



BirdLife Europe continues to strengthen ties between business and biodiversity

Tuesday 4th October - BirdLife Europe, in collaboration with BirdLife Partners, LPO/ BirdLife in France, Natuurpunt and Natagora/ BirdLife in Belgium and NABU/ BirdLife in Germany, organised a lunch debate today on the topic "Business for Biodiversity, Sustainable solutions for a changing world" in the centre of Brussels. Sponsored by HeidelbergCement and Swarovski Optik, the aim of the conference was to further deepen the discussion with the corporate sector on the numerous opportunities to create positive impacts on the environment and biodiversity conservation through economic activities.

"Through this event, BirdLife Europe aims at debating with the corporate sector on how biodiversity can be incorporated in a strategic way into business activities, creating lasting benefits for nature and our own wellbeing", said Angelo Caserta, Regional Director of BirdLife Europe. "We already work successfully together with some important players in this field, which attended the event and it is heartening to see that they want to pursue their efforts to improve their contribution to biodiversity conservation through our relationship. Moreover, I am sure this event will be a first step towards new exciting collaborations for the BirdLife Partnership.

The lunch debate was opened by a number of keynote speakers, among them Chief Executive of BirdLife International Dr. Marco Lambertini and Mr. Chris Boyden from the European Commission and was followed by interventions from companies who already work together with BirdLife and its partners, amongst them HeidelbergCement and Swarovski Optik. These corporate allies of BirdLife presented their experiences and views on the biodiversity work undertaken together with BirdLife, which led to an animated debate on sustainable management among the participants.

"Protection of nature and biodiversity promotion are at the heart of our sustainability management", said Daniel Gauthier, member of the Managing Board of HeidelbergCement and leading the Environmental Sustainability strategy for the Group. "Quarries are ideal places to promote biodiversity. Working together with BirdLife International at global and local levels will help us assess our impacts on nature and develop adapted measures to further use our quarries as stepping stones for nature."

"Swarovski Optik brings the preciousness of the moment closer to people and shares the joy of observation and the fascination for discovering the hidden and the beautiful with them", says Carina Schiestl-Swarovski, Chairwoman of the Executive Board of SWAROVSKI OPTIK. "In accordance with our company philosophy of commitment to people, animals and nature, we are very glad to be a partner of BirdLife International. Many of BirdLife's projects are outstanding examples of well managed conservation; of birds, habitats and global biodiversity. These projects clearly demonstrate how consistent, long-term support of conservation can make a real difference to birds around the world".

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Notes to editors:

- 1- Stichting BirdLife Europe
BirdLife International is a global Partnership of conservation organisations that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. The BirdLife Partnership operates in 117 countries and territories worldwide. BirdLife Europe supports the European and Central Asian Partnership for BirdLife International and is present in 45 countries and all EU Member States.
<http://europe.birdlife.org>
- 2- HeidelbergCement is the global market leader in aggregates and a prominent player in the fields of cement, concrete and other downstream activities, making it one of the world's largest

manufacturers of building materials. The company employs some 55,000 people at 2,500 locations in more than 40 countries.

<http://www.heidelbergcement.com>

3- Swarovski Optik

SWAROVSKI OPTIK, headquartered in Absam, Tyrol, is part of the Swarovski group of companies. Founded in 1949, the Austrian company specialises in the development and manufacturing of long-range optical instruments of the highest precision in the premium segment of the market. The binoculars, telescopes, rifle scopes, range finders and night sight devices are products of choice for demanding users. The company's success is based on its innovative strength, the quality and intrinsic value of its products and their functional and aesthetic design. The appreciation of nature is an essential part of its company philosophy and is reflected commendably in its environment-friendly production and its long-term commitment to selected nature conservation projects. The turnover in 2010 was 94 million euro (2009: 87 million euro) and the export ratio is 90%. The company has approx. 700 employees.