



**Building on
a decade of
collaborative
experience to
restore nature**





Dr Carolyn Jewell
Biodiversity and Natural Resources Senior Manager
Environmental Social Governance (ESG)

HeidelbergCement AG
Berliner Straße 6
D-69120 Heidelberg
Germany
carolyn.jewell@heidelbergcement.com

Dr Shane Sparg
Conservation Partnerships Manager

Stichting BirdLife Europe
c/o Hive5, Cour Siant-Michel 30B
B-1040 Brussels
Belgium
shane.sparg@birdlife.org

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Photo: Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus © Yves Adams

A decade to celebrate, a solid foundation going forward



As Patricia Zurita, BirdLife International's CEO said recently, the partnership between HeidelbergCement and BirdLife Europe has seen over the years a greater global awareness of the biodiversity crisis.

We've proved that business and biodiversity not only can, but must, work hand-in-hand to meet the planet's existential crises of nature loss and climate change.

Indeed, way back in 2011, HeidelbergCement, with BirdLife's help, began studying the proximity of their quarries to areas of high biodiversity value. In 2012, we kicked off what is now a ten-year project to restore and enhance biodiversity at active and retired quarries. This initiative by HeidelbergCement to seek out the scientific expertise of BirdLife was a strategic and thoughtful element of the company's leadership in sustainability. Environmental and social goals are integrated alongside economic targets into HeidelbergCement's business strategy - and the partnership with BirdLife International is but one proof point.

An example of the shared values between BirdLife International and HeidelbergCement is the emphasis placed by both organisations on science leading to concrete outcomes, collaboration with local communities,

and the importance of raising awareness broadly of the urgent need to save the planet and its biodiversity.

Besides being beautiful and inspiring, birds are a key indicator species for the health of the planet. And BirdLife is the leading authority on the health and conservation status of bird species. So, it was natural in 2011 for BirdLife to help HeidelbergCement investigate the issues around the siting of quarries, the species present and possibly threatened by the extractive activities, how to mitigate that, and then how, when the quarry is to be retired, to return it to a state that actually not only restores biodiversity but enhances it.

Two different projects illustrate our approach. In Ghana, HeidelbergCement enabled the propagation of nearly 5000 *Talbotiella gentii* young trees – critically endangered and endemic to Ghana – within the one of the quarries' nurseries. They then planted them in and around the quarries, in local forests, to re-establish the species. Another was a shoreline enhancement project building concrete floating islands within the HC Tovačov quarry lakes in the Czech Republic. According to the local

BirdLife Partner, the Czech Society for Ornithology, this innovative support offers a home to about 20% of the Czech breeding population of Common Terns.

Bringing conservation home to communities is exemplified by HeidelbergCement's collaboration with and funding of BirdLife International's terrific Spring Alive program. Children in Europe, Africa and elsewhere are encouraged take an interest in migratory birds.

BirdLife International works with HeidelbergCement on almost half of their extraction sites globally. From Spring Alive to the exciting Quarry Life Awards which raise awareness of the biodiversity value of quarries and sharing new best practices, with BirdLife's Partners and HeidelbergCement's, we are the power of many.

Patricia Zurita
Chief Executive Officer,
BirdLife International



**Dr Nicola Kimm –
Chief Sustainability Officer,
HeidelbergCement:**

As one of the world’s largest integrated manufacturers of building materials and solutions, HeidelbergCement is fully aware of its interaction with the environment. This is why the protection and enhancement of nature is systematically pursued as a key element of our sustainability strategy and biodiversity management is of extraordinary importance.

With the sheer numbers of species, different micro habitats, and intricate species interactions, it has always been clear to HeidelbergCement that this topic has great complexity. Therefore, we need a trusted partner to support us in delivering our biodiversity commitments. As such, we are really

happy to be celebrating ten years working with BirdLife International – a partnership that has developed based on our shared values of promoting biodiversity while using natural resources sustainably.

Over the past decade, BirdLife International and its national partner organisations have helped us maximise the role our extraction sites can play for biodiversity, through imparting knowledge, sharing best practice, and working on the ground with our operational staff to engage and empower. This publication is a testament to what has been achieved over the past decade.

This is a critical time for our planet, and urgent action is needed for both climate and nature. It is clear that we need to build on what we have

collectively learnt and use that to not only increase action on the ground, but also to help shape policy. As the global momentum accelerates action for nature, the next decade will bring with it new strategies, at global, regional and local levels. There has never been a more important time for collaboration, and we look forward to continuing our partnership into a further decade as we take the next step to understand our impact on biodiversity and work together towards nature positive.

