

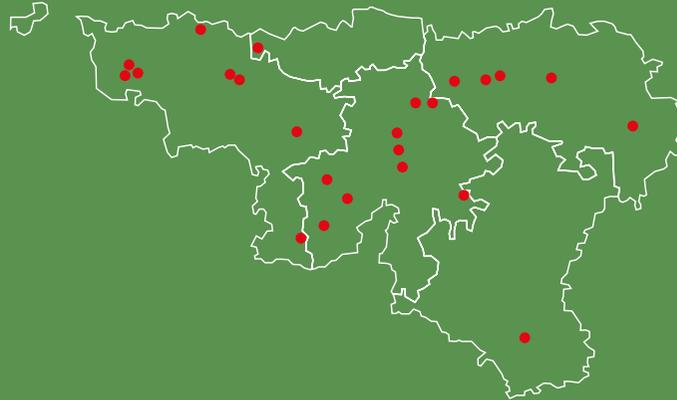
AN INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP

The project is led by Fediex (The Belgian Federation of the extractive Industry), in partnership with the Walloon Region (Nature and Forestry Department), the University of Liège Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech, Natagora and the Parc naturel des Plaines de l'Escaut. This "Industry - Public Authority - University - NGO" innovative partnership guarantees feasibility, quality and acceptability of new actions which will be implemented.



The project is co-funded by the European Union's LIFE programme (Ref: LIFE14 NAT/BE/364).

More than 25 quarries involved



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TOWARDS DYNAMIC MANAGEMENT OF QUARRY BIODIVERSITY

Exploitation of a quarry leads to the creation of environments which have become rare in Belgium, such as cliffs, rocky or sandy surfaces, rock slides, temporary ponds of water, pioneer grasslands or meadows.

These pioneer habitats, generated by mining activity, are exceptional opportunity for the installation and development of rare and threatened populations of pioneer species.

The objective of the Life in Quarries project is to develop, manage and maintain the hosting capacity of biodiversity of active quarries in Belgium. The originality of the project is to anticipate the implementation of biodiversity management measures during the extracting period in order to maximize stable and biodiversity-rich ecosystems in post-exploitation phase.

NEW APPROACHES

The project requires to develop and to demonstrate new approaches of dynamic management of biodiversity, but also to identify lock-in situation like administrative and legal constraints to apply new management measures to protected species.

DYNAMIC MANAGEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY

A network of temporary habitats is managed dynamically in time and space across the quarry in parallel with the extractive activity, ensuring constant availability of suitable habitat for development of biodiversity.

