

UEPG Sustainable Development Awards 2007

Company: GSM – Italcementi Group

Location: Gennevilliers, France

Gennevilliers Multimodal hub

Economic Award of Excellence & Award for Operational Best Practice



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As distances gradually increase between the aggregate deposits and the demand centres in the Greater Paris region, the development of cleaner alternatives to road transport (such as river and rail transport) is becoming imperative to preserve the environment. Combined transport for the haulage of heavy goods in urban areas is a factor in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and conserving fossil energy resources; it also lessens the social cost of the activity (less noise and pollution, better safety). The multimodal hub developed by GSM at the port of Gennevilliers on the River Seine is an outstanding example of this approach. Located northwest of the Paris metropolitan area, the facility is designed to receive large volumes of construction materials delivered via river and soon by rail to the very heart of the Greater Paris region's dense urban fabric. The new industrial infrastructure (aggregate blending plant, concrete mixing plant) will contribute to local development at a lower ecological cost than all-road solutions. This logistics hub is an industrial instrument to serve public policy in the area of construction materials and transport, as set out in documents which include the Quarry Master Plan of each department, the Urban Mobility Plan for the Greater Paris region, and the Greater Paris Master Plan. Representing a total investment of about €2 million, the hub, in its final configuration, will have an annual capacity of the order of 700 thousand tonnes per year. According to estimates by ADEME (Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie) and GSM, the existence of this hub will cut road traffic in the Greater Paris region by about 17,000 truck trips per year. Assuming full trimodal operation, that translates to avoidance of 522 tonnes of CO₂ emissions and an energy savings of 533 tonnes of oil equivalent. By encouraging the growth of construction activities and an increased use of the waterways, this facility also supports the development of traffic strategic for the Paris Port Authority, and with it, the livelihood of independent shipping firms and cooperatives. The partnership between the public and private sectors (ADEME – GSM – PAP) that the project promotes is another of its exemplary characteristics. The GSM hub at Gennevilliers is therefore entirely consistent with a policy of reconciling economic growth and environmental preservation, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.