Dr Nicola Kimm
Chief Sustainability Officer,
HeidelbergCement

Photo: Little Ringed Plover
© Tomasz Wilk



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THE QUARRY LIFE AWARD

To support HeidelbergCement enhance biodiversity throughout the lifecycle of its quarries and engage local communities, every three years the company hosts a nature-based competition – the Quarry Life Award.

Opening quarries across the world for university students, NGOs, communities and all other nature enthusiasts to have the chance of undertaking nature themed projects.

Nature of course is the biggest winner, but participants also have the

chance of winning national and international prizes, up to €30,000.

BirdLife International is a key partner in the competition, as an advisor and international jury member, with local partners playing active roles at a national level.

Interested to find out more, then visit www.quarrylifeaward.com

Restoring for the future...

HeidelbergCement AG and BirdLife International have been working in partnership since 2011 to achieve better protection of biodiversity at extraction sites. Both organisations have identified the importance of collaborating across sectors if we are to halt biodiversity loss, and ensure the topic is embedded in decision making at all levels of society. The science has proven that we cannot just reduce our impacts, but we need to reverse things completely and start putting back – restore nature.

General Principles

The two organisations agree that the biodiversity crisis is a global priority alongside the climate emergency and understanding. As these two agendas are profoundly connected they must be addressed together.

We recognise maintaining the integrity of existing biodiversity is a priority and therefore support the global 30x30 target, which means that for business planning, the mitigation hierarchy is paramount: first avoid harm, then minimise, rectify, reduce, or offset.

It is clear from the ecological restoration experience gained over past decades, that nature can and does recover if given the chance, often even quicker than realised. There is a push to speed up recovery, but facilitating natural regeneration is often more effective than prescriptive planting, which is evident through the sensitive restoration of extraction sites.

While restoration through working with nature and reactivating natural processes is preferred, it is recognised that human intervention may be required and that geomorphological reprofiling through the extraction of inert materials such as soil, gravel, and other aggregates can be part of the solution.

The wealth of co-benefits of restoration must also be widely recognised by decision makers and society, with restored habitats acting as carbon sinks, while providing flood and drought mitigation, health, well-being and jobs.

Policy asks

HeidelbergCement and BirdLife want to make it evident that they both individually and as a united voice, strongly support the EU Biodiversity Strategy commitment to establish legally binding restoration targets. Restoration must be a priority and the concept of restoring 15% of nature should be considered as a target. We challenge the European Commission to be bold and progressive in developing targets that:

- 1 Are binding and enforceable
- 2 Have strong governance
- 3 Are underpinned by science-based plans taking into consideration good involvement of stakeholders.

In addition, we need EU policy to be more enabling, and:

- 1 Support the notion to include biodiversity into all post-extraction schemes
- 2 Prohibit the plantation of invasive alien species
- 3 Facilitate and remunerate the return of quarries to priority habitats which could support the restoration agenda
- 4 Prioritise non-recyclable inert material (for example subsoils from construction projects) to be directed towards quarry reclamation for optimal land forming
- 5 Incentivise organisations for their active management of land for nature conservation and quarry restoration through the sustainable finance framework
- 6 Implement a harmonized concept of temporary habitats in all EU Member States

Businesses must understand that conservation should not be seen as a cost. Urgent action for nature and climate simply must happen for businesses to survive. The benefits go beyond species protection, as restoration has the potential to contribute to humanity's health and wellbeing. Therefore, we need to move from a linear, extractive, and wasteful economic model to a circular, efficient, and regenerative one.

Photo: Blue-tailed Damselfly © Lars Soerink



850

species recorded in quarries

40

local conservation projects worldwide

500+

HeidelbergCement environmental managers and site staff reached

65000

hectares of habitat restored and/or enhanced

Sponsoring of the BirdLife education programme Spring Alive, reaching millions

Developing the Extractive Sector Code-of-Conduct

50+

biodiversity surveys

Supporting the European Nature Directives and the European restoration law

30000

non-extraction sites and

800+

quarries assessed



Highlighted projects over the decade

2012

2012: Czech Republic – Shoreline redesign: A Natura 2000 quarry

Českomoravský štěrk and BirdLife Partner Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO) joined forces to enhance the lake margins for wetland birds at the Tovačov Lakes in Central Moravia. Additionally, a viewing tower was constructed providing visitors with the opportunity to observe the 70+ bird species making the lake their home, e.g. the Common Terns and Black-headed Gulls breeding on concrete islands near the shoreline.

