

Contents

Preface xv

1 Biodegradable Polymers – A Tutorial for a Circular Plastics Economy 1

Jean-Paul Lange, Michiel Dusselier, and Stefaan De Wildeman

- 1.1 Context 1
- 1.2 Plastics in the Environment – Biodegradation and Impact of Litter 4
- 1.3 Biodegradable Polymers 5
 - 1.3.1 Polyesters 6
 - 1.3.2 Polysaccharides 8
 - 1.3.3 Lignin 9
 - 1.3.4 Vitrimers – Recyclable Thermosets 9
- 1.4 Beyond Biodegradation 10
 - 1.4.1 Recycling and End-of-Life 10
 - 1.4.2 LCA 11
 - 1.4.3 Implementing the “New Plastics Economy” 11
- 1.5 Conclusions and Outlook 12
- References 15

2 Fundamentals of Polymer Biodegradation Mechanisms 17

Ebin Joseph, Payman Tohidifar, Cara T. Sarver, Roderick I. Mackie, and Christopher V. Rao

- 2.1 Introduction 17
- 2.2 Overall Scheme of Polymer Degradation 19
- 2.3 Biodegradation of Polysaccharides 20
 - 2.3.1 Cellulose 20
 - 2.3.2 Starch 22
- 2.4 Biodegradation of Polyamides 24
- 2.5 Biodegradation of Polyesters 24
 - 2.5.1 Polylactic Acid 25
 - 2.5.2 Poly(ϵ -caprolactone) 27
 - 2.5.3 Polyhydroxyalkanoates 28
 - 2.5.4 Polyethylene Terephthalate 29

2.6	Biodegradation of Hydrocarbons	36
2.6.1	Polyethylene	36
2.6.2	Polypropylene	38
2.6.3	Polystyrene	39
2.7	Biodegradation of Halogenated Polymers	40
2.7.1	Polyvinyl Chloride	41
2.7.2	Polytetrafluoroethylene	41
2.8	Biodegradation of Polyethers	41
2.8.1	Polyethylene Glycol	41
2.8.2	Polyurethane	42
2.9	Application of Biodegradation	43
2.10	Current Challenges and Future Prospects for Biodegradation of Plastics Wastes	44
2.A	Detailed Mechanism of PET Hydrolysis	45
	References	46

3 Plastic Pollution. The Role of (Bio)Degradable Plastics and Other Solutions 59

Lei Tian, Robert-Jan van Putten, and Gert-Jan M. Gruter

3.1	Introduction and Problem Definition	59
3.2	Sources of Macroplastics and MNPs	61
3.2.1	Mismanagement of Waste	61
3.2.2	Accidental Release	64
3.2.3	MNPs in Products	64
3.2.4	Degradation of Outdoor Objects	64
3.2.5	Wear (Tires, Clothing)	65
3.2.6	Waste and Wastewater Management (Water/Wind)	66
3.3	Impacts of Macroplastics and MNPs	67
3.3.1	Ecological Impact of Macroplastics (Entanglement and Ingestion)	67
3.3.2	Economic Impact of Macroplastics	67
3.3.3	Ecological Impacts of MNPs	68
3.3.3.1	Aquatic Environment	68
3.3.3.2	Terrestrial Environment	69
3.3.3.3	Atmosphere	69
3.3.4	Threat to Human Health	70
3.3.4.1	MNPs in the Human Food Chain	70
3.3.4.2	Plastic-Related Contaminants	70
3.3.4.3	Other Contaminants	70
3.3.5	Socio-Economic Impacts of MNPs	71
3.4	Plastic Biodegradability	71
3.5	Solutions	72
3.5.1	Cleaning Up	72
3.5.2	Waste Mitigation	73
3.5.3	Material Design	73

