

# Press Release

Rotterdam, 26 February 2021

## Companies and government bodies join forces

### Taskforce seeks to set the pace in tackling plastic granule pollution

**ROTTERDAM 26/02/21** - Several plastics companies have joined forces with the Port of Rotterdam Authority, Ducor Petrochemicals BV, PlasticsEurope Nederland, DCMR Environmental Protection Agency of Rijnmond and the Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management to set up a special collaborative alliance: the 'Rotterdam Clean Sweep Taskforce'. The Rotterdam Clean Sweep Taskforce aims to combat pollution from plastic granules, powders and flakes in the port of Rotterdam. The alliance is the follow-up to a conference held on this subject last September. The Taskforce is affiliated with Operation Clean Sweep® (OCS), a covenant of plastic manufacturers set up to address the issue of granule loss.

The reason for the September conference was that the environmental organisation Plastic Soup Foundation had drawn attention to the fact that plastic granules had been found in the water and on banks of the port of Rotterdam. Ann Geens, Site Manager at plastics manufacturer Ducor and Chair of the Task Force, acknowledges the problem: 'I honestly have to admit that our eyes have been opened. There are too many loose pellets (granules) on the quays, industrial sites and in the water of the Rotterdam port area. At Ducor we are already tackling this problem; however, it needs to be done on a much wider scale. I am therefore delighted that we have been able to bring together so many organisations from all parts of the supply chain. We can only solve this problem by working together.'

#### Operation Clean Sweep®

The full name of the taskforce is the Rotterdam Clean Sweep Taskforce, after the Operation Clean Sweep® programme set up by PlasticsEurope, the trade association for the plastics-producing industry. This covenant is widely accepted within the industry and its signatories aim to achieve zero emissions of plastic pellets, powders and flakes. The platform is open to all organisations and companies in the plastics industry that are willing to sign the OCS pledge. Ann Geens: 'The Rotterdam Taskforce wholeheartedly supports the OCS programme. Besides raising awareness, it also provides practical tools for tackling the problem. For example by improving the work location, tightening up procedures, raising awareness and training staff. More and more organisations are signing up to OCS, including only recently the Port of Rotterdam Authority which, as a neutral platform in the port of Rotterdam, has a vested interest in the programme.'

#### More companies

The intention is for as many companies and organisations throughout the supply chain as possible to join the taskforce. There is a similar task force operating in the port of Antwerp. There, companies, carriers, governments and environmental organisations are working together to reduce pollution from plastics. The Rotterdam Taskforce has a core group of participants comprising the Port of Rotterdam Authority, PlasticsEurope Nederland, Ducor Petrochemicals BV, DCMR, Deltalinqs, LyondellBasell, Shin-Etsu; the Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management, Huntsman and Rotterdam Polymer Hub.

The core group has had its first - online - meetings - and is working on topics such as awareness, enforcement, historical pollution and cleanup. Over the next few months, several working groups will be drawing up action plans relating to these topics.

You can find out more about the Operation Clean Sweep® programme here: <http://www.opcleansweep.eu/>

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**Note for the editors.**

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