

Company: CEMEX

Location: Avensan, France

Objective Structuring of a peaceful area for wildlife, especially wild birds, in a sector subjected to strong hunting pressures, and creation of an observatory of nature and wetlands for the public.

Context The region, in addition to its famous vineyards, offers a diversified landscape of fir groves, moors, oak groves, agricultural crops, prairies and swamps. Situated close to the estuary of the Garonne, it is lying on a very important migratory axis and is one of the areas where most hunting is carried out in Europe.

- Operation from 1973 to 2001; 1 million tons of aggregates extracted; Operated surface: 30 ha
- Restored surface: 15 ha in a wetland and 15 ha in a fishing area
- Water surface: 9 ha for the wetland, 10 ha for the fishing pond

Solution

- Diversification of the wetlands with a remodeling of the banks and of the bottom of the water plane.
- Creation of several different dried-up environments so as to diversify the plant groups.
- Conservation of abrupt, very steep operation fronts.
- Structuring of a 500 m² pond for the breeding of amphibians and the development of water insects.
- Structuring of roosting poles.
- Facilities to receive the public: ornithological observatory, discovery trail, information panels, picnic areas. Equipment has been installed to limit upsetting wildlife and avoid the destruction of the plants.

Result In 1996, an ecological expertise study, undertaken in the framework of a national research program on the wetlands generated by former aggregates operations, demonstrated the ecological interest of the site. An ideal field of discovery, the old quarry of Avensan is the pedagogical support which is perfectly adapted to the organisation of naturalist animations targeted to schoolchildren and to the public. The quarry was given back to the city hall of Avensan in 2001. It is now managed by a committee made up of representatives from CEMEX, SEPANSO and the City Hall of Avensan.

Partners In 1994, a partnering agreement was signed between CEMEX and SEPANSO (Society for the Study, Conservation and Maintenance of Nature in the South-West of France). All the rehabilitation works have been made under the scientific advice of SEPANSO, which has also ensured the follow-up of the recolonization of the area with plants and wildlife. This partnership fits in the framework of the corporate partnership between CEMEX and BirdLife International.

In 2001, CEMEX, SEPANSO and the city hall at Avensan signed a partnering agreement to ensure the best use of the site and guarantee its maintenance and scientific follow-up over time.



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