

Vinyl 2010

Sustainable Development: Progress Report 2003

Executive Summary



These are the highlights of the third annual report on the implementation by Vinyl 2010 of the PVC Industry's Voluntary Commitment - part of the programme for continuous environmental improvement over the entire PVC lifecycle. The work is central to the industry's actions to ensure that everything it does supports the three pillars of sustainable development: environmental protection, social advancement and economic wealth for current and future generations.

The Voluntary Commitment is a solid, tangible undertaking. Programme milestones make clear how much effort and resources the whole sector – from resin producers to the thousands of firms that convert and use PVC – is investing.



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**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

**RESPECT FOR
THE ENVIRONMENT**

**SOCIAL
PROGRESS**

The Voluntary Commitment in outline

In 2000, the PVC industry pledged to cut raw material and energy consumption in manufacturing, minimise the environmental impact of resin production, ensure that all plasticisers were safely used, phase out cadmium stabilisers by 2001 (done), assess risks linked to lead used as stabilisers and work toward the replacement of these by 2015.

Vinyl 2010 actively supports an integrated waste management approach and works with stakeholders to research, develop and implement appropriate solutions.

*The Voluntary Commitment:
A challenging 10-year plan to
deliver continuous improvement in
product stewardship across
the PVC lifecycle.*

Progress on principal current projects

PVC resin production

- Resin producers are minimising environmental impact by working towards the targets set in the ECVM Industry Charters for producing PVC by the suspension (S-PVC) and emulsion (E-PVC) processes. At the end of 2002, full compliance was at 93% for VCM and S-PVC, up from 88% in 1998.

Additives

- In stabiliser production, cadmium-based stabilisers are no longer sold, and assessments on lead-based stabilisers are being conducted while alternative stabilisers are being researched.
- The plasticiser industry continues to conduct research to build up the

scientific database consistent with Responsible Care® principles. During 2002, the industry again invested heavily in its research programme aimed at providing the necessary scientific studies to facilitate finalisation of the EU risk assessments and to ensure that plasticisers are being used without risk to human health or the environment.

Waste Management and Recycling

The integrated waste management approach includes commitments to recycling and specifically 50% of collectable, available PVC waste from window profiles, pipes, fittings and roofing membranes in 2005, and 50% of flooring in 2008. In addition, coated fabrics will also contribute to the overall industry recycling targets.

Highlights in 2002 were:

Mechanical recycling

- Mechanical recyclers and interested parties set up a consortium (Recovinyl SA) to facilitate the collection, dispatching and recycling of post consumer PVC waste across Europe. This will ensure a steady supply of material to recyclers.
- The Vinyloop Ferrara mechanical recycling plant in Italy came on stream in 2002 and is gearing up to a monthly capacity of 750 tonnes.
- Also based on Vinyloop technology, the decision was taken to start building a market development unit for fibres and PVC compounds of 1000 tonnes per year in 2003, to be followed by a 10,000 tonnes-a-year commercial plant in 2006. The project is known as 'Texyloop'.

Feedstock recycling

- On feedstock recycling, large scale field trials have been underway by Dow/BSL at its German feedstock recycling site. Vinyl 2010 is the initiator and main source of funding.
- The Danish Stigsnaes feedstock recycling project has been adapted and will be upgraded to commercial scale with an annual capacity of 40,000 tonnes of PVC waste. The investment is supported by a grant from the EU's LIFE programme as well as by Vinyl 2010.

- The Redop technology targets the mixed-plastics segment of municipal solid waste. It is managed by DSM Research in the Netherlands with participation of waste management companies, the plastics industry, a steel manufacturer and Vinyl 2010. The partners agreed in 2002 to go ahead with the production of larger quantities.

Other major projects

- In partnership with the Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling (ACRR), the associations represented by Vinyl 2010, the plastics industry resin producers (APME) and recyclers (EuPR) worked toward developing collection by local authorities and improving the recycling of plastic waste collected.
- Vinyl 2010 is supporting energy recovery projects based on municipal solid waste incineration. A survey on competing processes for the reduction or treatment of neutralisation residues is taking place in Italy, France, Denmark and other countries.
- PE Europe GmbH in Stuttgart has been contracted by Vinyl 2010 in 2002 to carry out an eco-efficiency study of recovery options.

Finance

In 2002, despite a difficult economic environment, Vinyl 2010 increased funding by 74% over the previous year. Total expenditure on waste management projects by Vinyl 2010 and EuPC member associations reached € 4.5 million against the € 2.6 million spent during 2001.

Johannesburg and the role of Vinyl 2010 in sustainable development

World leaders last year in Johannesburg declared sustainable development a “central element of the international agenda.”



Although the Voluntary Commitment was agreed on in 2000, before Johannesburg took place, the programme is

very much in line with the 2002 Declaration. In practice the task requires relentlessly improving production processes and products, investing in technology, cutting emissions and waste and boosting collection and recycling. Science and technology are at the core of the Vinyl 2010 work programme.

Sustainable development also feeds on openness and good governance. Vinyl 2010 has invited the European Parliament, the European Commission, Trade Unions, and Non-Governmental Organisations to join a Monitoring Committee,

which will review progress. The first meeting is scheduled for the end of the second quarter 2003.

The European PVC industry is committed to well being in the workplace and pays particular attention to constructive social dialogue.

For example, Vinyl 2010 and its partners hold regular consultations with the European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation on workplace health, safety and training issues.

In addition, Vinyl 2010 is getting ready to become more active in the European Union candidate countries. The objective is to help harmonise health, safety and environmental standards and share sustainability goals.

*Vinyl 2010:
The organisation that brings
together the whole PVC industry and
provides the infrastructure to translate its
aims on Sustainable Development
into reality.*