

BIODIVERSITY CASE STUDY



Company: 2 partners

Country: Germany

Title **Abandonment of a permitted limestone mining area to conserve a country-wide important habitat of orchids with several orchid species**

Context The Rheinkalk GmbH operates in Salzhemmendorf limestone quarries and lime kilns. The quarry "Voska" is operated since mid of the 19th century. Due to the use of different mining technologies different shapes of walls were created. Especially in the northern part of this quarry there are big cliffs and wide areas of raw limestone underground, the bottom of former mining. Although Rheinkalk has an unlimited permit this area was not mined for a long period. Here orchids settled in the time of the operational break. Because of the excellent habitat conditions a huge, important orchid population developed over the years. After some years of the operational break this area was planned to be mined, which would have destroyed the orchid population.

Solution The solution was a public contract between the land Niedersachsen and Rheinkalk, in which an abandonment was fixed. Rheinkalk spared the mining of permitted limestone and the land declared the support of further extensions and mining operations. The benefit for Rheinkalk is a non-formal handling of a strictly protected species and the acceptance of support by the authorities for future projects, e.g. extension of quarries.

Result Around the quarry Voska several species of orchids have successfully and continuously reproduced and formed an important, great population. The mining area created a raw soil, which is in combination with non-forestral reclamation the precondition for a orchid-habitat.

Partners The partner are Rheinkalk GmbH and the land Niedersachsen.

