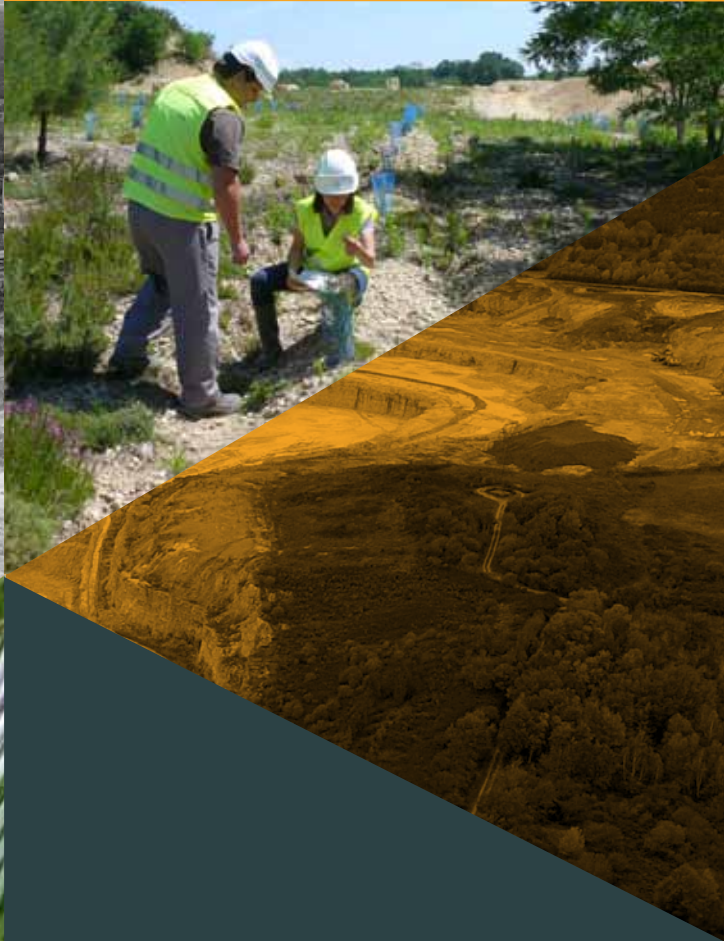




2007-2017

IUCN FRANCE & CEMENTS
CALCIA-GSM PARTNERSHIP



10 YEARS

**SPENT CEMENTING
OUR COMMITMENT
TO BIODIVERSITY!**

BALLOY-BAZOUCHES

FROM GRAVEL TO GRASSLAND



**Reclaimed quarry,
Balloy-Bazoches
(Dept. of Seine-et-
Marne).**

Did you think that quarrying was simply about extracting minerals and selling them? A tour of the site run by GSM in Balloy-Bazoches, in the area of La Bassée (Department of Seine-et-Marne) will show you just how mistaken you were! Here, the company manages environmental engineering projects and creates islands where the common tern can come to nest...

A quarry operator is also a steward of natural habitats – and especially in La Bassée, a vast alluvial plain where the River Seine, upstream of Paris, flows lazily, meandering and shifting course, accompanied by a network of small tributaries and a belt of grass swales, where water filters slowly through the soil. The Loing Valley and Fontainebleau Massif Naturalists' Association counted more than 750 plant species there, 23 of which are protected; as well as 231 bird species, more than 200 kinds of butterfly, 21 dragonflies, 30 molluscs...

Of the 30,000 hectares covered by La Bassée Plain, GSM's quarry occupies 200: a floating dredger to grab gravel from the river bed, a conveyor belt to carry it to the screening plant, where it is cleaned and sorted; and a port for shipping the finished products along the Seine. Sixteen employees run the site, which from time to time relocates as operations require. The regulations require the operator to reclaim disused areas once the aggregate has been extracted. But for what purpose? In 2004, when GSM had its operating licence renewed, the Regional Environmental Directorate demanded that these areas be turned into grasslands, whereas local farmers would have preferred to restore the fields that their forefathers once farmed, before the quarry existed. The officials had to parley with the farmers – providing explanations and highlighting the major ecological role of these mesohygrophilous grasslands, which are decreasing fast in the Île-de-France region which includes Paris; but they are the last refuges for a whole parade of flora and associated insects, as well as the rodents and birds attracted by them.

In 2007, the environmental management of the Bazoches quarry site underwent a step change, with the signing of a national agreement between GSM and the French





Great burnet.

