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THE OZZANO PROJECT

'2 litre' house makes 90% energy-savings

Preserving natural resources and saving energy is of concern to everyone today. When choosing a new vehicle, most people consider the "Euro" classification for fuel consumption and emissions, but when choosing a house the rationale is less obvious.

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Self-regulation at Café Crossfire

As part of its partnership with Brussels policy think-tank Friends of Europe, Vinyl 2010 participated in a debate on an area which is relevant and of interest to the PVC industry. The debate 'Can Self-Regulation Cut Through The EU's Red Tape?' was held on March 5 at the Bibliothèque Solvay in Brussels. The event was well-attended by representatives of the European Commission, European Parliament and from many industry groups and trade associations.

Vinyl 2010 Secretary General Jean-Pierre De Grève gave a welcome speech, outlining the role of the PVC industry's Voluntary Commitment and the progress the industry has made through Vinyl 2010 towards sustainable development. In addition to his introduction on the programme, brochures on Vinyl 2010 were made available for those seeking more information.

The panellists at the debate were European Commission official Heikki Salmi, Director of the European Consumers' Organisation (BEUC) Jim Murray and Member of the European Parliament Monica Frassoni. Moderator Giles Merritt asked participants to consider whether self-regulation can avoid red tape altogether and whether it is a credible response to reducing the administrative burden on industry.

Self-regulation better suited to industry?

The European Commission put forward the argument that self-regulation is faster, more flexible and more fitting to industry as well as being more easily accepted by industry. Industry can often regulate itself better and more efficiently than legislation can, the speaker suggested, particularly where the issues are technical. Cutting red tape could boost the EU's GDP by 1.5%, according to the Commission.

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Vinyl 2010 releases strong results in its Sixth Progress Report



Vinyl 2010 has released its Sixth Vinyl 2010 Annual Report, covering its activities for the year 2006. The report is available on www.vinyl2010.org and confirms the PVC industry's continuing progress towards better environmental performance and sustainable development in terms of production, responsible use of additives and the collection and recycling of waste. In 2006 Vinyl 2010 recycled 83,000 tonnes of PVC, more than doubling its recycling figures for the second year running.



Self-regulation at Café Crossfire



Jim Murray, representing the consumers felt that self-regulation is not the way to regulate as its effectiveness

is uncertain. "Not all self-regulation is equal and not all red tape is bad", he said citing self-regulatory initiatives

that have failed and resulted in subsequent regulation.

Monica Frassoni chair of the Green Group in the European Parliament said that while self-regulation often does not result in environmental protection she congratulated the PVC industry on the progress it is making towards its targets through Vinyl 2010. "If it works, wonderful", she said.

The importance of independent and transparent monitoring was stressed by all participants. In conclusion, it is clear that self-regulation is not a panacea but that with a real, well-managed commitment,

as in the example of Vinyl 2010, it can respond better and more flexibly than legislation.



Credit cards from recycled PVC

Paying with plastic took a green turn with the new AB Recycled-Card, a 100% recycled PVC product, introduced by Arthur Blank and Company, a Boston-based manufacturer of custom debit, credit, and bank cards.

Using overruns and scraps generated from its traditional PVC card manufacturing process, the company supplies the feedstock material to create new sheets, from which they punch out the AB RecycledCards.

The company claims that the off-white, speckled card is identical to traditional plastic cards in look, feel, and reliability. Arthur Blank believes it is the first volume card manufacturer to offer a wholly recycled product.

The AB RecycledCard is part of the company's Green Line, developed in response to the general market trend towards environmentally-friendly products.



'2 litre' house makes 90% energy-savings



Nevertheless keeping environmental performance in buildings and construction in mind is possible: architectural approaches as well as European indicators and Directives give guidelines to obtain better results in terms of energy saving and eco-compatible consumption.

The innovative 'Casa 2 Litri' (2 litre house) project launched by the Centro di Informazione sul PVC (the Italian association of the PVC industry) and AIPE (the Italian association of Expanded Polystyrene producers) seeks to respond to this challenge.

The goal of the project was to come up with an architectural approach able to construct a building which consumes the equivalent of 2 litres/m²/year (or 20 kWh/m²/year), for heating/air conditioning and hot water, instead, for example, of the average of 20 litres/m²/year for average Italian buildings. In other words, it results in a 90% saving of energy consumption.

