

VinylPlus Monitoring Committee

28th November 2018– 12h30 : 15h00

European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60, B-1000 Bruxelles,
Conference Room PHS 6 C 11

Minutes

Participants:

Ms. Laure Baillargeon	Policy Officer, European Commission, DG GROW
Mr Alain Cavallero	Secretary General, ESPA
Mr Alexandre Dangis	Managing Director, EuPC
Paolo Da Silva Lemos	Policy Officer, European Commission – DG ENV
Ms Brigitte Dero	General Manager ECVI and VinylPlus
Mr Armand De Wasch	Euro consumers
Ms Martina Dlabajova	MEP, European Parliament
Mr Nuno Mello	MEP, European Parliament
Mr Ettore Nanni	President, ESPA
Mr Martin Policar	Advocacy & Regulatory Affairs Manager, EuPC
Ms Noelle Tracey	Project Manager, VinylPlus
Ms Ingrid Verschueren	General Manager, Recovinyl

Apologies:

Mr Sylvain Lefebvre	Deputy General Secretary, IndustriAll European Trade Union
Ms Ana Miguel Pedro Soares	Parliamentary Advisor to MEP Nuno Melo, European Parliament

1. **Welcome and Agreement of the Agenda**

Brigitte Dero welcomed all the participants. The agenda was approved without comment.

2. **Formal approval of the minutes of the last VinylPlus Monitoring Committee Meeting of 26th April 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26th April, 2018 were formally approved without comment.

3. **Dates and Venue of Next Meetings in 2019**

The date of the next VinylPlus Monitoring Committee meeting was confirmed on the 9th April, 2019 from 10h30 : 12h30 followed by lunch at the European Parliament. The date for the 2nd meeting in November/December, 2019 will be decided at the meeting on the 9th April, 2019.

4. **New Chair of VinylPlus Monitoring Committee**

Following the previous meeting action item of the 26th April, 2018, to look for a chairman in academia. A possible candidate is Professor De Wulf from the University of Gent. Prof. De Wulf is an expert in clean technologies based on life cycle thinking and in the sustainable use of natural resource. Vinylplus believe he is the right person going forward as we move towards putting more emphasis on resource efficiency and renewables.

Action: Brigitte Dero to invite Professor Jo De Wulf to the next VinylPlus Monitoring Committee on the 9th April, 2019.

5. **VinylPlus Programme Implementation**

Recycling:

Ingrid Verschuere presented the latest Recovinyl results. The amount recycled so far is 673kt, 92% of the 725kt target for 2018. She is confident that Recovinyl is on track to reach its target by end of year. The 2019 targets set for 2019 is 765kt which is ambitious but realistic. The main outlets for recycled PVC are profiles 43% followed by traffic management products 24% and pipes at 10%.

A short update on country highlights included:

France: Market doing well. For profiles, there is a continuous high demand for rigid PVC recycle at high prices and a steady growth of flexibles throughout the year.

Germany: The market in general is much lower than in 2017. There is a high demand for rigid PVC but not enough material available. New build markets growing to the detriment of renovation projects which results in lower availability of windows and frames.

On flexible PVC, there is a decrease in this sector compared to 2017 by almost 50% due to lack of material. Despite the known problems with REACH/phthalates, cables are still running at a high level, although, there is still some hesitation to make investments and increase capacity.

United Kingdom: Some recyclers have difficulties to source high quality window profiles due to high prices. Cable waste in good supply and recyclers can easily obtain the material to produce traffic management and other products.

Italy: Low availability of windows and profiles which is similar to other countries. More and more companies switching from PC to PI (flexible).

Poland: Polish recyclers are very proactive in searching out material and are willing to pay high prices due to lower labour costs.

An update is given on the traceability study (survey) to map into which applications recycled PVC is used.