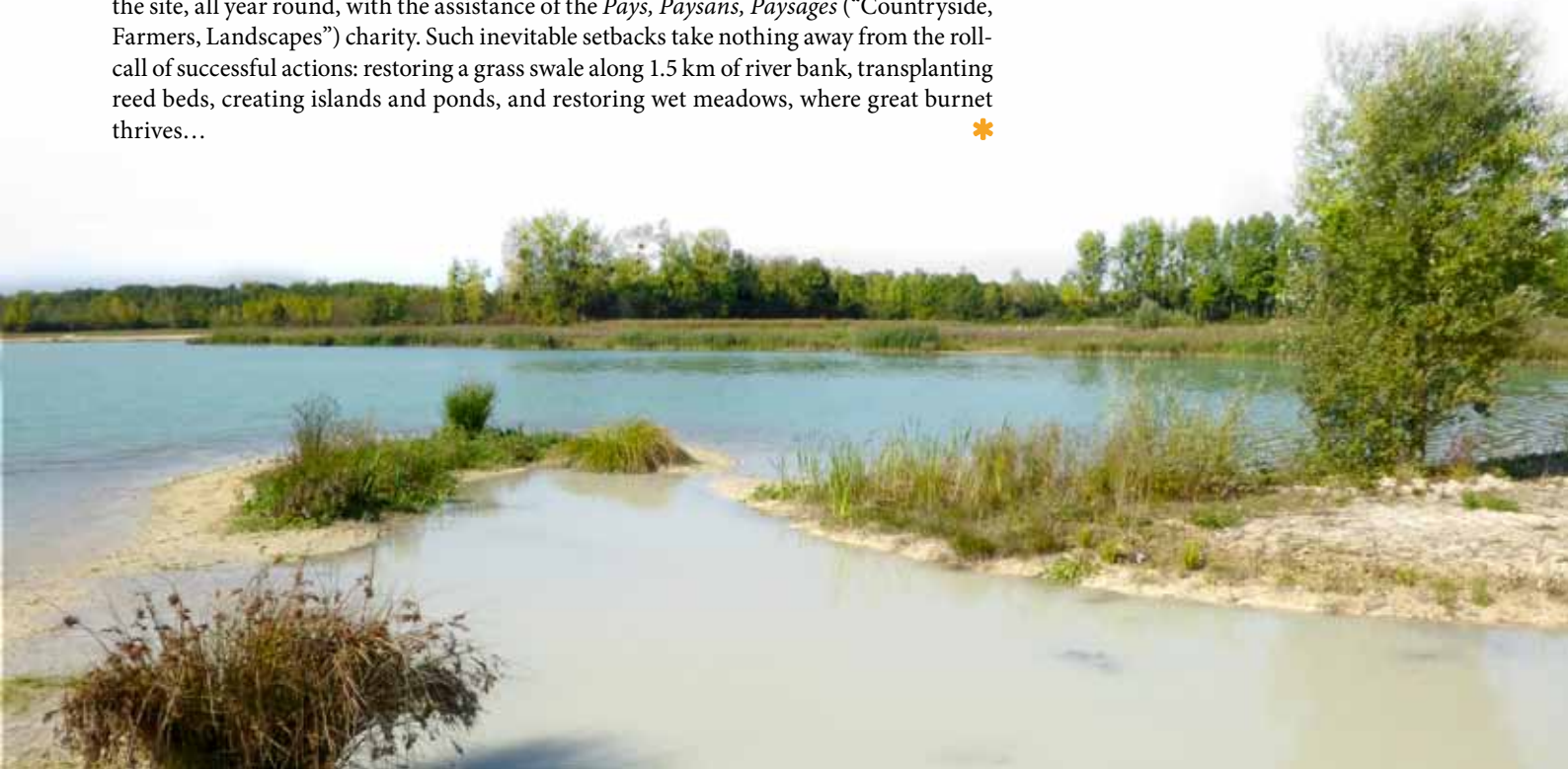


STRATEGIC AREA

A wetland of national importance, playing a strategic role in mitigating floods that could threaten Paris, La Bassée is safeguarded from rampant urbanisation – a national nature reserve was set up there in 2002. Several scientific monitoring programmes are also conducted there, notably on odonata (dragonflies), hoverflies (pollinating insects), herons, and the fringed pink, a flower protected throughout France. Many alluvial-gravel quarries are operated in the area.

