

## Minutes of the VinylPlus Monitoring Committee Meeting

**18 April 2024, 14h00 - 15h30**

**European Parliament, SPINELLI 5G375**

### Attendees:

Ms Laurine Biver	VinylPlus
Ms Sarah Debbiche Krichen	Senior Public Affairs Manager, VinylPlus
Mr Armand De Wasch	Euroconsumers
Prof. Jo Dewulf	University of Ghent
Ms Sylvie Famelart	Senior Communications Manager, 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
Ms Charlotte Röber	Managing Director, VinylPlus
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 Zdenek Hruska	VinylPlus
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. C. Röber, VinylPlus' new Managing Director, O. Pozlevic, A. De Wasch and M. Krusberg introduced themselves to one another.

### 2. Approval of agenda

All participants approved the agenda.

### 3. Approval of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on November 30, 2023, were approved.

### 4. Date and venue of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed for December 5, from 2 pm to 4 pm, location to be confirmed.

### 5. VinylPlus Progress Report 2024

The 2024 progress report was presented.

Pathway one:

- I. Verschueren presented Recovinyl figures.

- Recycling figures show a slight decrease (-9%) which is less than the decrease in the market. This is due to several factors, notably a downturn in the Building and Construction sector, less production at the converters' level, hence less pre-consumer waste to recycle, competitive prices of virgin material affecting demand for r-PVC, and impacts of European regulations on legacy additives.
- Overall ratio of post/pre-consumer remained the same.
- Profiles continue to have the highest share of recycling. Profiles also have the highest post-consumer recycling.
- There is a bigger drop in converting, with a 16% decrease in the use of recycle into new products.
- Audit and verification percentages for recycling and converting were also presented.

Regarding this pathway, the Committee asked about the low level of post-consumer recycling in flooring. This results from multiple factors, such as the need to improve post-consumer collection, and tackling legacy additives. Possible solutions include targets for separate collection, and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) to facilitate logistics with collection hubs where sorting happens.

Pathway two:

- Regarding compliance with the ECVM Charter, 6 ECVM members were audited in 2022, and a reaudit of all members (7 in total, including 1 new) member will take place in 2024.
- A revision of the ECVM charter is underway.
- Ecoprofiles for PVC will be published, and specific applications will now be assessed. The ecoprofiles were built using PlasticsEurope's ecoprofiles for ethylene and EuroChlor's ecoprofiles for chlorine, and additional data from ECVM members.

Pathway three:

- 500 products and systems have been certified under the VinylPlus<sup>®</sup> Product Label and Vinylplus<sup>®</sup> Supplier Certificates.
- VinylPlus has enhanced its collaboration with the Global Vinyl Council, notably in the context of the ongoing Global Plastics Treaty negotiations.
- VinylPlus continues to engage with institutions and local communities and supports projects such as Garden to Connect and the 2026 Winter Olympics.

The 2024 progress report was approved.

## **6. Policy and market developments impacting PVC value chain**

S. Debbiche Krichen presented VinylPlus' analysis and work on the ECHA investigation report, highlighting the research projects launched by VinylPlus to fill some of the data gaps identified in the ECHA investigation report:

- Four projects are currently taking place:
  - o Assessment of alternatives: Comparative LCA assessment of cables
  - o Microparticles: Evaluation of impact on environment and human health, in partnership with recyclers (PRE)
  - o Assessment of waste flows: Updated model to estimate waste flows until 2040
  - o Compliance of imports: Analysis of flooring samples
- Committee members expressed interest in receiving the results from these research projects.

S. Debbiche Krichen presented VinylPlus' contribution to the ongoing Global Plastics Treaty negotiations, including the viewpoint that voluntary commitments such as Vinylplus can complement legally binding provisions to reduce plastic pollution. Committee members stressed that industry initiatives cannot replace ambitious legally binding provisions, but only complement them.

C. Röber presented the PVC market situation, highlighting the following:

- PVC represents 9% of total EU demand for plastics.
- The PVC industry encompasses around 6300 companies, 176,300 employees, and 35.7 bn turnover. Out of this, most companies are converters (only 12 PVC producers). The biggest turnover in the value chain is made by converters overall, however, the per-company turnover is highest among resin manufacturers.
- PVC resin use is decreasing, and the amount of resin with recyclates is increasing.
- There is overcapacity in Europe. However, imports are increasing.
- VinylPlus is looking into import compliance, with a project aiming at understanding whether imported flooring contains substances that are restricted in the EU.

## 7. VinylPlus Programme Implementation

C. Röber presented the draft planning for the review of VinylPlus 2030 targets by the end of 2025. The revised targets will be presented at the VinylPlus Sustainability Forum 2026.

C. Röber outlined the role of the monitoring committee in the context of the revision of the targets, but also more broadly how the Committee should be defined in the revised Commitment, i.e. what should be the role, who should be the members, etc.

C. Röber asked Committee members for their views on the role of the Monitoring committee. Committee members provided the below input:

- M. Krusberg: The Committee is a good platform and formal structure to keep each other informed, without being too big a commitment. It's a good way to guarantee transparency. M. Krusberg indicated he is happy with the current format.
- O. Pozlevic: The committee is useful, and no other plastic sector has this regularity and level of detail. Having this level of data really helps. In particular, the ongoing project on market surveillance will be useful.
- J. Dewulf: The Committee needs more members to bring additional or complementary relevant expertise. Different workstreams/pathways could guide potential extension. In terms of format, the timing and duration are good. The role of the Committee should focus on exchanging information and acting as a sounding Board.
- A. De Wash: Stressed that his vision is to identify potential risks to the consumer and get relevant information. As such, they can also support market surveillance projects (i.e. conduct testing, and publish results).
- N. Lukyova: stressed the importance of enlarging the Committee to new members of the European Parliament following the EU elections, and suggested organising an event for this purpose.

It was agreed to create a role description for the Committee and to explore organising an event after the EU elections to have new MEPs join the Committee.

C. Röber asked whether Members would be interested in receiving more information on technical projects. Members indicated that projects of interest are those linked to regulatory developments, rather than pure technological development.

## **8. Wrap-Up**

J. Dewulf wrapped up the meeting, and summarised the key points as follows:

- Reduced volumes in progress reports that have to do with current economics.
- The project on minimising environmental footprint is underway.
- The ECHA investigation report on PVC and PVC additives and follow-up projects are of interest.
- On the Global plastics treaty, “voluntary” terminology should be avoided, and complementarity stressed instead.
- There is a PVC market overcapacity in Europe and simultaneously high imports
- The VinylPlus programme will be reviewed in 2025 and published in 2026.
- Work will continue to take place on the evolution of the Monitoring Committee, including the definition of role and outreach to new members.

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