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## Newsletter #8

At the end of 2019, the LIFE in Quarries project is implementing a new action, the restoration and management of grazed meadows. Eco-grazing will allow the management of limestone or acid-loving grassland, restored by the project. The goal of this action is a total of 70ha on 8 sites in the Walloon Region!

Another important progress is the finalization of the factsheets which detail the technical aspects of dynamic management of habitats in the quarries. In parallel, the dissemination of the project continues on the EU scale at the InterLIFE France Nature and thanks to a visit from a delegation of the "Federación de Áridos".

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### Restoration and management of grazed meadows

**Eco-grazing or extensive grazing is making a strong comeback for the management of public, private or protected areas with high ecological value. This enthusiasm is due to its economic, social and environmental benefits. In addition, grazing allows the management of inaccessible or impractical environments through a mechanical management.**



We talk about eco-grazing when the objective is to maintain or improve the biodiversity of a site. To achieve this goal, several guidelines must be respected:

- No fertilization and pesticides: Soil fertilization benefits only a small number of fast-growing plant species. If soils are fertilized, these species will tend to "choke" the other plants. As regards the pesticides, they are unsurprisingly harmful to many plant and animal species;
- Reduced livestock density: the grazing period, the length of time and the number of animals are decisive factors in ensuring the extensive nature. A precise grazing plan must be established according to the plant species present on the parcel;
- Limitation of drugs: drugs given to animals are found on the ground via their droppings. These drugs, such as dewormers for example, can have an impact on wildlife in the grasslands;
- Favoring rustic sheep breeds: These breeds are naturally more resistant to diseases and adapted to climatic conditions. This choice also helps to save local breeds abandoned by modern breeding;
- Maintenance of refuge zones, elements of the ecological network: wherever possible, these restorations are coupled with other actions, such as the digging of permanent ponds, the installation of hedges, shelters, or scree to diversify habitats and create a real ecological network.

These voluntary initiatives can be supervised by **Natagriwal** and are subsidized the **agri-environmental program (MAEC)** which consists of putting in place practices favorable to the protection of the environment (preservation of the biodiversity, the water, the soil, the climate), the heritage conservation (animal or plant) and the maintenance of landscapes.

### ECO-GRAZING IN THE QUARRIES

The peripheral zones of the quarry sites constitute an important opportunity for the restoration of limestone or acid-loving grassland depending on the type of rocks concerned. The restoration of these environments involves different types of work such as clearing, deforestation, seeding or hay transfer and control of invasive plants (eg buddleia, acacia, ...). Then fencing allows for long-term grazing management in association with local stakeholders. The arrival of the first sheep (the Soay sheep, the spotted Ardennes and Ardenne reds) in some LIFE quarries signals the culmination of this major project





## Finalisation of the factsheets!

In the perspective of autonomous management of biodiversity, several technical tools have been developed for the personnel of the participating quarries. Indeed, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the actions, it is important that all employees are aware of the biodiversity of their quarry and know how to preserve it through concrete conservation actions.

To this end, 11 factsheets are published:

- 6 factsheets detailing the methods of creation, management and monitoring of habitats created under the LIQ project: temporary ponds, soft cliffs, pioneer grasslands, shelters and scree, permanent ponds and platforms);
- 5 biodiversity factsheets (amphibians, plants, birds, reptiles and dragonflies and damselflies) illustrate species that can be found up in the quarry.

**LES AMPHIBIENS**

Crapauds, grenouilles ou tritons ?

CRAPAUDS	GRENOUILLES	TRITONS
Peau verrueuse	Peau lisse	Corps allongé
Pierre sauteur	Sauteuse	Présence d'une queue

**Création**

Profitez de divers apports d'eau pour créer des mares pionnières en différents endroits de la carrière.