Committee of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Up until then, biodiversity had mainly been a concern when the time came for restoration work; now, nature would be considered throughout the quarry operating cycle. The site's 16 staff were trained and asked to identify the rare and important species and adapt their activity to protect them; or, conversely, to detect invasive species and oust them before they colonised too large an area. The quarry's in-house staff and contractors had to comply with strict instructions: taking care of the riverbank slope, which was recreated; transplanting a hedge of blackthorn rather than pulling it up and replacing it with trees bought at a nursery; diverting the waterway that ran through the site, while digging up and replanting the peat that its banks are made of; and elsewhere, carefully managing the quarry faces to encourage sand martins to settle, in spots where their tranquillity could be ensured. Today, all of this is run with a tool co-developed with IUCN France: the biodiversity management system (SMBio).

At the Bazoches site, plenty of improvements can still be made: tern islands are a good thing, but every year the staff must maintain them, going over (in a boat) to pull out weeds. Ideally the current supported habitat would evolve on its own to functional status. But not everything can be planned by eco-engineering firms; the ideal scenario sometimes falls foul of an uninvited flower that is terrorising the neighbourhood. Which is how the grassland management by grazing programme had to be suspended due to the presence of French honeysuckle: a pretty flower, but deadly to sheep. The shepherd who since 2011 had grazed his flock in the meadows restored by GSM, after the end of gravel extraction, had to go elsewhere. Conventional methods had to be reintroduced: mechanical mowing and mulching in situ, whereas GSM had dreamt of hosting a flock of 300 livestock on the site, all year round, with the assistance of the *Pays, Paysans, Paysages* ("Countryside, Farmers, Landscapes") charity. Such inevitable setbacks take nothing away from the roll-call of successful actions: restoring a grass swale along 1.5 km of river bank, transplanting reed beds, creating islands and ponds, and restoring wet meadows, where great burnet thrives... *



SAND AND GRAVEL

FIVE TONS PER PERSON, EVERY YEAR!

Aggregates are sands and gravels extracted from both hard and unconsolidated rock quarries, and also from river beds. They are the basic building materials, used in making ready-mixed concrete (poured on the jobsite) and prefabricated concrete products; and for building road and rail infrastructure (earthworks, wearing courses, ballast, etc.). To meet regional-development requirements, average annual consumption is close to five tonnes per inhabitant.

Quarries are located where geology allows: mainly in the countryside, but preferably near urban areas. No one imagines that the habitats from which the materials are taken suffer no impact: quarrying turns landscapes upside down and disturbs and destroys species of flora and fauna, stripping the fertile topsoil to reach the rock, and disrupting the hydrological regime (in the case of alluvial quarries)... In the old days, making a declaration at the local town hall was all it took to work a quarry. But since the 1970s, operators



Processing facility, Illats quarry (Dept. of Gironde).

have had to obtain authorisation from the “prefect” (France’s top state official in each “department”, or county) – an authorisation subject to conditions that successive pieces of legislation have made tighter.

LIMITING AND OFFSETTING

To begin with, authorisation can only be issued after a highly regulated process involving an impact assessment and consultation with stakeholders and the public. Impacts must be avoided, reduced, and offset if they are residual, particularly for protected species and habitats.

Each authorisation comes with financial guarantees allowing reclamation should the operator go out of business... Operators must also comply with the various urban-planning documents – especially France’s recently-introduced “spatial planning, sus-

tainable development and territorial equality regional plan”. This is the chief document in setting out obligations regarding ecological continuity – the oft-cited “green and blue corridors” aimed at limiting habitat fragmentation, which is fatal to many species.

Besides these statutory requirements, which are needed to limit the negative impacts of the business, the quarry operator’s actions can have a beneficial effect on biodiversity, through restoring or creating environments favourable to threatened species, or by creating conditions conducive to introducing species of flora and fauna of special value. *

TARGETING 4 OUT OF 4

France’s National Union of Quarry and Building Materials Industries has produced a charter for the country’s quarry operators, which sets out environmental best practices tailored to each site. Each quarry is rated on a scale of 1 to 4, based on how far they have implemented these practices. More than 50 GSM quarries have reached level 4; all the others are level 3.

CEMENT PLANTS

NOTHING IS LOST, EVERYTHING'S RECYCLED...