Social Charter:

B. Dero reported on the Social Charter, which was signed in 2017 with the employers' group ECEG and trade union organisation IndustryAll. The focus is on health and safety in the PVC converting and recycling industry, as well as digitalisation. A workshop in March 2018 gathered more than 50 participants, including representatives for DG Grow, environment and employment, of trade unions and industry. The goal was to increase the stakeholder dialogue, especially with social partners to better assess the needs of the sector. The next step in 2019 will consist of plant visits aiming at improving the implementation of the health and safety at work legislation, among others by enhancing communications directed at workers.

In parallel, VinylPlus supported the study to assess the level and impact of digitalisation in the chemical and plastics industry.

Educational needs:

Martina Dlabajova reported on the Educational needs required in industry within the European Union. Apart from technical know-how there is a whole range of new skills which are critical:

Automation enabled by information technologies is transforming the traditional manufacturing processes and the nature of work and in the light of Industry 4.0, IT knowledge, digital and programming skills are essential. 90% of jobs will need the appropriate competence for entrepreneurial and smart technologies in the future. However, one of the main problems is that most of the companies in the plastic converting sector are SME's and do not have the resources to provide "digital" training to their current and new workers (re-skill and up-skill). Possible solutions could be to find synergies with policy makers (DG Grow, DG, Env, DG Empl; co-operation with educational bodies as well as using the experience of big companies and their innovation and best practices.

6. The Eu Plastics Strategy Pledges

With almost 725000 tonnes of recycled products tones recycled in 2018, the PVC industry is confident that the commitment and targets of 800,000 tonnes by 2020 will be achieved.

VinylPlus continuously looks for new ways to increase recycling by applying a circular economy approach to all its activities, designing products that respect the environment and which can be recycled. It has backed the European Commission's pledging call to increase recycling of plastics by committing to recycle at least 900,000 tonnes of PVC per year into new products by 2025. Looking further ahead, VinylPlus has also committed to recycling a minimum of 1 million tonnes per year by 2030. To make new targets achievable would require a supportive policy and regulatory environment particularly regarding the interface between waste, chemical and product policies.

Issues such as EU ban on landfilling recyclable waste, appropriate legislative framework to enable recycling of materials containing legacy additives (if not risky and safe.) would need to be worked out.

7. **Lead Stabilisers Update**

The Voluntary Commitment of the PVC value chain has been instrumental in achieving the successful replacement of lead stabilisers in the EU. Indeed, the recycling of PVC articles allow to save the raw material, the energy embedded in the material, reducing thus the CO2 emissions associated to the production of new PVC resin, as well as re-use of non-renewable resources. Lead stabilisers remain firmly embedded in the plastic matrix, posing no risk to human health or to the environment; recycled PVC articles offer the safest harbour for legacy additives like lead stabilisers.

Additional constraints introduced in the proposed restriction could have a very negative impact on the volume of PVC that could be recycled. The European Commission need to clarify their position regarding the conditions for the use of lead-containing recycle in soft PVC applications.

The vote in the REACH Committee is expected by end of 2018, with entry into application in Q4/2020.

8. **Reach: The case of ACDA**

There is now an informal proposal from the EU Commission to prioritise ADCA for the inclusion in Annex 14. Depending on the outcome of the member states consultation a formal proposal could be presented in December, with the vote most probably in February 2019. EuPC sent a letter to the commission, providing them with arguments for no classification of the issue. ADCA is used to foam the middle layer of sewage pipes and sound barriers (recycled PVC), and hence the issue is important for the PVC industry.

9. **VinylPlus Progress Report 2019 – Time Schedule**

The draft VinylPlus Progress Report 2019 will be circulated for your comments 10 days before the next meeting of the VinylPlus Monitoring Committee, i.e. by the 28th March, 2018 at the latest.

10. **VinylPlus Sustainability Forum 2019 - Prague**

Due to shortage of time, this topic was not reported. The theme of the next Vinyl Sustainability Forum in Prague (9-10 May, 2019) will be “Accelerating Innovation”. (please click on link below to find out more

<https://vinylplus.eu/community/vinyl-sustainability-forum>

All members of the VinylPlus Monitoring Committee are very welcome to attend the event.

The meeting ended at 15h00