

**EUROPEAN PVC INDUSTRY LAUNCHES AMBITIOUS NEW TEN YEAR SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT  
AND CALLS FOR MORE SUPPORT FOR RECYCLING IN EUROPE**

*VinylPlus to build on success of industry self-regulation under predecessor Vinyl 2010 programme*

The European PVC industry today announced an ambitious new set of targets for sustainable development to 2020 and called for the support of policy makers in stimulating recycling in Europe. The VinylPlus programme is built around five commitments aimed at: achieving a quantum leap in recycling rates of PVC and the development of innovative recycling technologies; addressing concerns about organochlorine emissions; ensuring the sustainable use of additives; enhancing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy and raw materials in PVC production, and; promoting sustainability throughout the whole PVC value chain.

The new initiative builds on the success of the Vinyl 2010 ten year voluntary commitment to enhance the sustainable production and use of PVC. Vinyl 2010 is widely regarded as leading example of industry self-regulation working in practice and delivering concrete results. Among its most significant achievements was the establishment of an infrastructure for the annual collection and recycling of over 250,000 tonnes of PVC - which prior to 2000 had been dismissed by many as an "unrecyclable" material destined for landfill.

Commenting on the launch of the new ten year voluntary commitment, Josef Ertl, Chairman of VinylPlus said, "VinylPlus is even more ambitious in its targets and scope than Vinyl 2010. The aim of the industry is to continue to contribute to Europe 2020 goals on sustainable growth through results-driven self-regulation. However, this will not be possible without the support of policy makers at EU and national level in stimulating recycling and use of recyclates through effective waste management and green procurement policies. Promoting a move towards zero landfill in Europe would help boost private investment in waste management and unlock the economic potential of the recycling sector."

Concrete targets in the VinylPlus commitment include the recycling of 800,000 tonnes of PVC per year by 2020 of which 100,000 tonnes should be treated by innovative technologies to tackle applications that have posed a challenge for recycling up to now. The industry is also planning to introduce a new VinylPlus certification and labelling scheme designed to help users to identify and prioritise sustainably produced PVC, while also creating value for VinylPlus participants.

VinylPlus has been developed with the input and guidance of The Natural Step (TNS), an international NGO at the forefront of research and dialogue on sustainable development.

According to David Cook, TNS Executive Ambassador, "People making procurement decisions generally welcome the chance to make better choices and to see suppliers responding actively to their needs and the sustainability standards they are working towards. In this respect, Vinyl 2010 is a rare example of an industry managing to turn itself around through voluntary action. With VinylPlus the industry is now setting itself even more challenging targets to meet the needs of society and further improve the credentials and appeal of PVC as a material of choice for sustainable purchasing."

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Transparency and open communication with internal and external audiences will be a key working principle of VinylPlus. The new commitment places significant emphasis on ongoing stakeholder dialogue as a means of ensuring that the industry's efforts translate into concrete and far reaching benefits for society as a whole.

In addition to maintaining a constructive dialogue with TNS, VinylPlus will continue to be monitored by an independent monitoring committee made up of representatives of the European Parliament, European Commission, trade unions, retailers and consumer organisations. As with Vinyl 2010, the industry will publish an independently verified and audited report outlining the progress made against each of the VinylPlus targets.

Finally, as sustainable development is a global challenge, the European PVC industry is committed to engaging in efforts to globalise the VinylPlus approach by sharing best practice and encouraging similar voluntary initiatives elsewhere in the world.

Commenting on this objective on behalf of the VinylPlus Monitoring Committee, Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl MEP said, "The efforts of the PVC industry in the past ten years have become a reference point for self-regulation in Europe. We welcome the ambition of the industry with VinylPlus to demonstrate European leadership on sustainable development on a global scale."

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**About VinylPlus:** VinylPlus brings together the large majority of the leading companies in the industry across 27 EU Member State as well Norway and Switzerland. The commitment will run by a secretariat led by General Manager, Stefan Eingaertner.

**Related links:** [www.vinylplus.eu](http://www.vinylplus.eu) [www.thenaturalstep.org](http://www.thenaturalstep.org)