Making cement is not that simple! You must wed know-how with mastery of production tools and techniques. The process is complex, and subject to stringent continuous controls regarding product quality and environmental impacts. The main ingredient is a type of limestone with specific chemical properties, which undergoes the four main stages of conversion: limestone extraction and crushing, and clay extraction; drying and grinding, which promote subsequent chemical reactions that yield a powder; the powder is then heated in a kiln to nearly 1,500°C, resulting in an artificial rock called clinker; lastly, the ground clinker is mixed with various additives in variable proportions to make a grade of cement that meets CE and NF (French) standards.

RECOVERED FUELS

For reasons of resource availability and supply, limestone and clay quarries are located close to cement plants. In other words, a cement plant is sited where deposits have been identified and analysed, and for which estimated reserves will sustain operation over several decades. As with any quarry, the impacts of cement plants in natural settings undergo documented assessments, and plants must comply with the extraction industry's regulatory obligations (*see facing page*). Although cement-based concrete is often viewed as an attractive material by firms that construct "environmental" buildings, owing to its thermal qualities (and especially its inertia), Ciments Calcia is striving to reduce the carbon footprint of its business. Firstly, by replacing fossil fuels with



Cement plant in Beffes (Dept. of Cher).

recovered fuels wherever possible. Which is how your old tyres, shredded into chips, are burned to heat cement kilns – as are pallet wood waste, used oils, and so on. The very high temperature of the flame in the kiln totally eliminates this waste, far better than a conventional incinerator could manage. Next, cement manufacturers fine-tune the proportion of clinker in their cement, by adding combustion residues and dust captured by the plant's dust control process, for example. Above

all, manufacturers endeavour to limit the impacts on their site environment of their plant and associated quarry, courtesy of tools developed in the partnership between the company and the IUCN's French Committee. *

INSECTS WELCOME

Located in the heart of the steel belt in the northeast French region of Lorraine, Rombas cement plant makes cement enriched with blast furnace slag. On the plant site, Ciments Calcia manages each non-degraded area differently, according to how the space is used by the company's activities, to promote habitat and species diversification and the expression of natural processes. An insect hotel has been installed to round off the package.

2008-2011

WITH IUCN FRANCE, GSM FORMALISES ITS BIODIVERSITY POLICY

*The first years of the partnership?
An initial site inventory, and the designing
of the company's biodiversity strategy.*



CRITERIA

How do you recognise a site of high ecological sensitivity?

One of the objectives of the first partnership between IUCN France and GSM was to draw up natural criteria applicable to all the company's sites: the presence of threatened species of fauna and flora; the location of the site, in or near areas that are important for biodiversity; and the need (voluntarily observed or a statutory requirement) to conduct ecological monitoring, are some of the selected criteria.

W

hat a terrific spot for a leisure centre! The sea is 100 metres away, and GSM, which operates the pebble quarry on the Hourdel headland south of the Somme Bay, was seeking to renew its licence and also widen its scope. The year was 1991, and the municipal councillors of Cayeux-sur-Mer dreamt of using the opportunity to boost the area's tourism potential: the future quarry lake could be the centrepiece of a leisure centre – a considerable attraction. The team at GSM Baie de Somme, however, had something different in mind: A leisure centre? OK, but for birds. The representative of France's national coastline protection body for the English Channel and North Sea, Christophe Lefebvre, shared the opinion of Nicolas Vuillier, director of GSM Baie de Somme. With backing from central government and a clutch of councillors, the site was finally assigned to be a natural area for birdlife. Avocets, Eurasian oystercatchers and northern shovellers would come to paddle there. For migratory species, a stopover in the Somme Bay was very welcome...

This decision illustrates GSM's early environmental commitment. Back then, no one was talking about "biodiversity": the recently-coined word had yet to enter people's vocabulary. But impact reduction and the local integration of its quarrying

activity were already one of the company's central concerns. It was among the very first businesses to create an environmental unit; and the first to draw up a national environment plan, followed by a second plan in 1997. In 2007, GSM looked for a national partnership with an NGO. Nicolas Vuillier, at the time GSM's environmental director, recalled his conversations with Christophe Lefebvre and decided to explore the topic with Lefebvre, then president of the French Committee of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Often described as "the UN for the natural world", the IUCN covers more than 1,000 organisations from 160 countries, including governments, public agencies, multilateral institutions and non-governmental organisations. Its 11,000 experts help, in particular, to compile the Red List of threatened species. Together, the two bodies would negotiate an innovative partnership – the first signed by IUCN France with a manufacturer.