**NAPPE**  
Creusez des dépressions pour atteindre le niveau de la nappe.

**ÉCOULEMENTS**  
Créez des successions de vauques pour ralentir et canaliser les écoulements existants.

**PRÉCIPITATIONS**  
Creusez des dépressions dans les matériaux meubles tassés afin d'accumuler l'eau de pluie.

1. Creusez une dépression à l'aide d'une pelle mécanique
2. Modélez pour répondre aux critères
3. Si le substrat n'est pas étanche, envisagez d'imperméabiliser à l'aide d'une couche d'argile

**Gestion dynamique**

Naturellement, ces plans d'eau pionniers sont recolonisés par une végétation trop abondante et des prédateurs. Ils perdent alors leur intérêt pour les espèces pionnières. Une gestion dynamique est alors nécessaire pour maintenir leur caractère pionnier.

**EXPLOITATION DE LA MARE**

Recréez un nouveau réseau de mares équivalent.

- Anticipez la création des mares, pour que les deux zones coexistent pendant au moins une saison de reproduction.
- Placez le nouveau réseau à une distance franchissable pour les espèces cibles. Par défaut, une distance de maximum 200 m par rapport à l'ancien réseau de mares est préconisée. Évaluez cette distance en contourant tout obstacle majeur (route, falaise, cours d'eau limitant la dispersion des espèces cibles).
- Créez de préférence de nouvelles mares en hiver pour permettre une collecte des eaux avant le printemps.

**VÉGÉTALISATION OU COUVREMENT DE LA MARE**

Rafraîchissez le milieu existant.

- Raclez superficiellement le substrat pour éliminer la végétation.
- Afin de ne pas impacter toutes les mares à la fois, raclez en rotation sur plusieurs années, selon la recolonisation.

De 1 à 4 heures  
Automne – Hiver

Il est normal que ces mares s'assèchent avant l'été. Cette absence d'eau permet d'éliminer les prédateurs.

These factsheets are available in paper on request from FEDIEX or electronically at the

## Dissemination of LIFE in Quarries at European level

### InterLIFE France Nature 2019

InterLIFE France Nature 2019 took place this year in Marseilles from September 30th to October 2nd. It was organized by the project LIFE Habitats Calanques. This symposium was a moment of exchange and sharing, around the theme of **anthropic pressure on natural habitats**, where we had the opportunity to present the project LIFE in Quarries.



### Visit of « Federación de Áridos »

On this 21th November, we welcomed a delegation from the "Federación de Áridos". It was the opportunity to present the project with concrete examples of good practices in the management of biodiversity in quarries and its implementation at Clypot (CCB) and Quenast (Sagrex).





### UEPG Sustainable Development Awards

We are glad to announce that the quarry "Les Petons" (Solvay) won a special mention at the UEPG Sustainable Development Awards in the category biodiversity thanks to the actions implemented by the LIFE in Quarries !

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## Quarries alive 2020

The 2nd edition of the Quarries alive International Conference will be held at the University of Liège, Belgium, June 24-26, 2020, with the theme "Quarries as opportunity for biodiversity and ecosystem services – A European approach".

### Aim

Quarries alive aims to bridge quarries and biodiversity projects around the world taking advantage from sharing different approaches and insights. Our goal is to create an interdisciplinary gathering to exchange experiences from scientific research projects, technical engineering approaches and innovative pilot-studies focusing on the enhancement of biodiversity in quarries. We will focus on projects working on habitat management and restoration, ensuring ecological services, and uplifting the conservation value of quarried areas.

### Invitation

We welcome all researchers, practitioners, stakeholders, as well as policy makers, to take part of this conference and share their knowledge. We challenge all actors from several quadrants of society, from ecologists to industrial stakeholders or NGO's to fulfill the demand for sustainable exploitation of resources. Quarries alive 2020 will consist of two days of conference and one day of field trip. We expected scientific presentations, but also presentations of applied projects related to biodiversity and ecosystem services in quarries.

### Registration

<https://www.gembloux.ulg.ac.be/qa2020/register/>.

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The entire LIFE project team wishes you a happy holiday season and the best wishes for the year 2020.

Thank you for your interest, and for any questions or additional information, do not hesitate to contact us or follow us on our website and social networks.



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