

## Value-chain Voluntary Agreements to improve resource efficiency and save energy: the new VinylPlus approach



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### Topic

- Resilience
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### Title of the Paper

Value-chain Voluntary Agreements to improve resource efficiency and save energy: the new VinylPlus approach

### Form of Presentation

- Poster
- Presentation

### Short Description (maximum 2500 characters)

The first 10-year Voluntary Agreement signed by the European PVC industry in 2000, Vinyl 2010, has been an eye-opening example of industry self-regulation working in practice. Based on a learning-by-doing approach, it has helped to revolutionise the PVC value chain in Europe.

The implementation of the ECVM Charter resulted in lower greenhouse emissions and subsequently in a reduction of both carbon and water footprints. Furthermore, the establishment of an infrastructure for collecting and recycling PVC in Europe has been one of the most significant achievements of the programme. Prior to 2000, PVC had been dismissed by many as an 'unrecyclable material' destined to be landfilled. In the last year of Vinyl 2010, over 260,000 tonnes of post-consumer waste were recycled. The programme showed how industry's Voluntary Agreements can be effective and that, eventually, self-regulation (without forgetting the role of institutions and decision-makers) can achieve results faster than regulations. In addition, this proactively voluntary approach and the involvement of the entire value-chain can provide an optimal platform for collaboration and dialogue with regulators.

Building upon the experience of Vinyl 2010, the new 10-year Voluntary Commitment of the European PVC industry, VinylPlus, aims to cope with the global challenges humankind is already facing regarding resource scarcity, energy efficiency and the development of effective technologies, methods and sustainability indicators.

Based on The Natural Step System Conditions for a Sustainable Society, five priority challenges have been identified for VinylPlus:

- Recycling 800,000 tonnes/year of PVC and the developing innovative technologies;
- Addressing concerns about organochlorine emissions;
- Ensuring the use of sustainable additives;
- Enhancing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy and raw materials in PVC production;
- Raising awareness about sustainable development, recognising that progress will be equally dependent upon widening its understanding throughout industry, as well as

across societies.

In creating the VinylPlus programme, the industry has chosen to work in an open process of extensive stakeholder dialogue, including private companies, NGOs, regulators, civil society representatives, and PVC users.

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