significant contribution to human nutrition in the future. The visitors then dive into the world of consumption and production. Here, they discover the abundance and variety of foods from Germany and their production – while also experiencing the flip sides of consumption. As they proceed through the exhibition, visitors learn how they can best deal with these flip sides and what individuals can do – as they engage in an exciting journey from the “ground” up into the urban world. Quite surprisingly, the visitors then access an open area with natural light and greenery, becoming part of the bustling, colourful life of people in Germany.

Finally, visitors enter the German pavilion's main show where the whole concept of individual participation is taken to an all new, unexpected and compelling level. At the close of their visit to the German pavilion, interaction evolves into a real community-enhancing event.

### **The SeedBoard**

The German pavilion offers an unprecedented exhibition experience as well. Each visitor is given their own personal "SeedBoard": their own "Fields of Ideas" – an innovative and surprising tool that actively and playfully involves them.

The SeedBoard serves as a screen for text, images, films and games. Visitors can use it to initiate and navigate exhibits, and selected content can be collected and stored. It contributes to making the pavilion visit a very personal adventure, while bringing to life Germany's fascinating technology.

### **The path through the exhibition**

#### **The pre-show**

The energy and commitment of people in Germany play a vital role in the exhibition. Dedicated, enthusiastic people from Germany, who are actively working towards ensuring sustainable human nutrition, are our ambassadors. In the pre-show, as the exhibition opens, they talk about their various projects and offer their personal insights. The message is clear: "Be active". Then, the first exhibition space opens up to visitors.



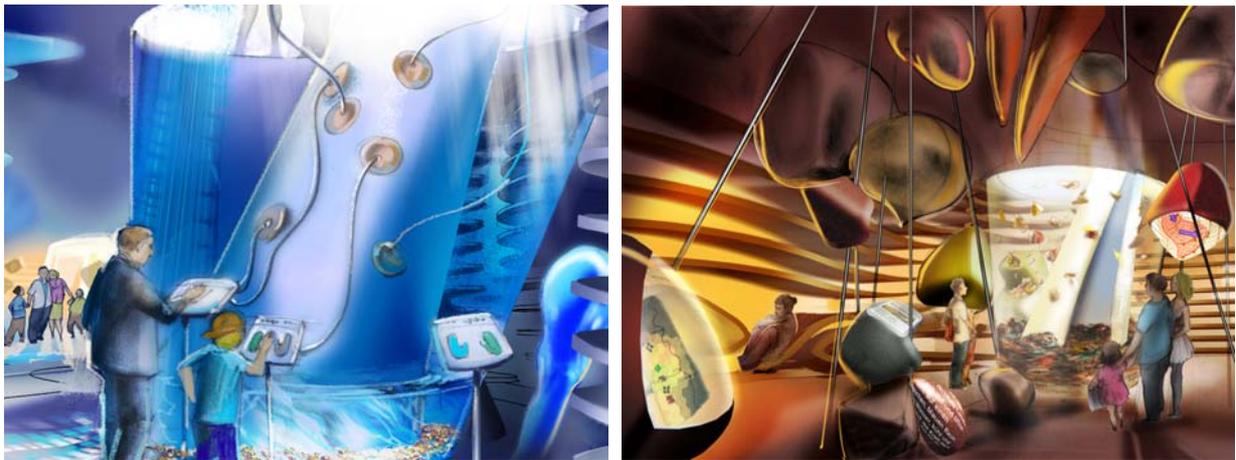
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### **The atmosphere inside**

The organic forms and structures experienced outside continue seamlessly into the interior. The walk through the exhibition is a journey through the fertile soil of ideas. The atmosphere is mysterious, focused and full of energy. Everything is growing and evolving. The path leads past nature's main resources: Water, Soil, Climate and Biodiversity. These give structure to the exhibition and open perspectives onto the many solutions from Germany, while letting visitors feel the energy of nature's forces through media installations and sound effects. Where the stems of the plants rise from the earth, a real piece of nature is created right in the middle of the exhibition. The visitor's gaze is pulled – upwards from below as well as downwards from above – eliciting interaction between visitors.

### **Water**

Out of the darkness of the pre-show, the path leads into a magical blue room. Water, cool and fresh, beautifully expresses the importance of this element for human nutrition. Various exhibit stations are grouped around a fountain centrally located within the central stem. These showcase new ideas and projects from Germany addressing the water theme, such as water treatment and water supply. Visitors can delve more deeply into content, if they so wish, by using the SeedBoard at media stations.



