VinylPlus Monitoring Committee

9th April 2019 – 10h30 : 12h30

European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60, B-1000 Bruxelles,
Meeting Room ASP 5G375

Draft Minutes

Participants:

Mr Alexandre Dangis	Managing Director, EuPC
Paulo Da Silva Lemos	European Commission – DG ENV
Ms Brigitte Dero	General Manager ECVM and VinylPlus
Mr Armand De Wasch	Euro consumers
Mr. Jo Dewulf	University of Ghent
Ms Martina Dlabajova	MEP, European Parliament
Mr Ettore Nanni	President, ESPA
Mr Paolo Sandri	European Commission – DG GROW
Ms Ingrid Verschueren	General Manager, Recovinyl

Apologies:

Ms. Laure Baillargeon	Policy Officer, European Commission, DG GROW
Mr Sylvain Lefebvre	Deputy General Secretary, IndustriAll European Trade Union
Mr Nuno Mello	MEP, European Parliament
Ms Ana Miguel Pedro Soares	Parliamentary Advisor to MEP Nuno Melo, European Parliament
Ms Noelle Tracey	Project Manager, VinylPlus
Mr Martin Policar	Advocacy & Regulatory Affairs Manager, EuPC
Mr Alain Cavallero	Secretary General, ESPA

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

   Brigitte Dero welcomed all the participants. The agenda was approved without comment.
   She introduced Professor Jo De Wulf from the University of Ghent, faculty of Bioscience Engineering, Dept. of Green Chemistry & Technology. He is an expert in clean technologies based on life cycle thinking and in the sustainable use of natural resource. He has accepted to take over the chair of the Monitoring Committee, succeeding Alfons Buekens Professor emeritus at University of Brussels.
   The Members warmly welcomed Jo De Wulf.

2. **Formal approval of the minutes of the last VinylPlus Monitoring Committee Meeting of 28th November 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 10th December, 2019 from 10h30: 12h30 followed by lunch at the European Parliament.
   The date for the 2 meetings in April/December, 2020 will be decided at the meeting on the 10th December, 2019.

4. **VinylPlus Progress Report 2019 – Final Review and endorsement**

   The VinylPlus Progress Report 2019 was formally approved by the VinylPlus Monitoring Committee
   Thanks to a moderate but continuous increase in volumes in nearly all European countries, PVC waste recycling within the VinylPlus framework reached 739,525 tonnes in 2018.
   According to a study carried out by the German consulting company Conversio (www.conversio-gmbh.com) on behalf of VinylPlus, 2.5 million tonnes of PVC waste were available in Europe in 2016. Hence the above mentioned recycled amount does represent about 29.6% of this available waste.

   Armand De Wash invites VinylPlus to communicate more widely such types of achievements in safe recycling PVC wastes, and to communicate more in general.
   He warned the participants on the increased testing of consumers goods made of plastics which the consumers organisations will perform in the near future. This might

raised the challenge of imported article which would not necessarily fully comply with the EU standards and might also undermined efforts done for EU plastic value chain such VinylPlus.

5. **VinylPlus Programme Implementation**

Recycling (Annex)

Ingrid Verschueren presented the details on the recycling volumes 2018 (Annex).
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%.

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

B. Dero presented the new **VinylPlus recycling project called 'Oreade' (Annex):** To complete the picture in terms of PVC waste management, and to also tackle the wastes which cannot be eco-efficiently recycled by mechanical recycling, VinylPlus has launched end of 2018 a series of chemical recycling pilot trials (2000 tonnes of PVC waste with different chlorine concentrations) at Oreade plant in Normandy in France. The economics of the process and its environmental footprint are under evaluation.
In the 'Oreade' project only the chlorine part is recovered and recycled. The hydrocarbon part is used to generate the energy.
This additional chemical recycling option reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills, prevents pollution and preserves natural resources by reducing the need to extract new raw materials. The process uses existing European infrastructure (WtE plants), which decreases the investment risks and increases the economic feasibility. There are several hundred WtE plants all over the world which use sodium bicarbonate to treat flue gases, about half of them being operated in Europe.
This chemical recycling is recognized in the Best Available Techniques Reference Document for Waste Treatment (EU Commission JRC policy report)

The results of these trials should be finalised in the autumn.

Social Charter:

B. Dero reported on the Social Charter, which was signed in 2017 with the employers' group ECEG and trade union organisation IndustryAll **(Annex)**. 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.

6. **The EU Plastics Strategy Pledges**

The Commission representatives explained the feedback received so far in the context of the call for pledges. The European Commission in December 2018 launched 'The Circular Plastics Alliance' (CPA) to help plastics value chains work together across Europe. The target is that 10 million tonnes of recycled plastics find their way into products in 2025, against less than 4 million tonnes in 2016.
The CPA agreed to work on 5 priority topics and working groups: collection and sorting of plastic waste, product design for recycling, recycled plastic content in products, R&D and investments, and monitoring of recycled plastics sold in the EU. On 20 September 2019, the Circular Plastics Alliance should present its Declaration.

On 4 March, the Commission published an assessment report of the voluntary pledges. It concludes that there is a strong momentum within the plastics value chains in favour of more recycled plastics. The pledges from suppliers of recycled plastics, if fully delivered, are sufficient to reach the 10 million tonnes target. However, there is a mismatch between the pledges from the supply and the demand sides.
VinylPlus is mentioned as a platform representing the full supply chain which reports tonnages of recycled plastic materials that are pledged to be used by the value chain to make new products by 2025: VinylPlus has committed to recycle at least 900,000 tonnes of PVC per year into new products by 2025. Looking further ahead, it has also committed to recycling a minimum of 1 million tonnes per year by 2030.
To make these 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.

Additives Update (Annex)

E. Nanni explained how the Voluntary Commitment of the PVC value chain has been instrumental in achieving the successful replacement of lead stabilisers in the EU:
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. 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 EU restriction could have a very negative impact on the volume of PVC that could be recycled.
Regarding the case of ADCA, there is now an informal proposal from the EU Commission to prioritise ADCA for the inclusion in Annex 14. 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.

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

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 12h30