

# Plastic pellet loss prevention in Flanders

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# Action required



Pellets at the loading area



Pellets near a container

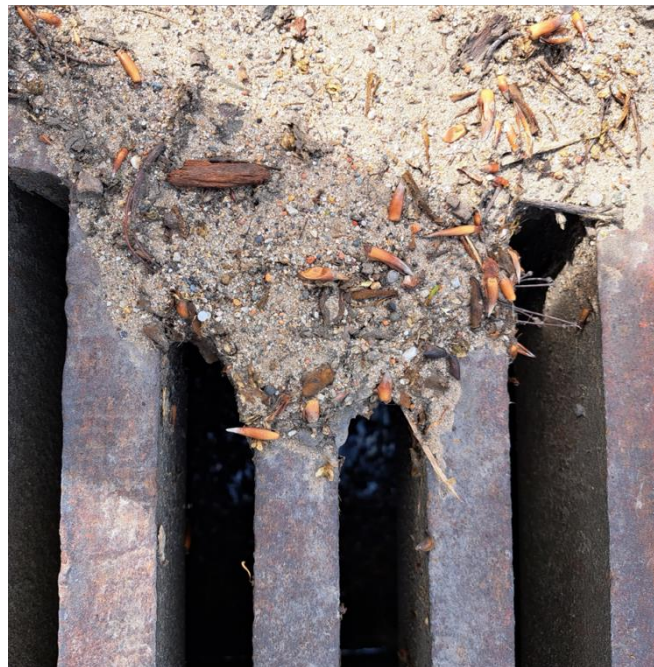
Source: VMM



# Action required



Pellets sticking on the tires of a truck

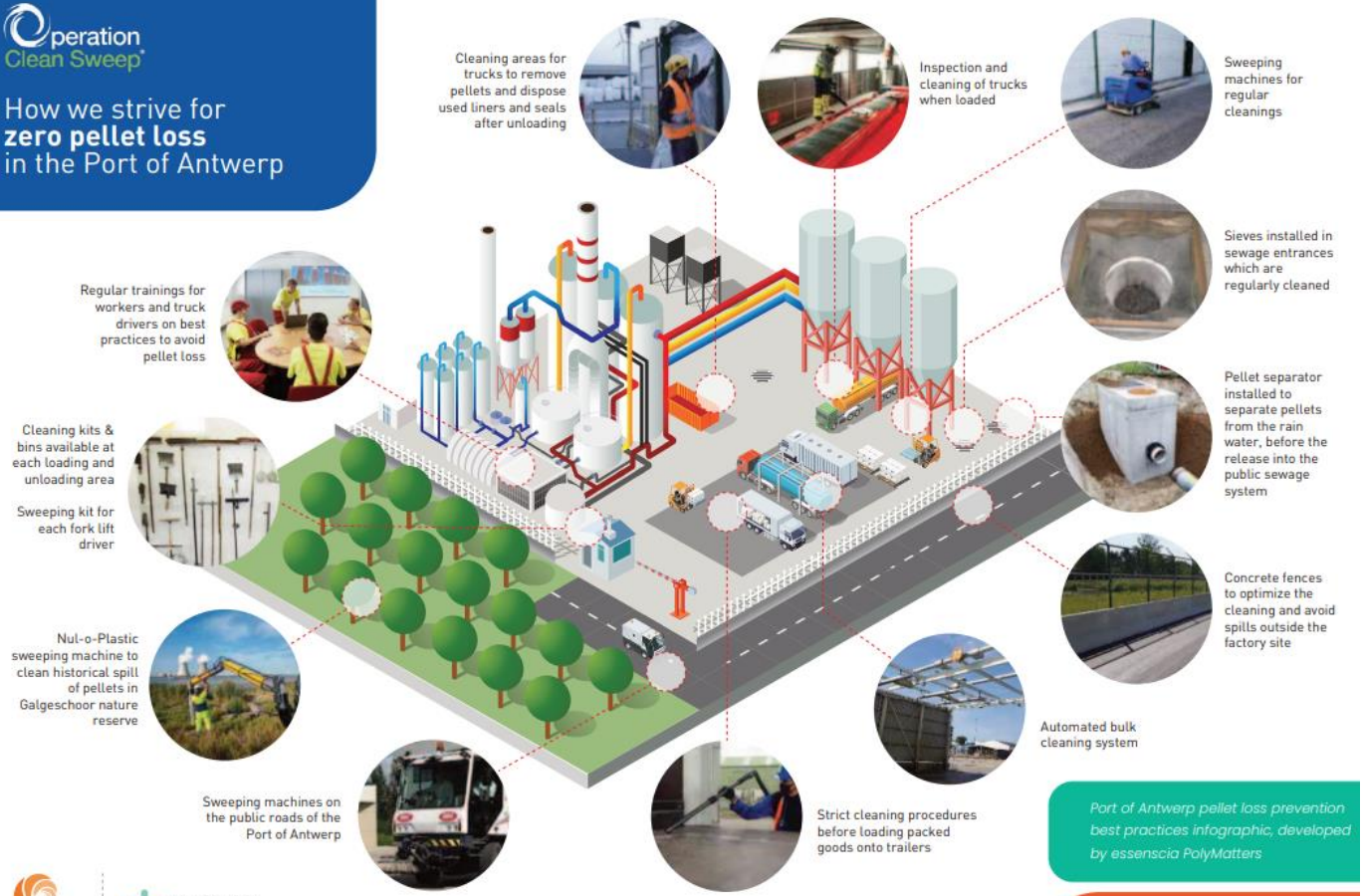


Pellets ending up in the sewer system

*Source: VMM*

**Operation Clean Sweep**

How we strive for zero pellet loss in the Port of Antwerp



Port of Antwerp pellet loss prevention best practices infographic, developed by essenscia PolyMatters