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### **Soil**

The atmosphere changes. As it gradually darkens, earthy tones begin to dominate. Several objects illustrate the complex "soil" organism as a vital platform for human nutrition. Display cases and interactive exhibits provide insight into projects targeted to protecting the soil and improving the nutrient balance.

### **Climate**

The next space exudes lightness and motion. Above, clouds pass by, a weather map's lines run across the room, allowing visitors to literally immerse themselves in the world of isobars, highs and lows, warm and cold fronts. The impact of climate change on nutrition is addressed here, as well as innovative solutions for renewable energy from Germany.

## Biodiversity

Then, an archive presents the fascinating variety of animals and plants – demonstrating how important it is to preserve this biodiversity to ensure food supply. Visitors can take stylised objects into their hands, in the form of seeds or eggs, look into them and listen to their stories. They are filled with projects and ideas from Germany targeted to the preservation and promotion of biodiversity.

These organic structures become more condensed, angular and urban, as the visitors leave the “ground”. As the urban world opens up, visitors can feel the power of creative development.

## Production and consumption

Here we deal with some quintessential questions: What do we want to eat in the future? What are our expectations of food production in the future? The focus is on becoming aware of how we deal with food and the impact of our daily choices.

With this in mind, visitors enter the world of production and consumption. A high, imposing space opens up in which a staircase winds upwards. Huge shelves full of stylised foods showcase the close to endless variety of stylised products which are made in Germany, while innovative production processes and new technologies in food safety are introduced. But the back of the staircase shows the much less attractive flipside of consumption. As an eye-opener, a staged “garbage hill” sparks awareness of a hard reality, while showing ideas and solutions to reduce waste.



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## The urban garden

On the way up, the atmosphere changes significantly. Daylight, a natural environment and real green spaces welcome visitors. They dive into a colourful, vibrant urban garden – where everyone is welcome and where people’s ideas develop and literally come to life. Here visitors can experience the many possibilities of agriculture right in the middle of the city, where plants and crops not only serve self-sufficiency, but also contribute to creating a strong community experience.

A German dining table allows visitors to take a look at “what’s cooking”, showing the importance of cooking and eating together – via selected school projects and civic initiatives. At the traditional “German lime tree”, visitors can leave their own ideas and share them with others.

### **The show: “Be(e) active”**

The path through the exhibition opens into the final highlight: the German pavilion’s inspiring and dynamic show where visitors immerse themselves in the German world of nutrition – filled with images, sounds and exciting moments.

In the show, an all-new view onto the world opens up to the visitors, as they see through the eyes of two bees flying over Germany. A musical artist, or “BeeJay” – becomes the conductor. Using their hands, their voices and their SeedBoards, visitors are given an opportunity to contribute to the fascinating sounds of nature, as they become the orchestra themselves, and create a rich image landscape, as seen through the large, stylised bee eyes. Animated by wire cables, the eyes “whiz” over the heads of visitors showing Germany’s multifaceted landscape from their perspective. The flight over fields and orchards, into the city, past places and people who are involved in the production and distribution of food. Exciting and amusing situations take surprising twists through the joint visitor interaction. Creating the future together evolves into an inspiring message which brings people together in a way that is light and fun.



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### **Conclusion**

The German pavilion takes a clear stance on the EXPO theme “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life” and calls people to action in a likeable and compelling way. It shows alternative solutions and approaches, and provides impetus for the future.

The German pavilion offers a wide variety of interactions – surprising and cutting-edge. It also presents an authentic picture of Germany – welcoming, vibrant and whimsical – at EXPO Milano 2015.

**Participants**

On behalf of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, Messe Frankfurt has entrusted the German Pavilion EXPO 2015 Milan Consortium (ARGE) with the realisation of the German pavilion. The ARGE, as general contractor, has taken on design planning and construction of the German Pavilion and the exhibition. The SCHMIDHUBER architectural office in Munich is responsible for the pavilion's spatial concept, its architecture and general planning. Milla & Partner from Stuttgart is responsible for the content concept as well as the design of the exhibition and media. NÜSSLI DEUTSCHLAND from Roth (near Nuremberg) is responsible for project management and construction.