

PRESS STATEMENT

Brussels 8 October 2014

The European Cement Association and BirdLife appeals to Jean-Claude Juncker: “Do not change the rules that protect European nature”. After the power grid operators, RGI, more businesses call for a change in Juncker’s mandate letter on the Environment. A joint press statement by Birdlife Europe and the European Cement Association, CEMBUREAU follows.

In an [open letter](#) to Jean-Claude Juncker **the European Cement Association, CEMBUREAU, and BirdLife** state: *«After decades of existence the Birds and Habitats Directive have just started to deliver where governments have taken the necessary steps for their implementation through specific and targeted instruments (such as management plans and environmental impact assessments). Where transposed correctly – continues the brief to Juncker - the regulatory framework provided by the Birds and Habitats Directives is flexible and modern but most of all, it is a framework within which the business can adapt and operate successfully».*

Most importantly the **joint statement concludes with a deep concern** on its future: *«The cement and building materials industry operates with a long term vision and planning horizon. This requires stability and predictability of the regulatory framework and a level playing field across the economic sectors and markets. We are deeply concerned by the suggestion that the Birds and Habitats Directives should be merged and “modernized”. A protracted process of re-legislation at EU level, and the inevitable uncertainties and social conflicts it would bring, would harm both nature conservation and security of investments. We would rather call on the Commission to focus on improving implementation».*

Angelo Caserta, Birdlife Europe Director, added to the statement: *«More and more members of the business community are joining the appeal to Mr. Juncker not to attack nature legislation: after the electric grid operators now it’s the Cement industry. In these very hours intense negotiations are ongoing for Mr. Juncker to finalise his Commission’s composition and mandate. My message to President Juncker is simple: the environmental community, a growing number of MEPs, and relevant businesses are asking you not to change rules that work, the Birds and Habitats Directives. Please Mr. President listen to these many and diversified stakeholders».*

Koen Coppenholle, CEMBUREAU Chief Executive, adds *«The cement industry is committed to the EU 2020 Biodiversity strategy, however we need security of access to raw materials. Therefore good implementation of the EU Nature legislation and Natura 2000 network in particular ensure the necessary balance of interests in the management of vital natural resources».*

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