

Over 360,000 tonnes of PVC recycled in Europe in 2012, new record for VinylPlus

Brussels 29 April 2013 – VinylPlus, the European PVC industry sustainable development programme, had a record 362,076 tonnes of PVC recycled last year, keeping it on track to meet the challenge of recycling 800,000 tonnes per year by 2020. A more comprehensive and wider scope for what constitutes 'recycled PVC' has been adopted to include post-consumer and limited types of post-industrial PVC, as well as some of the regulated waste streams in the EU.

Innovative technologies to recycle difficult-to-treat PVC waste are under currently evaluation and significant efforts were made to address the 'legacy additives' issue related to the presence of restricted chemicals in recycled PVC.

The 2012 results were presented at the Vinyl Sustainability Forum 2013 last week in Istanbul. Echoing words from the EU Environment Commissioner, VinylPlus Chairman Filipe Constant said the industry "is effectively moving from a model of resource consumption that follows a 'take-make-use-throw away' linear pattern into a truly circular economy model which puts end-of-life materials back into the production stream extending the added-value of PVC's inherent durability and versatility."

In 2012 VinylPlus registered a decrease of 76.37% in lead stabiliser consumption in the EU-27 compared to 2007 levels, well on track to complete the substitution by the end of 2015. The new audit on the 'PVC Industry Charters' showed a 96% full compliance.

A number of VinylPlus taskforces are fully operational, studying how to incorporate renewable energy and raw materials, the sustainable use of additives and the environmental footprint of PVC production. A VinylPlus product label concept for PVC products has been developed in collaboration with The Natural Step – an NGO providing input and guidance for the development of the VinylPlus programme – and the UK expert certification body BRE.

"It is quite impressive to see such a dynamic value-chain working together to make the entire industry and its products more sustainable," commented Reha Gür, Vice-President, Turkish Plastics Manufacturers Association, PAGDER. "As most of Europe and the world are experiencing difficult economic times, this is even more admirable. We are honoured to host the Vinyl Sustainability Forum in Istanbul and hope the work of VinylPlus can help inspiring our country's PVC companies – large and small - to move a step closer to the principles and goals behind this programme."

An important focus of the VinylPlus programme is the promotion of 'sustainability awareness'. In that regard, a number of communication projects were supported last year to reinforce the Voluntary Commitment messages along the value chain. VinylPlus also engaged in external debates including Rio+20, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The VinylPlus Voluntary Commitment was included in the Rio+20 Registry of Commitments.

Speaking at the Forum in Istanbul, Ambassador Tomas Anker Christensen, Senior Advisor at the United Nations Office for Partnerships noted "partnerships are a key enabler for achieving progress on agreed development goals, including sustainable development. VinylPlus has demonstrated success and we are keen to see how the European industry challenges itself to be more ambitious and concrete in addressing identified challenges. Industry has a critical role to play in accelerating change, greening the economy and driving sustainable progress around the world".

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

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About VinylPlus: Launched in 2011, VinylPlus is the new ten-year Voluntary Commitment to sustainable development of the European PVC industry. The VinylPlus programme has been 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. The regional scope of the programme is the EU-27 plus Norway and Switzerland.