2013

2013: Germany – Whooper Swans: Long-distant migrants make quarries their home

Heidelberger Sand und Kies GmbH and BirdLife Partner NABU initiated a project using satellite transmitters to track migratory Whooper Swans, of which 1,120 have been recorded to overwinter at the Dixförda pits. The transmitters are used to study the long distance and local movements of the swans and to find out more about their usage of the former quarry now proclaimed a Natura 2000 site.



2014

2014: Israel – Invasive alien species pose a risk

The bare ground conditions found in quarries can be very advantageous for invasive alien species, which can then be involuntarily spread when the aggregates are sold. Therefore, BirdLife Partner the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel supported Hanson Israel through the development of a Code of Conduct for invasive alien species free quarries in Israel to protect environment, society, and economy. The Ministry of Environment has now mainstreamed the Code as a regulatory requirement.



2015

2015: Poland – Bird breeding island management: Keeping our birds safe

The breeding success of wetland birds was at threat from red foxes and American minks on the artificial islands at the Wójcice quarry, a Natura 2000 site. BirdLife Partner the Polish Society for the Protection of Birds and Górażdże Group teamed up to protect the largest colony of breeding Black-headed Gulls and Common Terns in the Nyskie reservoir from these mammalian predators.

2016

2016: Estonia – Save the Sand Martins

BirdLife Partner, the Estonian Ornithological Society and Kunda Nordic Tsement have united to create better living and breeding conditions for Sand Martins in Estonia. A national assessment of Sand Martins through citizen science was undertaken, and specific management guidelines developed for the company to support them in conserving this species. To monitor the effectiveness of the management, yearly surveys were undertaken to monitor the breeding success.



2017

2017: Global Proximity: Pushing biodiversity forward

With their Global Proximity study, HeidelbergCement and BirdLife International pushed biodiversity forward at more than 1,100 quarries worldwide! The study was conducted periodically with the aim to help HeidelbergCement avoid and minimise risks arising from quarrying close to areas of important biodiversity value. Building on previous analyses, in 2017 all extraction sites were included in this proximity study, which directly supports the implementation of HeidelbergCement's ambitious Sustainability Commitments for 2030.

2018

2018: Georgia – Biodiversity inventory: Big leaps for Biodiversity in Georgia

Near the Kaspi Important Bird Area (GEO20), BirdLife Partner SABUKO and HeidelbergCement Georgia conducted nature surveys of flora and fauna on the entire site, targeting birds, amphibians, reptiles, and invasive alien species. This "biodiversity inventory" assisted the development of a Biodiversity Management Plan as well as an updated reclamation plan.



2019

2019: India – Bird Surveys: Keeping an overview

Together the BirdLife Partner Bombay National History Society and HeidelbergCement India conducted a bird survey focussing on migratory birds to create an inventory which revealed 117 bird species, of which 86 were common resident species and 31 were winter migrants. The site also supports five near-threatened species on the 2019 IUCN red-list of threatened species. A truly great foundation for biodiversity protection and restoration.

2020

2020: Ghana – T. gentii: A bright future for a critically endangered tree

A partnership between BirdLife Partner Ghana Wildlife Society and Ghacem has led to research trials in a tree nursery for the endemic tree species *Talbotiella gentii* near the Yongwa quarry to improve the species' conservation status. So far, 5000 seedlings have been planted out in the Yongwa forest reserve, and close monitoring is undertaken to establish the success.

2021

2021: Code of Conduct: Great news for business and biodiversity

HeidelbergCement and BirdLife worked with the sector to develop a Code of Conduct for species protection, with a focus on temporary habitats. This document will support the colonisation and management of protected species in active quarries, yet still enable economic activities to continue - a win-win. The Code is in full accordance with the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, and has been highlighted by the European Commission as a best practice example of NGO-business collaboration.



INTERVIEW

Dr Carolyn Jewell
(Biodiversity and Natural Resources Senior Manager, HeidelbergCement)
Martin Harper (Regional Director, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia)



What's your favorite animal or plant species that can be found in a quarry?

CJ: Well it has to be an insect, the Swallowtail butterfly.

MH: For me it is the delight when bee-eaters decide to call quarries a home at least for just a few short weeks.

What is the one project from the partnership that really stands out for you?

CJ: A tough question and so many great projects... but if I have to choose then it is our project in Ghana. The opportunity to advance research and contribute to the recovery of a critically endangered species is really humbling.

