

BIODIVERSITY CASE STUDY

Company: Dumont Wautier (Lhoist group)

Location: Ampsin, Belgium

Objective Creation of a natural reserve and a geological path in the former quarry of Ampsin, nearby Liege.

Context The city of Ampsin has a long tradition of mining activities. Hypolite Dumont, the ancestor of the Lhoist family, was the “quarry master” in Ampsin in 1889. In 2007, the excavation of limestone in Ampsin definitely stopped, after more than a century and the rehabilitation agreed with the authorities was realised by the company “Dumont Wautier” member of the Lhoist group, with the view to promoting an educational and environmental future of the site.

Solution The Ampsin project is a close cooperation between the city council of Amay, the Nature and Forest Administration of the Walloon Region and the company “Dumont Wautier”. The aim of the project is the creation of an official Natural Reserve, managed by the qualified experts from the administration with the view to promoting natural open habitat such as stretch of water and former cliffs and to encouraging the colonisation of protected species. For the three partners, it is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate that quarry activities and the promotion of biodiversity is not incompatible. It is also a very valuable example to dedicate a new area for education and social responsibility.

Result A formal convention has been signed between the City, the General Directorate of the Natural Resources administration and the company Dumont Wautier in 2008. The convention organises the cooperation between the parties for the next 30 years. The Natural Reserve covers 28 ha, which will be partially opened to the public. A more restricted and protected area will be visited only on guided tour. A geological path equipped with dedicational information has also been created. The formal inauguration took place 31 of march 2009.

The natural reserve has now got its official status for some years and the regional department for nature and forest (DNF) is in charge of the maintenance. DNF is trying to keep the area open for sheeps, eradication of the Black-Locust/False Acacia.

“Les Maîtres du Feu” in Ampsin is a museum dedicated to lime and the quarry is part of the visit.

Partners The City of Amay, the Division of the Nature and Forests of the Walloon Region and the company Dumont Wautier (Lhoist Group).