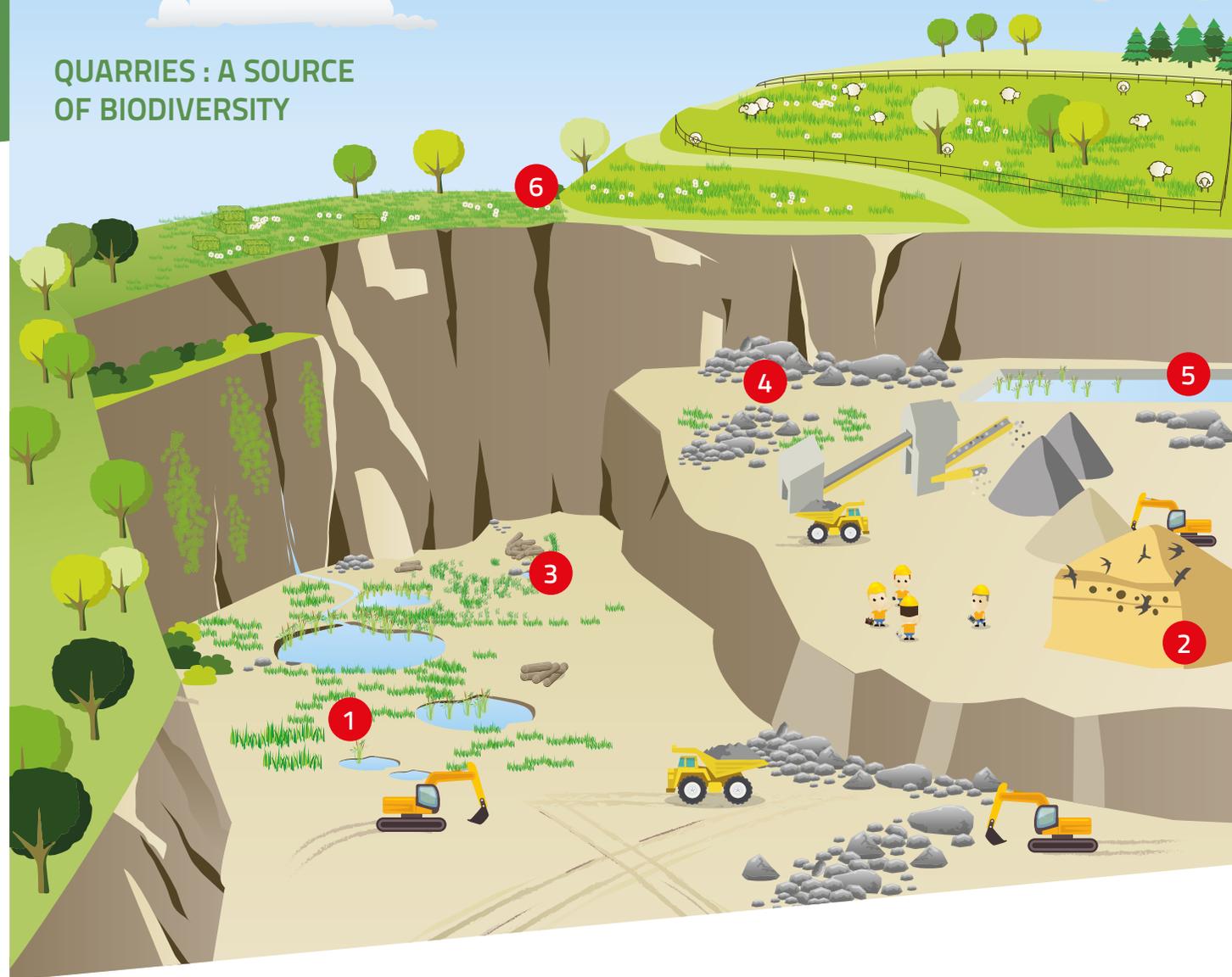
TWO PHASES

A pilot phase (2016-2018) aims at testing, developing and refining of the implementation of good practices of biodiversity management over a minimum of 12 quarries in the Walloon Region.

A second phase of the project (2018 – 2020) reproduces the developed good-practices to validate the results of the first phase, over a minimum of 12 additional quarry sites in Wallonia.

This second phase also involves a transfer of the methods and experience over a minimum of 6 sites at international level.

QUARRIES : A SOURCE OF BIODIVERSITY



MAIN ACTIONS OF THE PROJECT

1. DYNAMIC MANAGEMENT OF TEMPORARY PONDS

Creating temporary ponds, along with their regular refreshment, allow the development of targeted pioneer species, in particular, amphibians (Natterjack toad), dragonflies and water birds.

2. REGULAR LOOSE BANK REFRESHMENT

The creation and annual refreshing of soft sediment banks ensure the maintenance of suitable habitat for sand martins and solitary bees.

3. CREATION OF SHELTERS

Installation and dynamic management of shelters by stacking rocks or wood debris in open grounds enhances the hosting capacity of quarries for reptiles, amphibians and insects.

4. SCREE MANAGEMENT

Chalk and siliceous screes are important foraging grounds for reptiles, such as the smooth snake and the common wall lizard. A pluri-annual management scheme allows the maintenance of variously aged scree in active quarries.

5. CREATION OF PERMANENT PONDS

Large stretches of quarry water allow creating rich habitats which provide food and nesting resources for a wild variety plant and animal species, such as the great crested newt and the Midwife toad.

Installing floating platforms on large quarry lakes could generate attractive zones for bird species such as the common tern or the common gull.

6. RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT OF GRASSLANDS

Quarry dependencies constitute a significant opportunity for restoring dry and flowered grasslands, maintained either by late-mowing or grazing.