



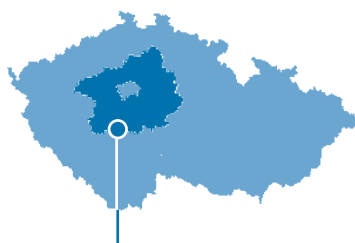
# Czech Republic

## Restoration of floodplain habitats and construction of a birdwatching tower at the Tovačov Lakes



HEIDELBERGCEMENT

### BACKGROUND



Central Bohemia,  
Czech Republic

Four large water bodies were created as a result of sand gravel extraction during last 60 years in the confluence of two important rivers in Moravia – the Morava and Bečva, near the town of Tovačov in Central Moravia. Their total water surface is 380 ha; three of the lakes are still used for mining. Apart from mining and as a source of drinking water, the lakes are also recognised for their high biodiversity and are part of the Natura 2000 network.

<b>Location</b>	Central Bohemia, Czech Republic
<b>Size</b>	~400 ha
<b>Mineral type</b>	Gravel and sand
<b>Habitat(s) created</b>	Lowland forest, islands and water-fringe vegetation
<b>Target species</b>	White tailed Eagle, ducks, herons, terns
<b>Protected areas</b>	Natura 2000 site “Morava-Chropýňský luh” and National Nature Reserve “Zástudánčí”
<b>Organisations</b>	Českomoravský štěrk, a.s. and Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO/BirdLife in the Czech Republic)

### WHY IS THIS PROJECT NEEDED?

Central Europe has lost nearly all of its natural wetlands and floodplains to infrastructure and flood protection measures. With this many important habitats, biodiversity and ecosystem services have been lost. Nowadays every natural or semi-natural wetland deserves protection and habitat restoration projects are very much needed to maintain local and migrating birds and other threatened species. At least 70 bird species rely on the Tovačov lakes mainly as a stop over site. The lakes are also used for drinking water which requires careful control of their hydrologic and ecologic conditions.



### PROJECT OBJECTIVES



DRINKING  
WATER



BIRDS

First a piece of land covered with natural forest will be „cut“ from the shore by a canal to create a 6 ha large island. Birds and other animals can use this undisturbed reserve for nesting and roosting. Secondly, part of the shoreline will be remodelled to create a shallow littoral zone giving more suitable conditions for birds feeding on small aquatic animals.

The planned works will be done in three phases starting with careful planning in 2013, excavation and bank remodelling in 2014 and habitat management and monitoring from 2015 onwards. The two main objectives to be achieved by 2015 are:

- To create a 6 ha island covered by lowland forests on the edge of the Tovačov Lakes.
- To construct a viewing tower and information facilities at the Tovačov Lakes.

## PUBLIC BENEFITS

By demonstrating the ecological value of gravel pits in Moravia, CSO and Českomoravský štěrk aim to increase the support of the local community and visitors for biodiversity conservation and to demonstrate the benefits of business-NGO partnerships.

The planned viewing tower will meet the needs of visiting birdwatchers who mainly come during the migration seasons and in wintering.

The planned restoration of the lakes and their use for nature conservation and recreation is widely supported by the local authorities and local people. Nevertheless, the law requires a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and hydrologic study to be carried out due to the proximity to the Morava and Bečva rivers and the potential risk for flooding.

## HABITAT CREATION WORK PLANNED

### Before (2012)

The excavated canal will separate the new island from the bank. The work will be carried out as part of gravel extraction.

At the same time, the forest itself will be preserved as non-intervention area, and will develop into a very rare habitat.

### After (2015)

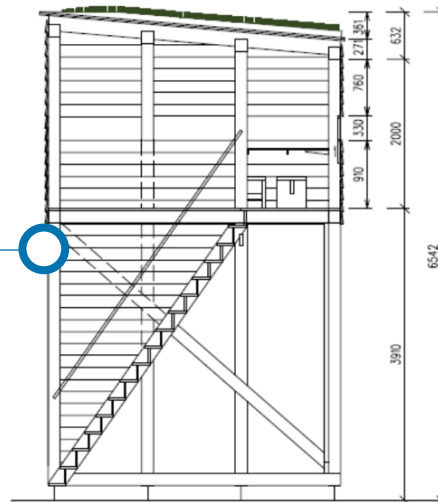
The new island will be well protected isolated stand of old forest (6 ha) suitable for breeding of birds like White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) or other rare species.

A smaller (non vegetated) island will be situated in the mouth of the lake to be used by ground nesting species such as Common Tern and waders.

### Visitors' facilities

A roofed wooden viewing tower and a network of paths and information pannels will welcome birwachers.

The entire area of the lakes will be zoned in order to meet the recreation and conservation needs. Visitors to the lakes will be better informed and their appreciation for the area will increase.



Since several years Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) have found new breeding possibilities at the Českomoravský štěrk pits. This has contributed to their increase in numbers in Central Moravia. The concrete floating islands, specially designed for birds, have proven very successful (see top picture on front page).

These activities are part of the BirdLife – HeidelbergCement Biodiversity Conservation Programme: Giving nature a second chance

For more information:

Boris Barov | Conservation Programme Coordinator | BirdLife Europe - HeidelbergCement  
Avenue de la Toison d'Or 67 | 1060 Brussels, Belgium | Telephone +32 (0) 479 70 16 06 | E-mail [boris.barov@birdlife.org](mailto:boris.barov@birdlife.org)