

Preserving water quality in a sustainable manner



The business case

Veolia Water, whose mandate is to deliver high quality water to its clients, is actively working with local authorities to protect the site that it depends upon to provide water to the Greater Lyon Urban Community in France. These actions to preserve biodiversity have proved to bring financial benefits to the company, whilst enhancing local biodiversity in the region.

The issue

Veolia Water is a global operator of water services, providing drinking water for the Lyon metropolitan area in France. For its water supply, it relies on the Crépieux-Charmy water withdrawal site, an area where public access is forbidden and all activity strictly controlled.

A protected wellfield to secure water quality

With a surface area of 375 hectares, Crépieux-Charmy is the largest well field in France. This site is unique in terms of its biodiversity, as it includes almost 500 plant species along with a very broad range of fauna (mammals, birds, fish, insects, etc.). Its quality has been recognized through its listing on several scientific inventories (i.e. Natural Zones of Ecological, Flora and Fauna Interest, Sensitive Natural Space, and Remarkable Wetlands and Natura 2000).

Veolia Water is highly dependent on the state of the Crépieux-Charmy water withdrawal site for the availability and quality of the existing water resource. Consequently, the company has implemented management plans aimed to further protect the site.

The response

Maintaining and restoring ecosystems

Since 1996, a team of environmental technicians, working closely with the Greater Lyon Urban Community

and the Regional Conservatory of Natural Spaces, has been in charge of monitoring the ecological heritage (environment, flora and fauna). The team maintains and restores the wellfield and performs other activities to meet the targets of its management plan:

- Keeping fauna and flora inventories;
- Installing/restoring and maintaining important habitats for the fauna and flora (alluvial forests, dry grasslands and wetlands);
- Additionally, the team leader participates in numerous awareness and communication campaigns.

Veolia Water tracks all of these developments very closely in liaison with the municipality and its partners (i.e. nature lovers, bird watchers and forest guards).

The results

Positive impacts on biodiversity compatible with savings

Since its inception, this project has helped to protect the site's biodiversity and led to the return of species that had previously disappeared from the site.

From a business perspective, the ecological management of the site has allowed Veolia Water not only to preserve water resource quality, but also to spend less money on site management and use the money saved for other purposes such as technical improvements of its facilities.



Veolia Environment Picture Library – Rodolphe Escher

FURTHER INFORMATION

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