

Sustained Wins for a Sustainable Future



Sustained Wins for a Sustainable Future

To win a single award takes exceptional performance. To harvest awards — repeatedly — takes commitment and passion to achieve quality and excellence.

For cement manufacturer Holcim Philippines, the recent honors it received in the 58th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference add to an already long list of recognition for the company's responsible and sustainable quarry operations.

Last November 11, Holcim received major awards in the Quarry Category of the Presidential Mineral Industry Environmental Award (PMIEA) for all its four cement plants—including the highest award for its Bulacan and La Union plants. The company's plants in Lugait, Misamis Oriental and Davao received the Platinum Award, the second highest recognition.

The PMIEA is the mining industry's most prestigious annual recognition of best practices on safe and environment-friendly operations.

The awards are significant for many reasons. This is the fourth straight year that Holcim has won the top honor — and only the second time that a single company has won two PMIEAs. In 2003, Bulacan and La Union plants also both received the Presidential Award. Overall, the two plants have each collected three PMIEAs.

Of the multiple commendations, Holcim Philippines Chief Operating Officer Roland van Wijnen said: "I am filled with pride, humility and excitement, as these awards show that our efforts to do the right thing are recognized by our peers in the industry and the concerned government agencies. These recognitions are the result of the priority we have put on safety and the strict standards we have observed in managing the environmental impact of our operations."

Holcim's La Union plant added to the award haul by winning the Best Mining Forest program in the Quarry Category. Holcim's Lugait facility, following its six-year hold on the award, placed second. The company's Bulacan and Davao plants were also cited for having outstanding mining forest programs as they ended in third and fourth place, respectively. The company's La Union plant was also the first runner-up in the Safest Cement Plant Operations.

This is the fourth straight year that Holcim Philippines has won the top honor—and only the second time that a single company was awarded with two PMIEAs.



Holcim La Union and Bulacan now have 3 PMIEAs each.



Holcim Davao is helping communities repopulate mangroves.



Holcim Lugait's own nursery supplies trees to rehabilitate mined-out areas.

The Holcim Philosophy

For Michael Cabalda, Holcim Philippines Sustainable Development Manager, the recent accolades prove that "what we say is what we do. And that our dedication to sustainability is non-negotiable!"

"We value the safety of all our stakeholders, especially when they are in any of our plants or facilities. We are committed in mitigating the impact of our business operations to the environment. And we take to heart our responsibility to take good care of our host communities," Cabalda explained. "These standards hold true in any Holcim facility anywhere around the globe."

He added, "We are proud to say that not only do we strictly abide by existing Philippine laws governing our operations, but we also go beyond the minimum requirements as Holcim's global standards impose stricter metrics."

This has been driven by Holcim's commitment to the triple bottomline and reflected in various initiatives that allow the company to reduce its carbon footprint and help manage the effects of climate change.

"One concrete effort is Holcim's co-processing technology. Operating under our Geocycle business, this technology allows us to substitute fuel with alternative materials such as rice husk. This technology also allows us to assist municipalities and other industrial establishments through the efficient disposal of various waste streams," explained Holcim Philippines Senior Vice President for Manufacturing Andre Caluori.

Caluori also pointed to various systems and programs that have allowed Holcim plants to manage the impact of its manufacturing operations for the benefit of the surrounding communities. Among these efforts, Holcim's award-winning global framework of responsible quarry operation and progressive rehabilitation continue to be a source of pride.

Explaining one of its best practices, La Union Plant Manager Andy White said: "Essentially, we ensure that we rehabilitate all the areas

where we operate, so they remain productive for the residents. As an example, we convert our limestone quarries into reforested areas or parks."

This approach is being practiced in all Holcim plants. Considered a success measure is the fact that these rehabilitated and reforested areas now serve as habitat of various flora and fauna species which the Holcim plants continuously propagate.

In its La Union plant for instance, Holcim has worked on a Memorandum of Agreement with the community to adopt a 50-hectare forest tree plantation within the Lon-oy Watershed in Barangay Lon-oy, San Gabriel, La Union.

Community partnership

The plant also boasts of many protection and conservation initiatives in partnership with nearby community and local government units. One of them is the sea urchin conservation program that includes seaweed propagation, which aims to enrich the marine life. Today, through the people's initiative, the site has already been declared a marine protected area.

This approach of partnering with the community to take care of the environment is likewise common among Holcim plants.

The Bulacan plant, for example, is actively promoting a mindset of proper waste segregation within its communities. Its Materials Recovery Center taps the community to help in the plant's environmental protection efforts, while providing opportunities for added income.

"We make sure that we secure the cooperation and commitment of our communities for our CSR and environmental projects because it is through their assistance that we can ensure the success and sustainability of these efforts," said Bulacan Plant Manager Bobby Sajonia.

Meanwhile, Holcim's Lugait plant prides itself with a six-year record of having the best mining forest program among non-metallic miners.

Much has been written about its butterfly garden and bird roosting "condotel." The roosting condotel houses doves, swiftlets, starlings, and other avian species—giving them a safe haven while conveniently keeping them away from the areas of operations.

In Davao, Holcim has almost three hectares of quarry areas planted to bamboos that provide nourishment and shelter to various animal species. Working together with the city, Holcim continues its commitment to restore and enhance mangroves in the area. Today, the Holcim Davao plant has a total rehabilitated area of 409 hectares with over 700,000 trees.

All these reflect Holcim's commitment to ensure environmental sustainability in all its operations. "We take environmental protection seriously, not just for the sake of having the 'numbers' to report, but because we believe this is the right thing to do," said Caluori.

"I think it is the consistent and sustained implementation of these practices that convinced the PMIEA judges to recognize Holcim anew," van Wijnen said. "It is good that early on, we've learned to have a healthy competition among our plants so we are continually on our toes. At the same time, knowledge sharing is a way of life at Holcim, so we don't hold back in sharing best practices so everyone can listen and learn."

Quite clearly, the recent PMIEA grand slam for Holcim is certainly well-deserved. It upholds the company's commitment to the environment through responsible operations. But more importantly, it affirms its passion to a sustainable future.

And that, indeed, is award-winning.

We help you build