A SUCCESSFUL GRAFT

Concluded in 2007 for a three-year term, the agreement spans four main themes: assistance with integrating biodiversity into company policy; advice and expert appraisals; discussions and forecasting; initiatives and projects. On this basis, a work programme was put in place and updated yearly. From 2008 onwards, an IUCN France research officer was based at the company's headquarters. His role: "Review GSM's existing knowledge and,

more widely, the issues underlying quarries and biodiversity; identify the company's specific needs prior to designing effective action plans, relevant indicators, and training courses able to meet the needs of GSM's business functions." In a nutshell, the IUCN would work alongside GSM to draw up an inventory of its business practices and to make recommendations with a view to a "biodiversity roadmap". The graft met with no rejection: "There were a few bits of resistance, of course," remembers Nicolas Vuillier. "But all in all, buy-in was immediate. Our facilities are in the wild, and many of our employees live in rural areas – some are hunters, anglers, and even naturalists! From the outset, they embraced the desire to preserve nature and biodiversity on our sites." At the end of the first partnership, no one questioned the utility of negotiating a second three-year agreement or of extending the initiative to include Ciments Calcia. *



Great crested grebes.

ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT

AFTER THE FIRST AGREEMENT between IUCN France and GSM, ecological management of sites had spread through the company, with: the creation of habitats favourable to remarkable species (ponds for amphibians and dragonflies, quarry faces prepared for cliff-nesting birds); ecological engineering practices (rebuilding of reed beds by transplantation); "soft" management of vegetated areas (upkeep by grazing, pesticide-free prevention), and so on.

60%

OF SITES OPERATED BY GSM in 2011 were located less than 500 metres from particularly sensitive areas in terms of biodiversity: nature reserves, Natura 2000 areas, wetlands listed under the Ramsar Convention, French regional nature parks, etc. Fifty percent of the company's sites hosted species on the Red List of species under threat in France. And 63% of GSM sites had a biodiversity action plan.



European tree frog,
Le Hourdel quarry
(Dept. of Somme).





**Biodiversity offset
area, Bussac (Dept. of
Charente-Maritime).**



**Cattle egrets in flight, Aressy quarry
(Dept. of Pyrénées-Atlantiques).**



**Flowery grassland,
Gamsheim quarry
(Dept. of Bas-Rhin).**

**ON OUR SITES,
NATURE FEELS
AT HOME**



2012-2017

BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ROLLED OUT ACROSS MOST SITES

The deployment of the “SMBio” enabled GSM and Ciments Calcia to tangibly express their commitment to the National Biodiversity Strategy.



HELLO, IS THAT THE IUCN?

How do you promote amphibians in ponds? How do you adapt a cement plant's green-space management? How do you deal with an invasive exotic species that's developing on a site? Where do you find a local nature charity to which you can delegate an expert appraisal or action plan? To all of these questions, asked by local GSM managers, IUCN France provides concrete answers under the partnership agreement.



How you do put in place and monitor a policy to preserve biodiversity across a network of 90 aggregates quarries all over France and Belgium?

For GSM, the answer, drawn up with assistance from the French Committee of the IUCN under the second three-year partnership agreement (2010-2013), was called “SMBio”, a biodiversity management system. The idea was to provide site and departmental managers with a tool that let them easily identify the biodiversity issues specific to their site; plan actions; monitor their execution; and finally to check whether the set objectives had been achieved. For this new three-year adventure with the IUCN's French Committee, Ciments Calcia (17 quarries and 10 cement plants) joined the programme.

To design the SMBio, the company drew on its experience in running its own ISO 14001 accredited environmental management system, which it modelled and simplified to make more operational. On each prioritised site given priority status, sensitivity maps highlighted the biodiversity challenges: a special species that had to be safeguarded; a sensitive environment; habitats in need of restoration... This gave rise to site-specific action plans: in some cases, it was necessary to change practices, manage quarry faces differently, restore lake banks by introducing gentler

slopes and vegetated banks, and keep a look-out for invasive exotic species.

The third component in the package was the “Rapido”, a tool for checking that planned actions were executed and for reviewing points needing attention on the site. In parallel, the IUCN's seconded staff led training courses for the company's employees, raising awareness of the need to integrate the biodiversity dimension in their business, for nature's great benefit... and for the long-term future of the business!

