

REVISION OF THE POLLINATORS INITIATIVE

June 2023



[Aggregates Europe – UEPG](#), representing an industry of 15,000 aggregates extraction companies operating 26,000 sites across Europe, positively welcomes the revision of the [EU Pollinators Initiative](#) launched in March 2023 by the European Commission. We are aware of the dramatic decline of pollinators across Europe, putting both managed and natural ecosystems at risk.

We specifically endorse the multi-actor collaboration objective outlined by the Revised Initiative (Action 11.4). As recognised by the European decision-makers, the European aggregates industry is contributing to fighting the decline of pollinators. That is why the European Commission published a guide titled [Business and nature working together: action by the extractives sector to protect wild pollinators](#) in which our member companies were able to show the ample set of best practices they put in practice everyday. [Aggregates Europe – UEPG](#) is also actively involved in the Business & Biodiversity Platform.

In addition, it is worth mentioning that the restoration projects undertaken by many quarrying companies during and after extraction also entail other indirect actions aim to enhance pollinators' population. Indeed, restoring floral populations such as host plants for butterfly larvae, or (re-) introducing aphids for hoverfly larvae, helps the pollinator population to bloom on the restored area, hence repopulating some areas with pollinators. Attracting pollinators can, in turn, boost the whole biodiversity initiative, as pollinators are a key element in the reproduction processes of plants.

In the frame of our [Roadmap 2030](#) commitment to contribute to biodiversity net gain by 2030 across our sites, [Aggregates Europe – UEPG](#) will continue developing programs and initiatives aiming at augmenting the pollinators population throughout Europe and, more generally, contributing significantly to reverting the biodiversity decline.



EXAMPLES OF POLLINATION-FOSTERING INITIATIVES

At national member or company level, many projects tackling biodiversity goals in general, or pollinators objectives more specifically, are set up with nature conservation organisations as well as local communities and authorities.

Our Dutch member [Cascade](#) developed a [practical guide](#) together with the [Dutch Butterfly Foundation](#) to provide raw materials extraction companies with more specific tips on how to design pollinators-friendly quarrying landscapes.

In the [Frame of the Life in Quarries project](#) (co-financed by the EU's Life Project), [Fediex](#), our Belgian member, managed to launch many initiatives to preserve and restore biodiversity across quarries. Fediex also published a [practical guide](#) destined to site operators on how to (re)construct living hedges to enhance insect and pollinators' population.

In Germany, the Bavarian regional aggregates association [BIV](#) published a [short leaflet](#) for aggregates producers together with the Bavarian Nature & Bird protection association [LBV](#). It aims at protecting and fostering wild bees in quarries and pits and gives tips on how to ensure that flowers or plants can thrive on sandy soils.

On this same topic, our French member, [UNPG](#), recently focused on the compatibility between sandy soils and bees. Together with the Territorial Office of the Northern Hauts-de-France Region, they have put together a [practical guide](#) destined to quarry operators tackling bees' protection and outlining the opportunities it entails for nature protection.



BEE SMART



The Austrian branch of [Holcim](#) has elaborated the [Bee Smart project](#) in collaboration with [BirdLife Austria](#). One of their most prominent initiatives was to set up a 5000m² flowering and orchard meadow in the Styrian Rosenberg quarry to foster insect pasturing.

Collaboration between aggregates extraction companies and nature conservation associations can also serve scientific progress. In Spain, [Holcim](#) monitored, together with the Catalan local nature conservation association, [ACER](#), the interaction between butterflies and wild orchids in the [Turo de Montcada quarry](#) near Barcelona, leading to the conclusion that some types of wild orchids only had interactions with some specific pollinators species.

Quarries and sand pits also turn out to be very important for some species of pollinating insects. With this in mind the Swedish local authority of Blekinge has [expanded the nature reserve of Ljungryda \(Olofström\)](#) to six hectares of a former sand pit directly bordering the existing nature reserve. Many species are fully or partially dependent on open, sunlit sand, but find it increasingly difficult to find it in the landscape. Areas with larger sand fields, such as Ljungryda, are therefore particularly valuable.