The '2 litre house' is conceptually a new building in which materials, systems and innovative building processes are brought together in order to achieve a huge reduction of the environmental impact in the maintenance and management phase and to guarantee the minimum environmental impact in both the construction and demolition phases.

The project is not commercial but it sets an example of a ground-breaking building approach which is available to all and conforms with the most demanding European and Italian Directives as well as other energy-saving legislation.

The '2 litre house' approach is based on sustainability in three separate areas:

- economic sustainability (supply and demand, life-cycle approach, economic analysis of building and maintenance processes)
- functional sustainability (technical and functional performance, quality of indoor environment and durability)
- environmental sustainability (environmental impact, saving natural resources and energy).

In order to achieve sustainability in these three areas, processes, materials and building elements must be taken into account as pieces of a technological and functional puzzle.

In substance, the approach has been the reconciliation of bioclimatic principles with the choice of materials and constructive systems to obtain maximum performance.

The main characteristics of the '2 litre' approach are: analysis of the climatic conditions, design of the rooms based on these climatic characteristics, solar shields for active and passive shadows, adoption of solar and photovoltaic panels, condensation boiler and/or heat pump, use of adiabatic heat sources for cooling, controlled ventilation, use of materials such as EPS and PVC for hyper-insulation and windows in order to guarantee the optimal thermal transmittance, use of PVC piping systems for fluid and light transportation and EPS components for roofing, walls, flooring insulation.

The '2 litre house' includes a maintenance and management guide accompanied by life-cycle assessments (LCAs) of the materials used and a final evaluation of the whole process, not only the energy aspects required by the EU Directive on Energy Certification.

This project was presented at Bolzano's Klimahouse Exhibition in January 2007, and at Milan's Expo Building Exhibition in February. In Milan the first concrete realisation of the project in the Commune of Ozzano Emilia, near Bologna, was also presented: five single family houses and an Experimental Didactic Centre are presently under construction. The project and design are managed by Studio Arkit of Bologna with the active support of the two associations AIPE and the Centro di Informazione sul PVC and their members, who supply materials and components.

Recovinyl expands its scope



Recovinyl was set up in 2005 in the framework of Vinyl 2010. The aim is to facilitate contacts and collection schemes with existing collectors and recyclers of PVC waste, and therefore significantly increase available volumes of recyclable PVC.

Recovinyl also provides financial incentives to support the collection of PVC waste

from the construction and demolition sectors, subsidising those who collect and send PVC waste to accredited waste recovery companies and recyclers. Its goal is to maintain a steady supply of post-construction PVC waste for recycling in Europe.

Recovinyl initially started with a network of collection points in Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK. Germany and France followed suit in 2006 and Denmark, Italy and Spain will join the initiative in 2007.

Recovinyl activities include:

- identifying dedicated points of collection for PVC waste and helping local authorities to facilitate collection
- working with waste collectors to spread knowledge and best practice about recovery and recycling solutions
- developing guidelines and organising training sessions

for collection centres to help personnel identify and sort PVC waste

- advising waste transfer stations and local authority collection site operators on how to proceed further in the sorting and recycling process.

Applications covered by Recovinyl include pipes, gutters, window and door profiles, shutters and blinds, panelling and cladding and, ducting for electrical cables.

The organisation works together with a wide range of stakeholders: consumers, businesses, municipalities, waste management companies and recyclers, as well as national and local governments.

Since it started its operations in 2005, Recovinyl succeeded in recycling 14,000 tonnes of PVC waste in 2005 and more than tripled this quantity

in 2006 by expanding its collection points and collecting more than 44,000 tonnes. This result also reflected the integration into Recovinyl of the TEPPFA and EPPA sectoral projects for pipes and window profiles. Recovinyl aims to ensure the collection of 75,000 tonnes of waste per annum throughout Europe by 2010 as part of the Vinyl 2010 programme.

The Recovinyl programme encourages participation in its scheme and has a dedicated website www.recovinyl.com for details on joining the programme.



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In the coming weeks, Vinyl 2010 will be participating in some major conferences and events in the Sustainable Development and Life-Cycle Management world, with papers, poster presentations and info desks, to present the Vinyl 2010 approach and achievements and to exchange ideas with global experts in the field of sustainable development.

- 15th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15) in New York, USA, 30 April-11 May (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/index.html>)
- Green Week 2007: 'Lessons from the past, challenges for the future' in Brussels, Belgium, 12-15 June (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/greenweek/index_en.htm)
- 11th European Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production in Basel, Switzerland, 20-22 June (<http://www.erscp2007.net>).