ACTIVE SUPPORT

In 2011, with strong encouragement from IUCN France, Ciments Calcia and GSM responded to the French government's call to take part in the new National Biodiversity Strategy. In late 2012, the commitments of Ciments Calcia and GSM received recognition.

These consisted of deploying SMBio and thus equipping the sites with biodiversity action plans. The companies' undertaking included national and local objectives, such as expanding biodiversity awareness-raising to all sites, developing partnerships, setting up ecological monitoring programmes, managing invasive exotic species, and sharing best practices.

In 2014, a three-year agreement was signed with the IUCN's French Committee. The three successive three-year partnerships have also enabled Ciments Calcia and GSM to support the work of IUCN France: by

REVIEW - TAKE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

- Annual review by management
- Involvement of stakeholders
- Publication of findings
- Complete system review every 3 years
- Improve
- New actions

DRAW UP A NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMME BASED ON

- initial surveys of each site
- significant activities
- biodiversity sensitivity: issues related to species, habitats and local areas.

To be rolled out locally.



CHECK FINDINGS

- Regulatory compliance
- Monitoring of site biodiversity indicators
- Best-practice inspections and non-conformity management
- Reporting

IMPLEMENT

- Organisation
- Responsibilities
- Best practices
- Awareness raising, training
- Management of exceptional situations (remarkable / invasive species, etc.)

helping to fund the compilation of the national Red List of threatened species and several other studies (biodiversity indicators for local/regional authorities, panorama of ecological services provided by natural habitats), and playing an active role in the work of the “business and biodiversity” group created in June 2009, which includes the IUCN’s manufacturing partners. The group, made up of member companies’ representatives and the voluntary experts of the IUCN France network, share thinking and experience feedback on environmental offsetting, biodiversity indicators, employee training, etc. The view inside the company is unanimous: the increasing consideration of biodiversity, and the rollout of the partnership with IUCN France, have provided a tangible vision of biodiversity and its interactions with extraction activity. *



SMBIO

FINALISING the adoption by all Ciments Calcia and GSM sites of the biodiversity management system (SMBIO) is scheduled for 2018. IUCN France has assisted many sites: raising employee awareness, presenting tools (sensitivity maps, actions plans, Rapido) and objectives, support with implementation and adaptation to the specific features of the site and environment in which the system is being integrated.



ECO-HEADQUARTERS

AT THE HQ of HeidelbergCement France, in Guerville (Dept. of Yvelines), the company’s biodiversity pledges are being put into practice. In an initiative led by the sustainability department, the Yvelines Naturalists’ Association conducted a first wildlife inventory of the site in 2010. And, assisted by IUCN France, the Noé (“Noah”) charity made recommendations for the site, which has now earned the “Jardin de Noé” label.



SÉBASTIEN MONCORPS

An ecologist by training, Sébastien Moncorps worked for France Nature Environnement (the national federation of nature conservation bodies), then at the National Museum of Natural History, before joining the French Committee of the IUCN in 1997.

INTERVIEW

“WE’RE MOVING BIODIVERSITY FORWARD BY ADAPTING TO BUSINESS FUNCTIONS”

For the director of the IUCN’s French Committee, this partnership has made biodiversity a strategic priority for the company.

The French Committee of the IUCN teamed up with GSM for its first partnership with a company. What drove your decision?

Sébastien Moncorps: GSM had clearly stated its wish to make a stronger commitment to biodiversity, there were already best practices in place, and our discussions with the company’s environmental director were immediately constructive – and quickly conclusive. The IUCN didn’t have any corporate members, and as companies’ responsibilities in terms of biodiversity were constantly growing, we wanted to undertake collaborations with them. In-house, we devised a framework partnership plan built around three themes: the unambiguous integration of biodiversity into the partner company’s strategy; discussions and joint work on the problems that companies face; and corporate philanthropy to support the French Committee’s programmes, especially the national Red List of threatened species. GSM and Ciments Calcia adopted this partnership framework, and we’re still using it today.

Biodiversity as part of the company’s strategy: what does that actually mean?

A stated wish to go further than the regulations’ strict requirements. We would not propose a partnership to a company that sought our help in complying with its business’s regulatory framework. But if a company wants to reach beyond its regulatory

obligations – as was the case with Ciments Calcia-GSM – by building a long-term strategy, changing its practices, developing awareness, training its employees, and viewing biodiversity conservation as a vital strand of its business, then we will work alongside the company, if it wants us to.

The second theme is interaction and joint work. What do you expect from this?

