Minutes of the VinylPlus Monitoring Committee Meeting

27 April 2023, 14h00 - 15h30
European Parliament, SPINELLI 5G375

Attendees:

Ms Sarah Debbiche Krichen	Public Affairs Senior Manager, VinylPlus
Ms Brigitte Dero	Managing Director, VinylPlus
Mr Armand De Wasch	Euroconsumers
Prof. Jo Dewulf	University of Ghent
Mr Zdenek Hruska	VinylPlus
Mr Mihkel Krusberg	European Commission – DG ENV
Ms Nathalie Lukyova	Assistant to Mr Knotek, MEP
Mr Ettore Nanni	President, ESPA
Ms Olga Pozlevic	European Commission, DG GROW
Mr Geoffroy Tillieux	Director, Technical Department, EuPC
Ms Noelle Tracey	Project Manager, VinylPlus
Ms Ingrid Verschueren	General Manager, Recovinyl

Excused:

Ms Laure Baillargeon	European Commission, DG GROW
Mr Werner Bosmans	European Commission – DG ENV
Mr Ondrej Knotek	MEP
Mr Sylvain Lefebvre	Deputy General Secretary IndustriAll, European Trade Union
Mr Nuno Mello	MEP
Ms Ana Miguel Pedro Soares	Assistant to Mr. Melo, MEP

1. Welcome
J. Dewulf welcomed the participants. S. Debbiche Krichen and M. Krusberg introduced themselves.

2. Approval of agenda
The agenda was approved by all participants.

3. Approval of minutes
The minutes of the meeting held on December 1, 2022, were approved.

4. Date and venue of the next meeting
The date of the next meeting was confirmed for November 30, from 2 pm to 3:30 pm. Participants were reminded to arrive at 13:30.

5. VinylPlus Progress Report 2023
The 2023 progress report was approved. Members made a number of comments and suggestions for the next report.

Suggestions for the 2024 report:
- Include more relative numbers expressed in percentages to show recycling progress.
- Show and add metrics for reducing and reusing projects, in addition to recycling.

- The garden to connect project is a good example of reuse, and more reuse projects could be added in the future.
- Differentiation between closed-loop and open-loop recycling.
- Clarify the definition of medical devices, which are one of the few single-use articles where PVC is used, and can be recycled, as demonstrated by the VinylPlus Med project.
- Develop a dynamic model on how much waste there is a how much we likely capture.

6. Chemical recycling of PVC – update on new projects

Z. Hruska presented chemical recycling developments for PVC. He highlighted that for PVC, chemical recycling can focus on either the hydrocarbon part (with gasification and pyrolysis technologies), the chlorine part (with dehydrochlorination technologies), or both at the same time in a two-step process. He presented a status update on the different projects that are ongoing in VinylPlus:

- **VinylPlus® RecoSalt:** Recovery and recycling of chlorine in waste to energy plants in the form of NaCl.
- **VinylPlus® RecoAcid**: Recovery of chlorine in waste to energy plants in the form of HCl, which is then used to recycle metals from bottom ashes. Some of the recycled metals belong to Critical or Strategic Raw Materials identified by the EU Commission.
- **Halosep®**: Recovery of chlorine in the form of salts from incineration waste residues. This project is supported by the European Commission's LIFE programme (link).
- **Ineos Inovyn project**: 2-step process, first dehydrochlorination of PVC to recycle HCl, which could be then used to make new PVC, and then the use of pyrolysis or gasification to recycle carbon for ethylene production.

Z. Hruska also presented current development and issues linked to EU regulation.

Lastly, Z. Hruska stressed that chemical recycling of plastics is a technology under development and in its infancy in market penetration, but with huge investment planned: from EUR 2.6 billion in 2025 to EUR 7.2 billion in 2030. The production of recycled plastics via chemical recycling is estimated to increase to 1.2 Mt in 2025 and 3.4 Mt in 2030. To achieve this, regulatory clarity and stability is needed.

Members asked about the compatibility of PVC chemical recycling technologies, which are not "plastic to plastic", with EU regulations. Z. Hruska confirmed that VinylPlus' definition of chemical recycling is aligned with the Waste Framework Directive.

7. VinylPlus Programme Implementation

a) Recycling Achievements 2022

I. Verschueren presented the recycling achievements for 2022, highlighting that the net PVC waste input for 2022 was 810 240 tonnes, and the PVC recyclate produced (Recycling Output) amounted to 780 180 tonnes. She detailed how PVC recycling has progressed since 2016, the split between pre-consumer and post-consumer recycling in 2022, the recycling of PVC waste per region, as well as the origin of PVC waste recycled in 2022 (see slides).

b) Uptake of r-PVC 2022

On the uptake of recycled PVC, I. Verschueren showed a significant progress compared to 2021, with 564930 tonnes of r-PVC bought and used (converting input) and 561 795 tonnes of r-PVC in new products (Converting output). In 2021, the figures were respectively 449 138 tonnes and 419 893

tonnes. She detailed the countries of origin of r-PVC versus countries of converting r-PVC and the end applications of r-PVC.

c) Audit/verification results

I. Verschueren showed that 84% of recycling volume figures were verified or audited.

d) Outlook 2023

Lastly, I. Verschueren highlighted that for 2023, the outlook is a bit more positive, although demand is slowing down in most countries, and energy costs remain high.

8. ECHA Investigative Report – contribution of the PVC value chain, issues

S. Debbiche Krichen presented an update on the ongoing ECHA investigation of PVC and its additives. She reminded participants of the context that lead to the European Commission asking ECHA to conduct an investigation report, outlined the scope of the report, and highlighted the industry's significant contribution to the calls for evidence launched by ECHA.

9. Lead in PVC REACH restriction

G. Tillieux updated members on the process of the REACH restriction on lead in PVC, informing them that the restriction is expected to be published in the official journal in early May. He presented an overview of the key points of this restriction, which includes a general restriction (maximum lead content of 0.1%), a derogation of 10 years for rigid recovered PVC (max 1,5% lead content), a closed loop recycling obligation after three years, and a labelling obligation.

10. Wrap-Up

J. Dewulf wrapped up the meeting.

It was proposed to extend the next meeting to 2 hours.