[www.opcleansweep.eu](http://www.opcleansweep.eu)

# The sector's voluntary system

- ▶ A lot of action taken
- ▶ They do not reach everybody

Source figure: Port of Antwerp Activity report 2021\_Operations Clean Sweep



# Prevention and reduction of plastic pellet losses in Flanders

- ▶ Current situation of the Flemish policy on pellet loss
- ▶ Other Flemish actions





# Current situation of the Flemish policy on pellet loss

## ► The Flemish Plastics Implementation Plan

- OVAM will investigate whether legal obligations can be introduced in case the voluntary commitments do not lead to the desired results in terms of avoiding pellet loss.
- Parties concerned: OVAM, Department Environment
- Implementation: additional environmental obligations in VLAREM, and BAT study\*

\*VLAREM: *Flemish Environmental Permit Regulations*

BAT : *Best Available Technique*

Approved by  
the Flemish  
government



# VLAREM

## ▶ 2022: VLAREM draft text prepared

- General environmental obligations
- Mainly “target and prevention requirements”

## ▶ Public consultation

- Draft tekst adapted

## ▶ Next step: first principal approval by the Flemish government

- Link to proposal: [Publieke consultatie voorontwerp besluit tot wijziging van titel II van het VLAREM, wat betreft kunststof granulaat, brandstoffen, brandbare vloeistoffen, opslag van gevaarlijke producten en particuliere stookolietanks | EMIS \(vito.be\)](#)

# BAT study

- ▶ **BAT study by VITO- started june 2022**
  - First draft released in November 2022
  - New draft expected soon
  - Timing for finalisation: summer 2024
- ▶ **BAT study may lead to additional obligations in VLAREM**
  - Targeting specific techniques or measures





# Scope of the BAT study –plastics value chain

## PRODUCER



LOADING  
ACCIDENTAL  
SPILLAGE

## LOGISTICS



## CONVERTER



UNLOADING  
ACCIDENTAL  
SPILLAGE

## INDUSTRIAL WASTE MANAGEMENT



## INDUSTRIAL WATER MANAGEMENT



## SORTING WASTE MANAGEMENT



## RECYCLER



- Producer plastic granules

- Carrier
- Storage, transfer, repackaging

- (Re)processing: converters, compounders

- Waste management: collection, cleaning, sorting, treatment

- Recycling companies

Source: figures OCS, text: VITO

# Scope van de BAT study: plastic granulate

- ▶ Plastic pellets/ nurdles (+/- 1-5 mm)
- ▶ Plastic flakes
- ▶ Plastic powder and fluff (< 1 mm)



Link:

[Voorkomen en beperken van kunststofgranulaatverliezen | EMIS \(vito.be\)](https://emissies.vito.be/nl/voorwaarden-en-beperkingen-van-kunststofgranulaatverliezen)

*Source figure: OCS*

# BAT candidates

## ▶ General measures

- Training
- Communication
- ...

## ▶ Prevention measures

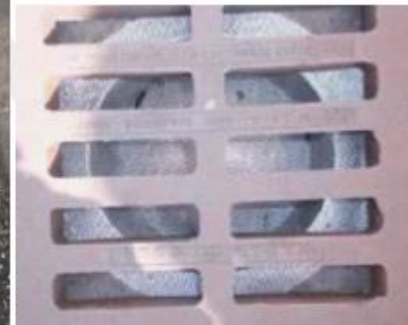
- Avoid unnecessary handling
- Proper packaging
- Automatic valves
- Closed loading & unloading systems
- ...

## ▶ Containment

- Water filtration techniques
- Appropriate disposal methods
- ...

## ▶ Clean up (on site)

- Vacuum
- Sweep
- Blow
- ...



Source figures: OCS, Plastics Europe, inspection dpt, text: VITO



# Learning network to prevent plastic granulate loss

- ▶ In cooperation with VIL and supported by VLAIO and Cmartlife
- ▶ Brought together around 15 companies over the whole value chain (2022)
- ▶ Exchanging examples of good practice
- ▶ Company visits
- ▶ Input for BAT study

Link:

<https://ovam2.createsend.com/campaigns/reports/viewCampaign.aspx?d=j&c=57272208033152BB&ID=64BE930A237CD5D12540EF23F30FED&temp=False&tx=0&source=Report>



# Other Flemish actions

- ▶ **Cooperation agreement with Port of Antwerp**
- ▶ **Deliver input**
  - European measures
  - United Nations international binding agreement to end plastic pollution

# European measures

- ▶ **16 October 2023: proposal for a regulation on preventing plastic pellet losses to reduce microplastic pollution**
  - [Microplastics pollution – measures to reduce its impact on the environment \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)
  - Open for feedback until January 2024
  - Obligations are based on the Operation Clean Sweep® programme
- ▶ **17 October 2023: Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2055 - Restriction of microplastics intentionally added to products adopted**
  - Obligation to report environmental losses for every use of synthetic microplastics





# Conclusion

- ▶ Actions on different levels ongoing to tackle the issue
- ▶ Still a lot of work to do



*Source figure: OCS manual*

# Thanks for your attention

## Any questions?

Vlaamse overheid

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