MH: If I am allowed to give a UK example then it would be the incredible habitat restoration at Ouse fen in Cambridgeshire, which is slowly but surely becoming one of England's best nature reserves.

What's the main thing your organisation learnt from this partnership?

CJ: For me, it is that by working together we can achieve measurable change for nature, but perseverance is key as there are always challenges along the way, from both sides of the partnership.

MH: Recognising that different partners can differ in insights and experiences but through collaboration we can add value to each other's own efforts.

What will be the major challenges for corporates with regard to nature conservation in the next decade?

CJ: The biggest challenge will be data! Being able to disclose information on a topic that is difficult to represent in a single figure, and for which numerous indicators and measurement tools exist, is not an easy task for the business sector.

MH: My hope is that corporates play their part not only in reducing environmental harm and improving the environmental value of their own estate but also advocate for change within their sector to raise standards. I see that with HeidelbergCement, and value the leadership role they play within the sector.

What does nature positive mean to you?

CJ: Nature positive means that we fully understand our impact on nature through our extractive activities, and that we not only work towards being net positive in this respect, but that we go above and beyond, taking part in initiatives across the quarry life cycle that contribute to the global reverse of biodiversity decline.

MH: In its simplest form, it is to ensure that through organisations' actions there is more nature tomorrow than there is today. We need more companies to do for nature what they are beginning to do for climate, by setting ambitious targets, backed up by costed plans of action and transparent reporting of progress.

What's your target for the partnership for the coming (10) years?

CJ: To expand our action on the ground into new countries, developing new local partnerships and to work together to shift perception towards supporting the positive role of reclaimed extraction sites in achieving the restoration goals set out by the EU and UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

MH: I agree with Caz!

What's the key take-away for you personally when thinking of this partnership?

CJ: As with any partnership they take work and commitment but having the support of topic experts to bounce ideas off and to validate our ideas and strategies is invaluable and really enables us to push forward our commitment to conserve nature.

MH: That's it, learning from each other and knowing that together we can make a big difference for nature.



Material stockpiles

Material stockpiles can become colonised by sand martins looking to build their nests in suitable sandy embankments. It is important that quarries manage their stockpiles to avoid the birds nesting in stock that will be sold prior to the end of the breeding season. Alternatively, setting aside designated material piles with the correct slope angles can safely attract the birds to a suitable breeding habitat away from the daily operations. These should be clearly demarcated and left undisturbed for the breeding season.

SAND MARTIN (BANK SWALLOW) MIGRATION GAME

Developed as a training and awareness tool, play and enjoy.

