

Germany

Restoring ecological networks by habitat restoration in limestone quarries in Lengfurt



HEIDELBERGCEMENT

BACKGROUND



Lengfurt, Germany

The dry and nutrient-poor grasslands on calcareous soil are among the most species-rich plant communities in Europe and contain a large number of rare and endangered species. In the European Union they are considered priority habitats for conservation. Calcareous grasslands play a major, but not always well recognised role, for society and nature. Pressure on these habitats is steadily increasing, mainly due to abandonment or change in use.

Location	Bavaria, Germany
Size	~200 ha
Mineral type	Limestone
Habitat(s) created	Early succession vegetation and calcareous grasslands
Target species	National Red List and EU priority species e.g. Woodlark, Tree Pipit, Rock Bunting, Wryneck, reptiles and amphibians, rare plants.
Protected areas	Natura 2000 site (SCI):
Organisations	HeidelbergCement plant Lengfurt and LBV (NABU and BirdLife Partner)

WHY IS THIS PROJECT NEEDED?

The Bavarian Biodiversity Strategy (Bavarian government, 2008) sets the context for this project:



Cement plants are nearly indispensable for the optimization of the target habitat types

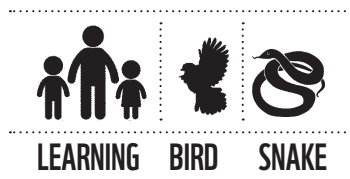
- Bavaria pursues an integrated model for sustainable land use and nature protection. This requires restoration and maintenance of ecological connectivity in the landscape.
- By 2020 viable populations should be reached for the endangered species for which Bavaria has a special responsibility. The conservation status of the Red List species, such as *Lullula arborea*, *Emberiza cia*, *Anthus trivialis*, *Jynx torquilla*, *Bubo bubo*, *Charadrius dubius*, *Corvus monedula*, *Coronella austriaca*, *Lacerta agilis* should increase by 50%.
- By 2020 protected and endangered habitat types should be significantly preserved, and as much as possible, through voluntary measures. This has to complement the European and national network of protected areas of core zones, corridors and stepping stone habitats.
- This also applies for habitat types of special importance for migrating species.



The quarries at the Lengfurt cement plant are nearly indispensable for the optimization of the target habitat types (including typical species) as well as corridors for habitat networking among Natura 2000 sites. If this project succeeds, HeidelbergCement's plant in Lengfurt will double the size of the protected habitats in the nearby Natura 2000 site.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

THE PRINCIPLE ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT INCLUDE:



- To maintain the important calcareous low-nutrient meadows intact and open by appropriate tending strategies.
- To restore connectivity of natural habitats: In practice HeidelbergCement will dedicate a significant part of its land as test areas (see map below) for active and passive habitat restoration. These areas are adjacent to already protected Natura 2000 sites (*SCI Magerstandorte bei Marktheidenfeld und Triefenstein*). The morphological structures of disused quarries and natural succession will work hand in hand to accommodate a suite of sensitive plants and animals (priority habitat types).
- Monitoring and mapping of birds and other target species (e.g. smooth snake/*coronella austriaca*) over two years.
- Production of maps and flyers, presentations, report of the project.
- Elaboration of target/ indicator species concept according to the habitat network and prioritisation of single areas.
- Cooperation with the local nature conservation authority.
- Environmental education activities with children and LBV groups: they can help by implementing habitat maintenance measures - learning by doing.



PUBLIC BENEFITS

A restored old quarry and surrounding biotopes will be made accessible to the public. This will come hand in hand with well illustrated information about the geology and living diversity of the special habitats. HeidelbergCement and LBV will become more effective in reaching out to the local community and achieving their goals: raising the awareness about the positive role that mineral extraction activities can have on biodiversity when managed well and in partnership with nature conservation organisations.

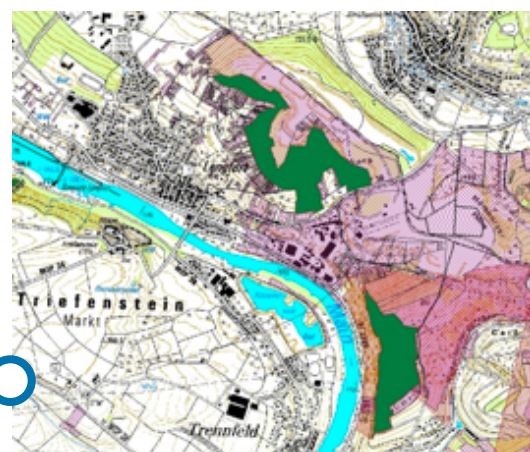
HABITAT CREATION AND SURVEY WORK PLANNED

The typical aspect of calcareous grasslands in Bavaria is highly aesthetic and appreciated.



Mapping of target and indicator species and the development of a habitat management concept is the basis for further environmental education projects (such as green class rooms).

The location of the Lengfurt plant and its quarries by the river Main gives possibility to recreate both the horizontal and vertical structure of the typical calcareous cliff with patchwork of grasslands and shrubs.



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

For more information:

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