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CEMEX summary

Introduction

CEMEX is one of the world's largest building materials suppliers. It operates in over 50 countries and has a workforce of more than 60,000. Cement is a key ingredient in concrete. Concrete is the most consumed substance in the world after water. Concrete can be made on site or supplied ready-mixed. The first company to supply this service was Ready Mixed Concrete (RMC). CEMEX bought RMC in 2005. CEMEX both locates and carries out its operations in a sustainable way.

Sectors

CEMEX's business covers all three sectors of industry.

- Primary . quarrying materials. This process has to fit in with the government's Regional Minerals Plan. This makes sure that there is a fair balance of extraction across regions. CEMEX also dredges material from the seabed.
- Secondary . preparing aggregates, cement and making ready mixed products. Cement plants need planning permission and are regulated by the Environment Agency.
- Tertiary . transportation and sales to other businesses. CEMEX makes more than four million deliveries a year in the UK, making it one of the countries biggest logistics operators.

Location

Industry needs to locate where both its costs and its environmental impact can be minimised. This may mean closer to customers, or closer to raw materials. CEMEX locates plants near raw materials to reduce transport to its many customers. Large construction projects may be treated differently. For example, the plant for the Wembley Stadium project was located at Wembley itself.

Sustainable location

CEMEX can only site quarries where material naturally occurs. It can, however, make other activities more sustainable. For example, it uses:

- rail for many journeys
- water (sea, rivers and pipelines) where it can
- alternative fuels such as old tyres and household waste to heat its kilns
- waste from other industries to reduce its carbon footprint.

CEMEX invests around £60 million a year in the UK, much of this dedicated to reducing its environmental impact.

Impacts

CEMEX has identified seven key indicators to reduce its environmental impact. It looks at how it can:

- reduce emissions
- use less energy
- develop new and better products
- improve production efficiency
- contribute to the community
- engage employees to support communities
- communicate better with stakeholders.

CEMEX is careful about how sites are restored once they are worked out. CEMEX Angling comprises a collection of restored sand and gravel pits; Eversley Quarry in Hampshire has been restored to provide a nature reserve, golf course and other sports; at Barrington, the entire quarry has become a Site of Special Scientific Interest and therefore protected.



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Conclusion

CEMEX provides essential building materials. It takes s its responsibilities towards the environment seriously and reduces its impact wherever possible.