from the EVOH are excellent in gas barrier property. Therefore, the EVOH is conventionally widely used for packaging materials because of its excellent gas barrier property and excellent transparency.

[0003] An example of the packaging material is a multilayer film structure including an EVOH film layer provided as an intermediate layer, and resin layers of a thermoplastic resin provided as inner and outer layers on opposite sides of the EVOH film layer. With its excellent gas barrier property and transparency, as described above, the multilayer structure is utilized as films and sheets for packaging materials such as a food packaging material, a pharmaceutical product packaging material, an industrial chemical packaging material, and an agricultural chemical packaging material, containers such as bottles, and other formed products.

[0004] These packaging materials and containers can be melt-formed from the EVOH in a known method. It is known that the EVOH is liable to be colored by the melt-forming. This is supposedly because the EVOH contains a greater number of hydroxyl groups, and the hydroxyl groups are thermally dehydrated to generate a polyene structure at the main chains of the EVOH.

[0005] As for this problem, it is known that an EVOH prepared by adding 0.000001 to 1 wt.% (0.01 to 10000 ppm) of a conjugated polyene compound having a boiling point of 20°C or higher to

Model recycled pellets were prepared and evaluated in substantially the same manner as in Example 1, except that methyl sorbate was not added. The evaluation results are shown below in Table 1.

[0109] [Comparative Example 2]

Model recycled pellets were prepared and evaluated in substantially the same manner as in Example 1, except that the proportion of methyl sorbate was 30 ppm based on the total weight of the EVOH (A) and the sorbic acid ester (B). The evaluation results are shown below in Table 1.

[0110] Table 1

	Example 1	Comparative Example 1	Comparative Example 2
sorbic acid ester	Methyl sorbate	Methyl sorbate	Methyl sorbate
Proportion (ppm)	3	0	30
Coloration (YI value)			
Heated for 20 minutes	10	14	13
Heated for 30 minutes	35	43	38

[0111] Example 1 relates to the inventive EVOH composition containing the specific very small proportion of the sorbic acid ester. Surprisingly, the composition of Example 1 had a YI value of 10 after the heating for 20 minutes and a YI value of 35 after the heating for 30 minutes, although containing the sorbic acid ester in a very small proportion (i.e., 3 ppm). Unexpectedly, the YI values were lower than those in