

„Biodegradable Plastics in Open environments - Scientific answers and tools for a holistic evaluation“

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If ending up in the sea, our rivers, lakes and soils biodegradable plastics are assumed to be less persistent than conventional ones. However, reliable methods and data on the biodegradation of any plastic material in the open environment are not systematically available. We explain a multi-tier test scheme of reliable and environmentally relevant methods that can solve this problem. Results include the evidence of biodegradability, the assessment of biodegradation rates in relevant conditions and environmental impact. The data can then be used for Life Cycle Assessments and Life Cycle Impact Assessments and thus to evaluate any plastic material or product. An overview of the available standard test methods and specifications is also given.