

## **Maris Natuursteen**

Maris Natuursteen is a leader in the recycling of cobblestones. Every year, ten thousands of tons of natural stone are broken up, cleaned, sorted by geology and size and reused in various public and private projects. For example, we reuse a lot of natural stone (cobblestones) that was already produced decades ago.

In this way we avoid any impact on people, nature and the environment since this natural stone no longer needs to be mined. We also avoid the impact on people, nature and the environment caused by the transport from various foreign (even intercontinental) quarries. Breaking up natural stone (cobblestones), cleaning and sorting them, and then using them again in various public and private projects (sometimes even the same project from which they were broken up) is a strong example of sustainable entrepreneurship.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

We recently also adopted a Code of Conduct with which we impose ourselves and exhort our suppliers to respect important ethical, environmental and social standards and values and thus try to optimize them. We are aware that it is a process that has to progress gradually, but "many small things make a big one".

Natural stone from a number of non-European (for us Asian) countries has a bad reputation when it comes to "ethical values". Are the rules and guidelines imposed by various international bodies being respected? Maris Natuursteen has been working for several years to put an end to these problems. That is why we have also signed a license agreement with the external independent control body "Xertifix" that monitors the situations on site. With this agreement, we are sure that the rules and guidelines imposed by the "United Nations", by the "International Labor Organisation" and by "OECD" will be adjusted to be eventually respected.

### **The Xertifix standard includes 6 items listed below;**

- I. ILO Core Labour Conventions
- II. Health and Protection of Workers
- III. Contractual Issues
- IV. Environmental Protection
- V. Community
- VI. Legality, traceability, and business ethics

On Friday, May 10, 2019, the TruStone covenant was signed in Brussels at the cabinet of Flemish Minister President Bourgeois by the Prime Minister, a number of Flemish and Dutch companies, governments, NGOs and other organizations (such as trade unions). The fact that this is a cross-

border agreement (Flanders and the Netherlands) also makes it unique. The SER (Social Economic Council) acts as the independent secretariat for the covenant. Maris Natuursteen was one of the first to co-sign the covenant and as such has also committed itself to help achieve the objectives of the covenant.

On Monday, May 13, 2019, the covenant was also signed by Dutch minister Sigrid Kraag, a number of Dutch natural stone processing companies and representatives of FNV, CNV and Arisa.

### **TRUSTONE'S OBJECTIVE.**

Particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America, natural stone is regularly extracted and processed under conditions that violate human rights/labour rights and harm the environment. The natural stone sector in Flanders and in the Netherlands has taken the initiative to tackle this problem together.

The natural stone sector in the Netherlands and Belgium consists of several hundred companies specializing in the import and processing of natural stone or natural stone-based products, such as boulders, tiles, kerbstones, countertops, tombstones, monuments, facades.

Society and the Dutch and Flemish governments expect companies to make an effort for International Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainable chain management. Moreover, this is laid down in international guidelines and obligations such as the principles of the United Nations on Business and Human Rights, the Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the core labor standards of the International Labor Organization (ILO). Obtaining complete transparency in the chain is of paramount importance in this respect. This can be done, for example, by mapping out risks in the production chain so that problems such as child labour, forced labour, lack of freedom of association, unsafe working conditions and unhealthy working situations can be identified.

We are extremely pleased with the fact that the existing problems will be tackled jointly, with more capacity than the individual approach of us as an SME, and that is why we are proud to have signed this covenant from the start.

Via the link in the Dutch version you can see all participants in the TruStone initiative.

TruStone Flyer (click the link in the Dutch version).

### **PLAN OF APPROACH MARIS NATURAL STONE**

In concrete terms, we are going to map out the entire chain and optimize it in a positive constructive way by carrying out a Due Diligence process. In this way, measures can be taken so that no damage is done to people, nature and the environment.

How Maris Natuursteen works with prioritizing risks, which action points there are, what the objectives are and when they will be tackled/achieved, can be found in our action plan. Click on the following link to download the action plan.

