

VinylPlus announces nearly half million tonnes of PVC recycled and a stronger commitment to contribute to climate mitigation

Brussels, 30th April 2015. With 481,018 tonnes of PVC waste recycled in 2014, VinylPlus, the sustainable development programme of the European PVC industry, is steadily progressing toward its 2020 recycling targets. The industry confirmed today at the [Vinyl Sustainability Forum 2015](#) its strong commitment to reduce the European PVC value chain contribution to GHG emissions.

With the theme 'More Vinyl, Less Carbon', the 2015 Forum gathered today in Cannes, France, more than 100 stakeholders from academia, government bodies, the UN, the European Commission, retailers and all sectors of the PVC industry. Discussion focused on how the industry is helping combat climate change, improving energy and resource efficiency; and how PVC products can contribute in reducing CO₂ emissions.

Welcoming delegates, VinylPlus Chairman Michael Träger said: *"Once again VinylPlus' progress and achievements in 2014 confirm our industry determination to reduce its environmental footprint and the effectiveness of our voluntary approach to sustainable development. As foreseen, in 2015 we will undertake the mid-term critical review of our targets, measuring and evaluating our initiatives up to now, to place our sustainability programme in the context of ongoing socio-economic and environmental developments. Today's Forum gives us the opportunity to start our review process also in the framework of the global sustainability agenda for 2015."*

Outlining the UN sustainability agenda for 2015, including the Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030) and the Paris Climate Summit (COP21), Christophe Yvetot, from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization ([UNIDO](#)), said *"The post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and climate commitments will offer a new narrative for industry: sharing prosperity and respecting the environment. As a member of the [Green Industry Platform](#), the Vinyl Industry can actively contribute to the global sustainability agenda through its continuous efforts to reduce its environmental and climate footprint and to develop new green products, services and jobs that will support a more sustainable world."*

"Our Voluntary Commitment – said VinylPlus General Manager Brigitte Dero, presenting VinylPlus 2014 results – already encompasses themes linked to climate change, such as recycling and therefore resource saving; energy efficiency and GHG emissions reduction along the entire production chain; and increasing use of renewable energy and materials."

In 2014, VinylPlus recycled 481,018 tonnes of PVC waste, on track to achieve its target of 800.000 tonnes/year by the end of 2020. The largest volumes, 473,576 tonnes, were registered and certified by Recovinyl (www.recovinyl.com), the organisation set up in 2003 to facilitate PVC waste collection and recycling.

Nevertheless, uncertainties in the interpretation of relevant EU regulations (REACH¹, CLP² and Hazardous Waste), particularly in relation to recycled PVC containing legacy additives, might jeopardise recycling activities and demand for recyclates in Europe. The European PVC industry is working in strict cooperation with the competent authorities to address this issue.

Important progress was also registered on the PVC additives side in 2014: the use of lead-based stabilisers decreased by 86% in the EU-28 compared to 2007, progressing towards the target of completing their substitution by the end of 2015. Furthermore, the VinylPlus Additives Task Force developed a new methodology to evaluate the use of substances utilised as additives in PVC products. This integrates the current standard Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) with TNS³ criteria for sustainability. The new 'EPDplus' approach was then reviewed and discussed with external stakeholders. The finalisation of the first EPDplus for sewage pipes was announced today at the Vinyl Sustainability Forum 2015.

Another important result in relation to climate change mitigation is represented by an average 10.2% decrease in the energy used by ECV⁴ member companies in 2012-2013 to produce one tonne of PVC compared to the 2007-2008 baseline, which is well in line with the target of a 20% reduction by 2020.

Commenting the works of the Forum, Arab Hoballah, Chief Sustainable Lifestyles, Cities and Industry of the United Nations Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)) said *"UNEP welcomes all Sector initiatives such as VinylPlus, which recognize the challenges, set targets, engage stakeholders and demonstrate progress. 2015 will set the sustainability agenda through 2030 and beyond. No matter how you react, the trends that are driving the planet are driving the market. The private sector can see this as a new set of regulations, restrictions and red tape, or as a historic, immediate opportunity to innovate, grow new markets, and build new relationships with customers and other stakeholders to help society meet the challenge of change. UNEP stands ready to work with those visionaries."*

www.vinylplus.eu

Download the VinylPlus [Progress Report](#) and [Executive Summary](#)

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About VinylPlus: Launched in 2011, VinylPlus is the renewed ten-year Voluntary Commitment to sustainable development by the European PVC industry. The VinylPlus programme was developed in an open process of stakeholder dialogue with industry, NGOs, regulators, public representatives and users. [Five key challenges](#) have been identified based on [The Natural Step System Conditions for a Sustainable Society](#).

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¹ REACH: Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals

² CLP: Classification, Labelling and Packaging of substances and mixtures

³ TNS: The Natural Step (www.thenaturalstep.org)

⁴ ECV: The European Council of Vinyl Manufacturers (www.pvc.org)