



**Brussels 8 October 2014**

**Joint appeal to President Jean-Claude Juncker**

**Dear President Juncker,**

A prerequisite for a sustainable and prosperous society is the balance between economy, individual and social needs and a healthy environment. Biodiversity is an integral part of all three pillars as it is in the basis of ecological processes that deliver goods, services and the regulatory systems of our planet. After many years of cooperation the Cement Industry and BirdLife International feel confident in stating that **EU Nature legislation is good for business and nature**. We are therefore addressing you with a joint call in defense of Nature legislation on the basis of the following considerations.

1. The companies in the Cement Sector confirm their support to the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and its implementation. We are committed to sustainable development to which we contribute by constantly improving our environmental performance, striving to manage our business operations within safe ecological limits.
2. A key issue for the mineral extractive industry is the security of access to raw materials. We believe that 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. Instead of tipping the balances in one direction or another, it is in our common interest as industry to encompass in such framework all economic sectors that are dependent on natural resources, ecosystem services and goods.
3. 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). If the Directives were transposed and applied consistently, and without un-necessary 'gold

plating', across the member states and economic sectors they would have proven their value and fitness for purpose.

4. Where transposed correctly, 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. The Cement sector has demonstrated decisive commitment to biodiversity through the investments and management systems we have put in place and through adopting common standards and guidelines. This framework allows us to achieve positive economic and environmental outcomes from our activities not only for our shareholders, but for society at large and for the local communities where we operate.
5. 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.
6. 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, in full cooperation with all stakeholders in order to identify any specific problems and address them within the existing legal framework on the basis of openness, scientific evidence and objectives driven policy making.

Kind regards,

For CEMBUREAU



Koen Coppenholle  
Chief Executive

For BirdLife Europe



Angelo Caserta,  
Regional Director