



Celebrating 10 years of



A retrospect of the Grand Prize winners of the last editions.





Then.

For many years Heidelberg Materials has been promoting the protection of biodiversity during and after quarrying activities.

In 2012, we initiated the Quarry Life Award: an international competition to support and increase biodiversity at our sites, have open communication channels with our neighbours, but also to educate and raise awareness about the importance of nature and celebrate the conservation of habitats and species.





And now.

It is clear that the private sector needs to play a key role in reversing biodiversity loss by understanding its impacts and dependencies, mainstreaming the topic throughout the business and working toward a net positive outcome for nature.

Over the past five editions of the Quarry Life Award, more than 1.500 projects proposals were submitted, out of which more than 400 were selected to take part in the research periods. These projects involved about a thousand researchers and reached out to thousands of stakeholders.

Until today, the national and international winners were granted around one million EUR in prize money.





Then in 2012.

The Grand Prize winner of the International Quarry Life Award was the team from Czech Republic.

They mapped a variety of habitats at the CEP II gravel pit near the city of Trebon and recorded the species diversity of numerous groups of organisms. Their research showed that undisturbed, natural development of open areas on or around the shorelines of the extraction zones permits a considerably greater abundance of species development than only reforestation.



**Grand Prize
1st edition**



And now.



The outputs from the winning project were published in an international scientific journal, with research continued diligently since 2012.

In cooperation with Heidelberg Materials, the project team established 40 experimental plots to investigate further the restoration of sandy grasslands. 2014 marked a milestone for the team members with the successful restoration of sandy grasslands by using biomass transferred from the nearby well-preserved dune.

Additionally, the QLA project team, together with the national QLA team and the quarry staff, succeeded in amending the national legislation on restoration of post-mining sites to make the application of near-nature restoration more efficient.





Then in 2014.

The Grand Prize winners completed a comprehensive inventory of the reptiles and amphibians living in the Góraźdże limestone quarry in Poland.

They found out that the high degree of biodiversity at the quarry is mainly due to the presence of many amphibian and reptile species. As a consequence, they developed a list of recommended land reclamation practices. During the QLA project, the rare species *Coronella austriaca* (Smooth Snake) has been found.



**Grand Prize
2nd edition**

And now.

The QLA project directly contributed to the protection of *Coronella austriaca*.
Over eight years a detailed study of the snake population has been undertaken:
150 snakes have been identified around the Górażdże Limestone quarry since then.

Based on the data collected in the project, several articles have been and
will be published in international journals.

Additionally, a virtual trail complete with educational boards about amphibians and
reptiles living in the quarry site has been created.





Then in 2016.

The Grand Prize project from Spain 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.



**Grand Prize
3rd edition**



And now.

After winning the QLA Grand Prize, a second survey with otters as bio-indicators was conducted. The two significant data sets allowed the team to publish an article in the Restoration ecology journal.

Furthermore, under team member supervision, a final master's degree project as well as two internships were carried out as part of the program Master of Ecosystem Restoration coordinated by the Alcalá University of Madrid.





Then in 2018.

The Grand Prize project team from Masaryk University, in the Czech Republic, monitored and analysed the behaviour of six bee colonies at three different localities during the growing season 2018 – two were placed in the Mokrá quarry, two at the reclaimed Hády quarry and the last two were monitored at the edge of the nearby village Lažánky.

The aim of the project was to provide scientific evidence about the importance of quarries (active and reclaimed) as a lifeline for the declining populations of bees.



**Grand Prize
4th edition**

And now.

The QLA project team currently runs a website with several beehive scales, which were bought for children beehive clubs working in ČMŠ quarries across Moravia.

The scientific approach of the project gained a community perspective – several beehives at the Mokrá quarry are now used for the production of honey to provide as a gift to the company and the communities around it.

Furthermore, the project team started bee-keeping in different localities and learned how to maintain nests for several solitary bees.



Our Vision & Mission



At Heidelberg Materials the protection and enhancement of nature is a material issue for the business, being at the core of our sustainability strategy with global commitments and local action. In more than 600 active quarries we are committed to protecting and enhancing nature during and after extraction and promoting a high diversity of local flora and fauna.

Our sites are operated in accordance with relevant international, national, and local environmental legislation, with environmental impact assessments prepared generally as a pre-requisite for the permitting of quarrying activities.

Our partnership with the largest international nature conservation organisation, BirdLife International, helps us to minimise our impact on the environment and promote biodiversity at our quarrying sites and in their surroundings.

Explore some actions



- In 2021, BirdLife, Heidelberg Materials, CEMBUREAU, Eurogypsum, and UEPG released the “Extractive Sector Species Protection Code of Conduct” – a guidance for the management of temporary habitats linked to the extractive sector.
- Since 2019, Heidelberg Materials sponsored the Spring Alive programme, which aims to inspire and educate children across Africa and Eurasia about the wonders of nature and bird migration. Through workshops, school activities and family events, this initiative fosters the next generation of conservationists – also shining a light on quarries providing a safe “stop over” for migrating birds.
- The germination and planting project of the critically endangered species *Talbotiella gentii* with Ghacem is now in its second phase, with an additional 2000 seedlings being raised in the tree nursery for subsequent use in restoration as the project continues. This is seen as a flagship project for Heidelberg Materials.

The Quarry Life Award

10 years of inspiring biodiversity projects