## **COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES COMMITTEE**

An independent Complaints and Disputes Committee was launched in March 2021. Injured parties can turn to this committee when their rights are violated.

Why a complaints and dispute mechanism.

An effective grievance and dispute mechanism is the sixth and final step in the due diligence process, where companies are asked to cooperate with, or provide for, remedial action. It is through this mechanism that all stakeholders in the chain can make their voice heard, such as workers in or residents of factories or quarries. It also ensures that companies really get to know what is going on in terms of social and human rights and the environment.

All information about this can be obtained via the link complaints and disputes committee.

Complaints and disputes can be reported to the responsible persons of the Maris company who are included in our Code of Conduct and via the following link Complaints and disputes committee Dutch or Complaints-disputes committee English.

You can find out how a complaints procedure works via the following link. Complaint procedure

## **IMVO PILOTS NATURAL STONE - DUE DILIGENCE**

Important buyers of natural stone are governments. Socially Responsible Procurement (SRP) by governments is therefore of great importance. A pilot in the field of child labor should ensure that governments give preference to responsibly produced natural stone. Maris natural stone is an active participant in the Pilot India.

A stakeholder dialogue is organized by TruStone on a frequent basis. Quarry owners, factory owners, NGOs, importers of natural stone and contracting authorities take part in this. Maris Natuursteen actively participates in these dialogues. From the dialogues with the local quarry owners, NGOs and local governments, it appears that child labor (particularly in the "cutting" of Cobbles in domestic situations) still occurs. It is also for this reason that we actively participate in the stakeholder meeting to address and ban this problem. The following important topics have now also been given priority for joint improvement: - Improving registration, especially with regard to the payment of wages; - Improving health and safety conditions; -Providing access to remedy. These 3 items are addressed and evaluated according to a strict schedule. The first positive progress is already clearly noticeable. This also clearly shows that the dialogue that is conducted from the collective in the stakeholder meeting (in addition to the importer-supplier dialogue) has a positive impact on the improvement of various problems.

Click on the link below for the final report of the pilot program ISV Natural Stone Procurement as a driver of transition.

Final report of the pilot program ISV Natuursteen.

With the link in the Dutch version you can download TruStone's annual report 2021.

Annual report 2021

## **ETHICALLY RESPONSIBLE NATURAL STONE**

Meeting in Khamman (India)

To find out what Maris Natuursteen is doing in the context of Ethically responsible natural stone, click on the link below.

Ethically sourced natural stone

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Maris Natuursteen opts for environmentally friendly solutions where possible in its business operations. A few examples:

### **Recycling of used natural stone:**

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### **Water:**

We have a rainwater buffer basin of approximately 750 m<sup>3</sup>. We use this rainwater for our production process. The water is recycled so that it can be used several times in the production process. We also use this water to reduce flying dust from our stock of recovery boulders. We will soon be building a new industrial hall where a buffer basin for rainwater will also be provided.

### **Sound:**

We are building a new industrial hall for our sawing machines where a lot of attention is paid to absorbing sound so that there can be no question of noise nuisance.

### **Energy:**

In our new offices, lighting with sensors has been installed at the locations that qualify for it so that it switches on and off automatically. We also installed 192 solar panels on the roof of our buildings. With these solar panels we generate approximately 70,000 kW per year.

**Waste streams:**

We completely separate our waste (soil, boulders, sludge...). It is transported to approved recycling centers in the area. In this way we create a transparent waste stream where the recovery of all materials is of paramount importance.

**Health, Safety and Education:**

In addition to our internal safety officer, Maris Natuursteen calls on an external safety advisor who makes an objective review of the item health, safety and training in order to optimize this matter in all areas.

Attention is also paid to ergonomics. Sorting cobblestones is physically very hard work. To improve working conditions, a number of things were automated in this process and belt heights in the sorting line were set to the level so that the work is less stressful for the employees.