We had noticed that our partner companies were often raising the same themes and difficulties, and that these topics were shared by our other members: public agencies, NGOs and experts. This was the case with environmental offsetting, for example; with the issue of biodiversity reporting; and also with the management of invasive exotic species on manufacturing sites. So we set up a “business and biodiversity” working group, which Ciments Calcia-GSM sits on, alongside the six other companies we have partnership agreements with. Companies, NGOs, public agencies, and experts work together to find solutions that are useful to everyone, by considering the various points of view. Ciments Calcia-GSM’s representative even chaired this group for three years.

And lastly, there’s corporate philanthropy. Is this payment for your services?

No, it’s philanthropy! If we can deliver such a level of expertise, it’s because we are constantly working on long-term pro-

grammes, unrelated to any “order” placed by a company. The national Red List of threatened species is one such programme.

Our work on the Red List is now 75% funded by corporate philanthropy, and Ciments Calcia-GSM has backed the development of all the assessments we’ve done since the Red List was launched in 2007. It’s a greatly appreciated contribution to our knowledge of the state of biodiversity in France!

**“BEING
IN TOUCH
MEANS WE CAN
RESPOND MORE
RELEVANTLY”**

One person from the IUCN France team works part-time at Ciments Calcia-GSM’s headquarters. Does this happen with all your partner companies?

No, it’s specific to this partnership, but it illustrates the two levels at which we cooperate. First, there is strategic support: drawing up a biodiversity policy, designing tools to steer it, identifying priority sites. And then there’s a second level: assisting with action plans, staff awareness-raising and training, support with problem-solving, helping to identify local partners. We

visit the sites as often as possible. We’re also in touch with Ciments Calcia-GSM’s land & environmental managers and site managers. This helps us to understand the company’s constraints from the inside, and its business functions. And it means we can provide more accurate and relevant responses to the company’s biodiversity issues!

Isn’t it slightly unnatural for IUCN France to build partnerships with a company whose business has a negative impact on habitats?

Companies certainly do generate impacts on nature, but they depend on it too – which is why they must be part of the solution to halt the erosion of biodiversity and reclaim it where it has been degraded. Ciments Calcia and GSM exert pressures on habitats, but the strategy and the environmental management that they have deployed through the partnership is not only limiting these impacts but actually creating conditions conducive to introducing or reintroducing species, and to rebuilding habitats. With a reclamation programme that is ecologically well designed and monitored, the areas of water that sometimes replace quarries can be richer in wildlife than the habitats that predated the quarries! Our work benefits biodiversity when we assist a company like Ciments Calcia-GSM in its strategy and long-term actions. And we are particularly satisfied with the results achieved during our ten-year partnership! ✱



WHAT IS IUCN FRANCE?

The French Committee of the IUCN brings together 52 members (ministries, public agencies, charities, nature-conservation federations and foundations) in an original partnership, and also heads a network of more than 250 experts. It is devoted to saving biodiversity and to the fair, sustainable use of natural resources.

HEIDELBERGCEMENT

BIODIVERSITY COMES FIRST!

The group to which Ciments Calcia and GSM now belong has put nature conservation at the core of its sustainability strategy.

“**A**nd the winners are...”? The otters and the southern water voles in the Aridos Sanz quarry near Valladolid, Spain. On 8 December 2016, no otters or voles attended the ceremony in Brussels to receive the Grand Prize of the 3rd Quarry Life Award – an international contest for projects aimed at promoting biodiversity in quarries, run by HeidelbergCement, now the parent company of Ciments Calcia and GSM. The €30,000 cheque with the Grand Prize will help improve connectivity of bodies of water between the gravel pit and its surroundings. The first step, aided by camera traps, will be to find out more about populations of these two species (and a few others into the bargain) and their behaviours; then determine which environmental-engineering actions will need to be carried out to improve their habitat.

In 2016, the contest’s judging panels assessed 450 projects from 21 countries. Prize money awarded by the national panels, then the international panel, helped fund 94 of these projects. “Protection of species diversity and the sustainable extraction of raw materials are the fundamental pillars of our sustainability strategy,” declared Dr Bernd Scheifele, chairman of HeidelbergCement, at the prize ceremony. “Through the Quarry Life Award, we are encouraging research on biodiversity in our quarries as well as novel, practical conservation concepts. The projects and research findings are



River otter.

not reserved for our sole use: we seek to cooperate with various actors in the fields of education, science and conservation, to better publicise the biological value of extraction sites.”