3.5.4	Bringing It All Together	73
3.5.5	Policies and Legislation	76
3.6	Conclusions	77
	References	78
4	Tutorial on Polymers – Manufacture, Properties, and Applications	83
	<i>Gert-Jan M. Gruter and Jean-Paul Lange</i>	
4.1	Introduction	83
4.1.1	Today's Petrochemical Industry	83
4.1.2	Today's Bio-based Plastic Industry	85
4.1.3	Environmental and Climate Challenges	85
4.2	Production of Polymers	86
4.2.1	Addition Polymers	87
4.2.2	Condensation Polymers	88
4.2.3	Thermosets	90
4.2.4	Renewable Monomers	91
4.2.4.1	Oils-Based Monomers	91
4.2.4.2	Sugar-Based Monomers	92
4.2.4.3	Lignocellulose-Based Monomers	93
4.2.4.4	CO ₂ -Based Monomers	95
4.3	Main Polymers Applications	95
4.3.1	Rigids	97
4.3.2	Films	98
4.3.3	Fibers	98
4.3.4	Foams	99
4.3.5	CASE (Coatings, Adhesives, Sealants, Elastomers)	100
4.3.6	Composites	102
4.4	End-of-Life and Biodegradation	103
4.4.1	Reuse and Recycling	103
4.4.2	Biodegradation	103
4.5	Conclusions	105
4.A	Definitions: Biopolymer vs. Bio-based Polymer and Relation to Biodegradation	105
	List of Polymers	107
	References	108
5	Condensation Polyesters	113
	<i>Jules Stouten and Katrien V. Bernaerts</i>	
5.1	Introduction	113
5.2	Preparative Methods	114
5.3	Biodegradation of Polyesters	116
5.3.1	Hydrolytic Degradation	117
5.3.2	Enzymatic Degradation	118
5.4	Aliphatic Polyesters	119

5.4.1	Poly(alkylene dicarboxylates)	119
5.4.2	Poly(hydroxy acids)	120
5.4.3	Cyclic Sugar-Based Monomers	121
5.5	Semi-aromatic Polyesters	122
5.5.1	Poly(butylene adipate terephthalate) (PBAT)	122
5.5.2	Furanoate Copolymers	124
5.6	Cross-linked Polyesters	127
5.6.1	Multifunctional Alcohols or Carboxylic Acids	127
5.6.2	Incorporation of Functional Monomers	129
5.6.3	Cross-linking of Native Polyesters	130
5.7	Applications for Biodegradable Condensation Polyesters	130
5.7.1	Biomedical Applications	131
5.7.2	Agricultural Applications	132
5.7.3	Packaging Material	132
5.8	Polyester Recycling	132
5.9	Concluding Remarks	134
	References	135
6	Polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHAs) – Production, Properties, and Biodegradation	145
	<i>Martin Koller and Anindya Mukherjee</i>	
6.1	Introduction	145
6.1.1	General Aspects of Biodegradation of Polymers	147
6.1.2	General Aspects of Microbial Synthesis of PHAs	148
6.1.3	Types and Properties of PHAs	150
6.2	Biosynthesis – Substrates and Strains	152
6.2.1	Principle Stoichiometry of PHA Biosynthesis	152
6.2.2	Biosynthesis of <i>scl</i> - and <i>mcl</i> -PHAs	154
6.2.3	Heterotrophic Feedstocks	155
6.2.4	Autotrophic Feedstocks	157
6.2.5	Syngas	158
6.2.6	Methane	158
6.2.7	Production Strains	160
6.3	Bioengineering: Bioreactor Design and Feeding Regime	163
6.3.1	Feeding Regime	163
6.3.2	Continuously Operated Bioreactors for Liquid Feed	164
6.3.3	Bioreactors for Gas Feed	166
6.3.4	Photo-reactors for CO ₂ Feed	166
6.4	Downstream Processing for PHA Recovery	167
6.4.1	Classical Solvents	168
6.4.2	Halogen-Free Solvents	170
6.4.3	Supercritical Solvents	172
6.4.4	Recovery by Chemical and Mechanical Disintegration of Biomass	173
6.4.5	Biological PHA Recovery	175
6.5	End-of-Life Options: Recycling and Biodegradation of PHAs	176

6.5.1	Recycling	176
6.5.2	Incineration	178
6.5.3	Mechanistic Considerations of PHA Degradation	178
6.6	Biodegradation – Added Value for Selected Applications	181
6.6.1	Packaging	181
6.6.2	Hygiene/Care/Cosmetics	182
6.6.3	Medical – Drug Delivery	182
6.6.4	Other Applications	184
6.7	Conclusions	185
	References	186

