

Joint statement

27 October 2023

Criteria will enable consumers to choose the most responsibly produced PVC building products for renovation

The Nordic PVC Network is pleased to see that the Nordic Swan Ecolabel recognises the positive developments PVC has undergone in terms of sustainability. However, we find it peculiar that this progress does not immediately lead to the Swan setting criteria for PVC building products for renovation. As PVC is the most used plastic in building & construction, and is regaining lost market shares, it would only be logical that such criteria are set. The argument is that establishing such criteria would be too complicated.

Our message is that setting criteria for PVC does not have to be a complex task. In fact, it can be distilled into a few, but effective, guidelines.

Firstly, we can insist that the raw material for the PVC products must be produced in Europe with European PVC resin by companies that are part of VinylPlus, the European PVC industry's commitment to sustainable development. This ensures that the PVC production surpasses the strict environmental and health standards set by EU BAT reference documents.

Secondly, we can demand that the company selling the PVC products must partake in extended producer responsibility by joining a PVC collection and recycling system. This will ensure that PVC waste is managed responsibly and recycled into new products. Today, such a system exists in Denmark for rigid PVC in form of WUPPI. By enabling both rigid and flexible PVC products to be Swan labeled, manufacturers would be incentivised to establish collection and recycling systems for rigid PVC in the other Nordic countries, as well as for flexible PVC.

Lastly, regarding criteria for the products' content. We can simply state that PVC products should not contain substances of concern, i.e. classified phthalates, heavy metals, or any other substances of concern. This ensures that the products are easily mechanically recyclable without any harmful legacy additives at their end-of-life.

With these simple criteria, we can take a significant step towards making PVC more environmentally and health-wise acceptable without overcomplicating matters.

At the same time, such criteria will help consumers choose responsibly produced European PVC products over imported goods from China and elsewhere that do not follow the same strict regulation as in Europe. This is important as consumers' have changed their attitude towards PVC and increasingly buy imported PVC products, as has been documented by the Danish EPA (Miljøstyrelsen: Kortlægning af forsyning af PVC i Danmark, 2021).



The Nordic PVC Network is open to engaging in a constructive dialogue with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel on establishing pertinent criteria.

Signatories:

[PVC Information Council Denmark](#)

[PVC Forum Norway](#)

[PVC Forum Sweden](#)

[Finnish Plastics Industries Federation](#)