This is why, many years ago, HeidelbergCement set up long-term partnerships with various nature-conservation charities such as BirdLife International, NABU (*Naturschutzbund Deutschland*) in Germany, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in the United Kingdom.

10 PRINCIPLES

HeidelbergCement is one of the world’s largest integrated producers of building materials, with leading positions in aggregates, cement and ready-mixed concrete.

Since acquiring Italcementi in 2015, the company employs nearly 60,000 people at more than 3,000 sites in about 60 countries. This acquisition brought Ciments Calcia and GSM into the orbit of HeidelbergCement. Since 2017, French projects have been invited to enter the Quarry Life Award.

TURTLE TEAM

THE EUROPEAN POND TURTLE

is a high-stakes species that is fully protected in France. Near its quarry in Saint-Laurent-des-Hommes (Dept. of Dordogne), GSM tasked business and nature-conservation students with projects to safeguard its habitats, in conjunction with the Aquitaine regional natural spaces conservation body.

REED AND WATCH

DEVELOPED SINCE 2006 with the expertise of the National Museum of Natural History and the involvement of IUCN France, the Roselière ("reed bed") programme (standing for: "network of observations of open-water sand pits of ecological and environmental-restoration interest") allows quarry operators to optimise their management of the relationship between manufacturing activity and biodiversity.

MAGIC SHOW

IN ROUSSAS (Dept. of Drôme), the common predatory bush cricket (called the "toothed magician" in French) reigns. To make sure that this odd character – strictly protected, and the largest known insect in France – casts a spell on it, GSM, which operates a limestone quarry at Roussas, has reintroduced it to certain parts of the quarry. On the same site, rhizomes of Crimean irises (also protected) have been relocated. The green spaces are trimmed twice a year by Roue goats (a local breed).

A CUT ABOVE

WHY MOW GREEN SPACES within quarry-site perimeters when they only need cutting once a year, as late as possible, so that their constituent plants have time to complete their life cycle? The benefits? Time savings, greater species diversity, and the sustaining of small fauna. In Villiers-au-Bouin (Dept. of Indre-et-Loire), a local farmer comes to make and bale hay, for his livestock's dining pleasure...

But HeidelbergCement's biodiversity commitments are not limited to holding an annual competition. The group has a set of biodiversity guidelines, which apply to all its sites. They set out 10 core principles, which govern the practices that are implemented during and after use of the quarry. And so: "Each mineral extraction site should maximise the land area with ecological value"; "the ecological and economic value of land after use needs to be fully considered as they both can forward the promotion of biodiversity"; "Certain areas of each quarry should be left to develop naturally"; and "HeidelbergCement promotes a high degree of biodiversity even in working quarries. Areas temporarily out of use should be managed to maximise ecological benefit."



THE PARTNERSHIP'S ACTORS

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“TAKING ACCOUNT OF BIODIVERSITY IS AT THE HEART OF OUR STRATEGY”

In about 60 countries worldwide, the name HeidelbergCement is a byword for competence and quality. The group's international identity means that, for each of its activities, there is a responsibility for sustainability and a commitment to it. Although the way we operate is centred on our customers, employees, shareholders and local partners, biodiversity issues are also an integral part of our strategy.

THE QUARRIES from which we extract raw materials, whether for our cement or aggregate production activity, are precious habitats for an array of animal and plant species. The dynamic nature of quarries attracts a wide range of rare species. When our extraction sites stop operating, they are reclaimed and restored to their natural state, and also to allow a farming or forestry application – but we always consider stakeholders' opinions and the biodiversity issue. Our preference is always for a natural project, as this will promote the development of high biodiversity.

THE COMMITMENT of Ciments Calcia and GSM, reflected for the past ten years in an active partnership with the French Committee of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), is fully attuned to the HeidelbergCement Group's ambition to support biodiversity and to its global partnership with BirdLife.

PROMOTING the best possible consideration and conservation of biodiversity on our extraction sites is a strategic theme of our development. To achieve this objective, the group has adopted a set of guidelines for its extraction sites. The French business, which has successfully developed its own approach, is recognised for its performance and commitment in this field. With all our employees and partners, we will thus make an active contribution to the HeidelbergCement Group's ambitions, in order to achieve our joint objectives: protecting and developing biodiversity. ✱

JEAN-MARC JUNON

CEO HeidelbergCement France