7 Ring-Opening Polymerization Strategies for Degradable Polyesters 205

An Sofie Narmon, Liliana M. Jenisch, Louis M. Pitet, and Michiel Dusselier

7.1	Introduction	205
7.2	Ring-Opening Polymerization Mechanisms	207
7.2.1	Cationic Ring-Opening Polymerization	207
7.2.2	Anionic Ring-Opening Polymerization	209
7.2.3	Coordination–Insertion Ring-Opening Polymerization	210
7.2.4	Enzymatic Ring-Opening Polymerization	211
7.3	ROP-Based Polyesters	211
7.3.1	Lactones	211
7.3.2	Thermodynamics and Kinetics	212
7.3.3	Functionalization	214
7.3.3.1	ROP of Functional Lactones	215
7.3.3.2	Post-polymerization Functionalization	215
7.3.3.3	Grafting	216
7.3.4	Four-Membered Lactones	216
7.3.4.1	β -Butyrolactone	218
7.3.4.2	Acid-Substituted β -Lactones (β -Malolactonate)	218
7.3.4.3	Alkoxy-Substituted β -Lactones	219
7.3.4.4	Alkene-Substituted β -Lactones	220
7.3.5	Five-Membered Lactones	221
7.3.5.1	γ -Butyrolactone	221
7.3.5.2	α -Angelicalactone	223
7.3.5.3	α -Methylene- γ -Butyrolactone	223
7.3.5.4	Ether γ -Lactones	225
7.3.6	Six-Membered Lactones	227
7.3.6.1	δ -Valerolactone	227
7.3.6.2	Unsaturated δ -Lactones	227
7.3.6.3	Ester-Substituted δ -Lactones	228
7.3.6.4	Ether δ -Lactones	230
7.3.6.5	Dilactones	232
7.3.7	Seven-Membered Lactones	236
7.3.7.1	ϵ -Caprolactone	236

- 7.3.7.2 Substituted and Functionalized ϵ -Caprolactone 238
- 7.3.7.3 Ether- ϵ -Lactones 241
- 7.4 Relations Between ROP Polymers and Degradability 242
- 7.5 Conclusion 246
- 7.6 Outlook and Recommendations 249
- References 252

8 Recent Developments in Biodegradable Cellulose-Based Plastics 273

Karin Molenveld and Ted M. Slaghek

- 8.1 General Introduction 273
- 8.2 Cellulose 274
- 8.3 The Development of Cellulose Plastics 275
 - 8.3.1 Cellulose Feedstock and Dissolving Pulp 276
 - 8.3.2 Cellulose Derivatization 276
 - 8.3.3 Cellulose Acetate and Cellulose Esters 277
 - 8.3.4 Cellophane 279
 - 8.3.5 Cellulose Fibers in Thermoplastic Formulations 280
- 8.4 Recent Developments in Thermoplastic Cellulose Derivatives 280
 - 8.4.1 Characterization Methods for Lignocellulosic Biomass 281
 - 8.4.2 Alternative Feedstocks for Dissolving Pulp and Production Routes 282
 - 8.4.3 Ionic Liquids and Deep Eutectic Solvents for Cellulose Regeneration and Modification 283
 - 8.4.4 New Derivatization Routes 284
 - 8.4.5 Plasticizers 284
 - 8.4.6 Mixed Cellulose Esters 285
 - 8.4.7 Cellulose–Polymer Blends 286
 - 8.4.8 (New) Properties and Processing Routes 287
 - 8.4.9 New Applications 287
- 8.5 Biodegradation of Cellulose Derivatives 288
- 8.6 Conclusions 289
- References 290

9 Ester Derivatives of Microbial Synthetic Polysaccharides 299

Hakyong Lee, Hongyi Gan, Azusa Togo, Yuya Fukata, and Tadahisa Iwata

- 9.1 Introduction 299
 - 9.1.1 Background of Bio-Based Plastics 299
 - 9.1.2 Polysaccharides 300
- 9.2 Zero Birefringence Property of Pullulan Esters 302
- 9.3 Bio-Based Adhesives from Dextran (α -1,6-Glucan) 304
- 9.4 Films and Fibers from Paramylon and Curdlan (β -1,3-Glucan) Esters 306
- 9.5 Polymerization of α -1,3-Glucan and Films of α -1,3-Glucan Esters 310
- 9.6 High-Performance Polysaccharide-Branched Esters 312
 - 9.6.1 Cellulose-Branched Esters [14] 312

