

**Press release**

## **The Quarry Life Award 2016**

### **HeidelbergCement honors international projects that promote biodiversity**

On 8 December 2016, the winners of the International Quarry Life Award were presented in Brussels. This was the third edition of this bi-annual competition established by HeidelbergCement to explore innovative ideas to promote biodiversity at quarry sites. More than 450 proposals from 21 countries were submitted in 2016, of which 94 were selected for the competition in different categories: Habitat and species research, Biodiversity management, Education and raising awareness, Beyond quarry borders, and Student project.

In his opening speech, Dr Bernd Scheifele, Chairman of the Managing Board of HeidelbergCement, emphasized the importance of the competition to the company: “The protection of species diversity and the sustainable extraction of raw materials are fundamental pillars of our sustainability strategy. Through the Quarry Life Award, we promote new knowledge about biodiversity in our quarries as well as innovative, practical conservation concepts. The projects and research results do not only serve ourselves alone. We seek to cooperate with various stakeholders from the spheres of education, science and conservation to increase awareness of the biological value of quarrying sites.”

Daniel Calleja Crespo, Director General for Environment at the European Commission, also underlined the importance of cooperation between industry, conservation organizations and civil society to help promote species diversity as part of environmental protection.

The international jury, composed of Dr Carolyn Jewell (HeidelbergCement), Dr Erasmus Owusu (University of Ghana), Dr Ani Mardiasuti (Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia), Dr Michael Rademacher (University of Applied Sciences Bingen, Germany), Richard Grimmett (BirdLife International), Dr Ulrich Tränkle (AGLN, Landscape Planning & Nature Conservation Management) and Daniel Gauthier (former member of the HeidelbergCement Managing Board), presented the Quarry Life Award 2016 on the following projects:

**Grand Prize (30,000 €):**

***Linking quarries and surroundings by restoration ecology for semi-aquatic mammals***

The Grand Prize was awarded to a Spanish team led by Dr Rocío de Torre Ceijas. The project investigated the ecological connectivity of waterbodies in gravel quarries, and how to enhance this connectivity to the quarry's surroundings for a positive effect on biodiversity. The researchers used otters as a bio-indicator because of their habitat needs.

**International prizes by category (10,000 €):**

**Habitat & species research**

***Arthropod & earthworm diversity as a bio-indicator for reclamation success***

Around the world, reclamation success is often solely measured on the growth of planted vegetation - which does not give a full picture. To improve this, a project team in Indonesia investigated the use of arthropods and earthworms as bio-indicators of habitat complexity to evaluate the success of woodland creation activities in the Hambalang quarry.

Project leader: Wahyudi Nelvianto, Indonesia

**Student project**

***Nature only works if we do it together - Students "understand" insects and biodiversity***

This community project saw a group of pupils from Evangelische Grundschule Holzdorf learning about wild bees and their role in the ecosystem. Through the project, they built a bee hotel, tended a wildflower meadow and developed an information board about bees with the help of recovering addicts from HEPORÖ GmbH.

Project leader: Elisabeth von Campenhausen, Germany

**Biodiversity Management**

***Optimizing wetland functions to local conditions in connection to quarries***

At the Cementa Degerhamn limestone quarry, this project analyzed the effectiveness of an artificial pond and adjacent wetland at retaining water and nutrients from water pumped out of the quarry back into the alvar landscape. Based on their studies, the team made

recommendations for developing a multifunctional wetland focusing on nutrient retention and the resultant positive effect on biodiversity.

Project leader: Emma Svahn, Northern Europe

### **Education and Raising Awareness**

#### ***Biodiversity in space and time***

This project had a two-pronged approach: first, to assess the habitats and biodiversity of the Pechurki quarry; second, to attract public attention and raise awareness of biodiversity conservation activities. To achieve this, the team delivered more than 70 eco-lessons, performed quarry tours, attended conferences, engaged with the media, created an animated video and even organized their own essay and photographic competitions.

Project leader: Yanina Dmitrakova, Russia

### **Beyond quarry borders**

#### ***Stepping ponds - enhancement of connectivity for amphibians in riverside gravel pits***

This project evaluated the potential of gravel pits to improve and increase landscape connectivity for amphibians, one of the most globally threatened taxa due to diminished habitats. The team made recommendations on creating corridors to connect water bodies; how to inhibit the spread of the invasive exotic red swamp crayfish and advice to foster the natterjack toad population.

Project leader: Daniel Gómez de Zamora Martínez, Spain

### **About HeidelbergCement**

HeidelbergCement is one of the world's largest integrated manufacturers of building materials with leading market positions in aggregates, cement, and ready-mixed concrete. Following the acquisition of Italcementi, the company employs some 62,000 people at more than 3,000 locations in around 60 countries.

Heidelberg, 9 December 2016

5,489 characters