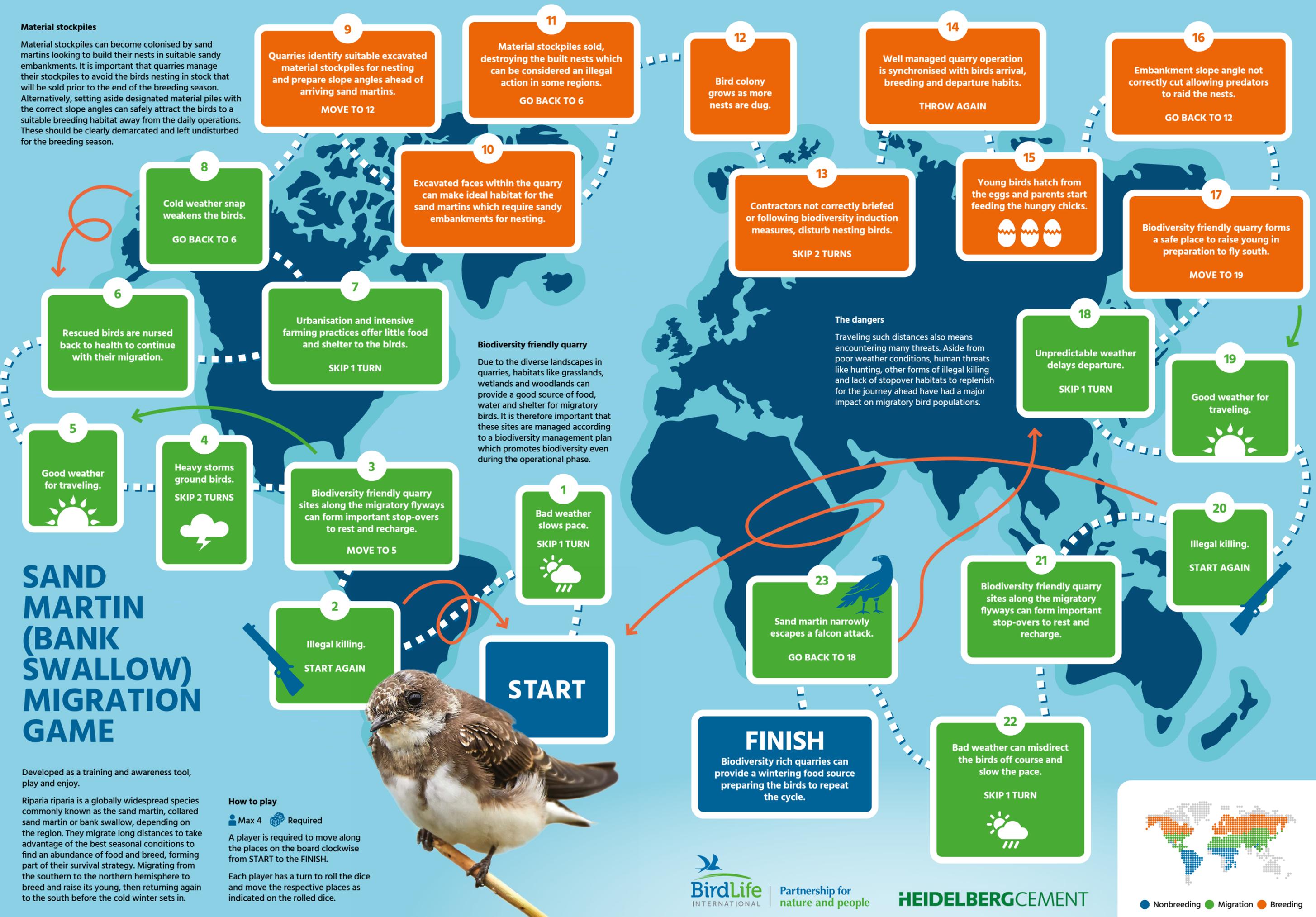
Riparia riparia is a globally widespread species commonly known as the sand martin, collared sand martin or bank swallow, depending on the region. They migrate long distances to take advantage of the best seasonal conditions to find an abundance of food and breed, forming part of their survival strategy. Migrating from the southern to the northern hemisphere to breed and raise its young, then returning again to the south before the cold winter sets in.

How to play

Max 4 Required

A player is required to move along the places on the board clockwise from START to the FINISH.

Each player has a turn to roll the dice and move the respective places as indicated on the rolled dice.



Biodiversity friendly quarry

Due to the diverse landscapes in quarries, habitats like grasslands, wetlands and woodlands can provide a good source of food, water and shelter for migratory birds. It is therefore important that these sites are managed according to a biodiversity management plan which promotes biodiversity even during the operational phase.

The dangers

Traveling such distances also means encountering many threats. Aside from poor weather conditions, human threats like hunting, other forms of illegal killing and lack of stopover habitats to replenish for the journey ahead have had a major impact on migratory bird populations.



● Nonbreeding ● Migration ● Breeding

5 REASONS FOR YOUR CHILD TO CELEBRATE SPRING WITH SPRING ALIVE



With 117,006 children engaged and over 7 million people reached in 202, Spring Alive is a strong force for the celebration and care of migratory birds on the African-Eurasian flyway.

1 For knowledge

Recognizing the arrival of migratory birds also brings a broader understanding of nature. Some bird migrations are so huge, they are almost beyond comprehension. Spring Alive brings an opportunity to think globally, and expand your knowledge of science and the natural world.

2 To broaden your horizons

Someone in Europe once said that when Swifts arrive in the Spring, they are really just on loan for a few months from Africa, where they spend most of the year. Spring Alive also transcends national borders and encourages learning about other cultures.

Find out how to get involved at springalive.net

3

To connect with nature

Children are negatively affected if they do not have a regular connection with nature and the outdoors. Spring Alive events encourage children to go outside and appreciate the wildlife they see. Also, children with a connection to nature are much more likely to care for their environment as they grow into adults.

4

For birds

This year, Spring Alive educates people on how to protect bird nests to support birds' breeding success. And there are so many other ways in which birds can be helped.

It is good for the planet too

Children with a connection to nature are much more likely to care for their environment as they grow into adults – helping support the biodiversity that supports their future.

5

It's free!

Spring Alive is funded by HeidelbergCement, meaning children of all backgrounds can enjoy learning about nature at no cost.



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF RESTORATIVE
COLLABORATION

10

YEARS



ČESKOMORAVSKÝ
ŠTĚRK
HEIDELBERGCEMENT Group

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