



Polymer suppliers not understanding the benefits of oxo-biodegradable technology to the environment, and to them.

There is a definite and pressing need for governments, communities and the plastics industry to work together to reduce the amount of plastic waste in the environment, but despite their best efforts some of the plastic will always escape collection and end up in the open environment. We all agree that plastic waste causes a visual intrusion and a danger to wildlife, and is a real threat to the marine environment.

Plastic bags are incredibly useful but have become a target for politicians and environmentalists. It is time that the polymer suppliers and the plastics industry woke up to the fact that conventional plastic is under attack all over the world, because it can lie or float around in the environment for decades, causing a serious problem for future generations. This should no longer be tolerated, and the plastics industry can quickly and easily relieve itself of this problem at little or no extra cost, as plastic products can now be made with oxo-biodegradable technology.

With this technology the life of the bag or packaging can be controlled at manufacture to allow for storage and re-use, and during this time the bag can be collected and recycled with conventional plastic or incinerated for energy recovery. However, if it escapes collection and ends up in the open environment it will degrade and biodegrade in the same way as a leaf only quicker, leaving no toxic residues and no fragments of plastic. See www.d2w.net After 15 years on the world market this technology has now been used, tested and proved beyond doubt.

The enemy of a viable solution is misinformation which misunderstands and denigrates a technology which has a serious role to play in combatting the problem of plastic waste, and the recent statement from the GPCA is a case in point. There is no evidence that the type of people who cause litter will know or care whether the plastic is biodegradable or not. The statement also says that the advent of oxo-biodegradable plastic bags is misleading, because “these bags have ingredients that interfere with the recycling process of plastics”.

This is true of vegetable-based or “bio” plastics, but not true of oxo-biodegradable plastic, which can be recycled with conventional plastic without detriment to the recycling process or the resultant products. See [http://www.biodeg.org/TCKT%20Report%2017.3.16\(1\).pdf](http://www.biodeg.org/TCKT%20Report%2017.3.16(1).pdf).

To set the record straight, oxo-biodegradable plastic is made from naphtha - a by-product of oil refining that used to be wasted, and while we have this resource, it makes sense to use it. Oxo-biodegradable plastic can be made in existing plastic factories with their existing workforce, machinery and raw materials, thus safeguarding markets for polymers and jobs in the plastics industry. It offers a solution which can be implemented right now.

The UAE and eight other countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East have already legislated to make sure that oxo-biodegradable plastic replaces old-fashioned plastic.