

Press Release

Brussels, 26 January 2023

Plastics Europe and EuPC launch European Operation Clean Sweep® certification scheme

Plastics Europe, the association of plastics manufacturers in Europe, and EuPC, the association of European Plastics Converters, announce today the launch of the Operation Clean Sweep® (OCS) harmonised European certification scheme. Adding this new tool to the OCS toolbox is a milestone for the OCS programme in its work towards zero pellet loss in the environment.

The loss of plastics pellets in our ecosystems is unacceptable, but can unfortunately occur at all stages along the value chain despite the application of the current standard environmental, safety and quality management controls. The Operation Clean Sweep® programme was developed to help companies tackle pellet leakage by providing a series of key recommendations and tools.

Operational from February 2023, the first ever European pellet loss prevention certification scheme will further strengthen Operation Clean Sweep® by creating harmonised processes and procedures for controlling and documenting pellet loss across the entire plastics supply chain.

The scheme will allow all current OCS signatories, and any other pellet handling entity along the supply chain, to assess and quantify their implementation of the OCS pledge. It will set common minimum requirements (based on the six pillars of the [OCS pledge](#)) that will be audited regularly by accredited certification bodies. Certified companies will be listed on an online Public Register and the development of the certification will be reported annually, including pellet loss estimates and performance indicators.

Hervé Millet, Director Climate and Production, Plastics Europe, stated: *“The launch of the OCS Europe certification scheme is an important step to further improve the impact of the Operation Clean Sweep® programme and support our members and their value chains in preventing pellet loss. Plastics producers are fully committed to deploy the certification among their European facilities and encourage all their value chain partners to do the same.”*

Geoffroy Tillieux, Technical Director, European Plastics Converters, added: *“We can now tackle the issue of pellet loss with a practical toolbox. Preventing pellet loss is about culture and organisation change and companies in plastics masterbatching, compounding and converting may now demonstrate through concrete and transparent action how they prevent environmental pollution”.*

The OCS Europe certification scheme was developed with guidance, and under the supervision, of a multistakeholder committee composed of policymakers, certification bodies, industry, and with additional recommendations provided through a public consultation. The implementation of the scheme will be monitored and further finetuned to ensure it effectively supports the objective of reaching an overall decrease in plastics pellet losses.

The plastics industry supports the European Commission’s objective of identifying policy options aimed at reducing unintentional releases of microplastics in the environment. When it comes to plastics pellets, we trust that our industry’s actions to date, including the introduction of the OCS Europe certification scheme, can serve as a blueprint for the development of the European Commission’s policy on unintentional pellet losses.

It is only by working together as a united value chain that we can tackle pellets pollution. We call on all our partners to join the [OCS programme](#), get certified and achieve our shared goal of systemic change.

More information:

The Operation Clean Sweep® programme currently has more than 1,800 signatories including companies, sites and associations. This includes all Plastics Europe members and a constantly increasing number of converters and transporters.

The rules and principles of the certification scheme, as well as the applicable requirements for companies' facilities to be certified are available on <https://www.opcleansweep.eu>.

An initial list of approved certification bodies will be published on the same website in February 2023.

Notes for Editors

About Plastics Europe:

Plastics Europe is the pan-European association of plastics manufacturers with offices across Europe. For over 100 years, science and innovation has been the DNA that cuts across our industry. With close to 100 members producing over 90% of all polymers across Europe, we are the catalyst for the industry with a responsibility to openly engage with stakeholders and deliver solutions which are safe, circular and sustainable. We are committed to implementing long-lasting positive change.

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About EuPC:

European Plastics Converters (EuPC) is the leading EU-level trade association, based in Brussels, representing European plastics converting companies. EuPC totals about 46 national as well as European plastics converting industry associations and represents more than 50,000 companies, producing over 50 million tons of plastic products every year. The European plastics industry makes a significant contribution to the welfare in Europe by enabling innovation, creating quality of life to citizens and facilitating resource efficiency and climate protection. More than 1.6 million people are working in EU converting companies (mainly SMEs) to create a turnover in excess of € 260 billion per year.

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