

Minutes of the VinylPlus Monitoring Committee Meeting

30 November 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 (Chair)
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 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 Nuno Mello	MEP
Ms Ana Miguel Pedro Soares	Assistant to Mr. Melo, MEP

1. Welcome

B. Dero welcomed all participants on behalf of the Chair, J. Dewulf, who joined the meeting as of 2.30PM.

B. Dero announced that it was her last Monitoring Committee and thanked all participants for this fruitful work since the committee was created in 2003.

2. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved by all participants.

3. Approval of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27/04/23 were approved without any comment.

4. VinylPlus Programme Implementation

a. PVC recycling progress in 2023

I. Verschuereen presented the Recovinyl data for 2022: 810.240T of PVC waste was recycled and 564,930 T of recycled PVC was used into new products. The gap between the two figures is due to the fact that not all converters are part of the Recovinyl network.

I. Verschuereen gave an overview of the forecast for 2023. The general market feedback showed a decrease in the waste collected due to a slowdown in the building and construction sector. The uptake of recycled PVC is impacted by strong competition with imported virgin PVC available on the market at low prices.

I. Verschuereen updated on the year-to-date data for 2023. 523.869 T have been registered so far, and almost 290 000 T have been registered by converters. Higher volumes are expected to be registered by the end of the year, according to the usual trend.

O. Pozlevic asked about the impact of renovation efforts pushed by Europe (Renovation Wave). I. Verschuereen replied that the impact was important right after measures were put in place. However, at the moment, the construction sector has slowed, leading to a lower demand for production and new construction products, and less waste being available for recyclers.

b. Mitigating loss of waste streams

G. Tillieux presented what could be the solutions to mitigate loss of waste streams. He explained that beside the current market trends, such as the slowing down of the construction sector, regulation also impacts recycling. For example, the REACH restriction on lead in PV and on MCCPs. To ensure recycling continues to progress, VinylPlus will adopt the following strategy.

In the short term:

- Incentivize and develop existing collection schemes such as windows and related profiles
- Better mapping and support for the recycling supply chain

In the medium term:

- Expand collection scheme
- Extended Producer Responsibility
- Specific sectoral schemes to get more material for recyclers (for example on flooring and pipes)
- Research projects to develop innovative technologies
 - o Continuous sorting, for example scanning technology to detect the presence of specific additives
 - o Separation
 - o Extraction of legacy additives
 - o Chemical recycling: PVC is an enabler to remove heavy metals from waste

O. Pozlevic asked about the reason why we cannot collect more waste now. G. Tillieux replied that it requires specific sorting for each application. Across EU, infrastructures are not the same in each country which poses challenge.

O. Pozlevic stated that recycled content target set by the commission could be an incentive for higher collection rate, for example in public procurement conditions. G. Tillieux added that implementing a landfill ban would be very helpful.

c. PVC recycling options

Z. Hruska explained that chemical recycling is necessary to reach the 2025 and 2030 target of the VinylPlus Commitment.

Z. Hruska presented the latest projects under development:

- VinylPlus Recosalt 1: mature technology already in use in the EU and recognized as best available technology
- VinylPlus Recosalt 2: demonstration project to show the possibility for polymer-to-polymer recycling. In both projects, solid salts are collected.
- Recoacid: Plants are already using the technology and the process will be soon mandatory in Switzerland in 2026.
- Halosep: the concept is to recover chlorine; a pilot plant is implemented in Copenhagen and the project is recognised as best available technology by the Nordic council of Ministers
- Pyrolysis: mixed plastics waste containing PVC is recycled. Chlorine is recovered and recycled.

Z. Hruska insisted on the need for a legal framework integrating Mass Balance to enable higher contribution to PVC recycling numbers.

d. Additive Sustainability Footprint developments

S. Debbiche Krichen stated that the Additive Sustainability Footprint (ASF) tool is part of VinylPlus 2030 Commitment and seems to be of interest to regulators: it was presented to both ECHA and the European Commission. Additionally, several companies also expressed their interest in being trained and in testing the tool. We now have a plan to train additive suppliers on the tool in 2024 and conduct ASFs with additive suppliers.

6. Policy developments currently impacting the PVC value chain

S. Debbiche Krichen outlined the following developments:

- The publication of the ECHA investigation on PVC and PVC additives.
- The status on Waste Shipment Regulation

7. Reshape of monitoring committee:

B. Dero announced that Charlotte Röber will take over her role in the Committee as of January 2024. She explained that this could be an opportunity to expand the Committee and ask external stakeholders to join.

J. Dewulf, chairman of the Committee said that a good balance is necessary within the group, and he will support C. Röber in the management of the group.

8. Progress report 2024

- L. Biver explained the initial timeline foreseen for VinylPlus Progress Report 2024
- the verified and designed Report will be sent to the Committee (by April 16, 2024)
 - the next Monitoring Committee will review the Progress Report

- the Progress Report will be distributed on May 22-23, 2024 at the VinylPlus Sustainability Forum.

The next meeting will take place on April 18, 2024, in the European Parliament.

5. Wrap-Up

J. Dewulf wrapped up the meeting and thanked B. Dero for the good collaboration over the years and her contribution to the Monitoring Committee. He looks forward to meeting the new Managing Director Charlotte Röber at the next meeting.