9.6.2	β -1,3-Glucan (Curdlan) Branched Esters [15]	314
9.6.3	α -1,3-Glucan-Branched Esters [16]	315
9.7	Enzymatic Esterification of Polysaccharides	316
9.7.1	Enzymes as Biocatalysts	317
9.7.2	Reaction Mechanism	318
9.7.3	Factors Influencing Enzyme Activity	319
9.7.4	Strategies for Efficient Biocatalyst Processes	320
9.7.5	Development Trend and Prospects	320
9.8	Biodegradation of Polysaccharide Ester	322
9.9	Summary	322
	References	322
10	Biodegradable Lignin-Based Plastics	329
	<i>Yi-ru Chen and Simo Sarkanen</i>	
10.1	Lignocellulose Biorefineries	329
10.2	Macromolecular Lignin Configuration	331
10.3	Industrial Availability of Lignins	336
10.4	Compelling Traits in Physicochemical Behavior of Kraft Lignin Species	337
10.5	Kraft Lignin-Based Plastics	341
10.6	Tuning Strength and Production Cost of Plastics with High Kraft Lignin Contents	343
10.7	Ligninsulfonates (Lignosulfonates)	346
10.8	Laboratory Ball-Milled Lignins	348
10.9	Blend Configuration in Ball-Milled Lignin-Based Plastics Exemplifies the General Case	351
10.10	Lignin–Lignin Blends	355
10.11	Biodegradation of Kraft Lignin-Based Plastics	357
10.12	Alternative Formulations for Polymeric Materials Containing More than 50 wt% Lignin	359
10.13	Concluding Remarks	362
	Acknowledgments	362
	References	363
11	Design of Recyclable Thermosets	369
	<i>Bryn D. Monnery, Apostolos Karanastasis, and Louis M. Pitet</i>	
11.1	Introduction	369
11.1.1	Polymers and Plastics	369
11.1.2	Handling of Plastic Waste	370
11.1.3	Chemical Nature of Plastics	370
11.2	Design of Recyclable Thermosetting Polymers	372
11.2.1	Recyclability by Triggered Degradation	374
11.2.2	Dissociative Covalent Adaptive Networks	374
11.2.3	Vitrimers (Associative CANS)	376
11.3	Examples of Vitrimers	380

- 11.4 Adaptable Cross-Linking of Conventional Polymers 383
- 11.5 Outlook and Summary 385
- References 387

- 12 Managing Plastic Wastes 391**
Jean-Paul Lange
- 12.1 Introduction 391
- 12.2 Plastic Waste 391
- 12.3 Mechanical Recycling 393
- 12.4 Dissolution/Precipitation 394
- 12.5 Chemical Recycling 395
- 12.5.1 Depolymerization of Condensation Polymers 396
- 12.5.2 Melt Pyrolysis of Polyolefins 397
- 12.5.3 Alternative Pyrolysis Processes 398
- 12.6 Energy Recovery – Recycle Fuels and Incineration 400
- 12.7 Waste Destruction – Biodegradation 401
- 12.8 Life Cycle Analyses 401
- 12.9 Need for Fresh Carbon Input 402
- 12.10 Conclusion and Outlook 403
- References 404

- 13 Life Cycle Assessment of Bio-Based Plastics: Concepts, Findings, and Pitfalls 409**
Li Shen
- 13.1 Introduction and Chapter Learning Objectives 409
- 13.2 “Bioplastics” Is a Confusing Term 409
- 13.3 LCA in a Nutshell 412
- 13.3.1 Concept and a Brief History 412
- 13.3.2 Procedure, Jargons, and Sciences Behind 413
- 13.3.2.1 Goal and Scope Definition 414
- 13.3.2.2 Life Cycle Inventory Analysis (LCI) 414
- 13.3.2.3 Life Cycle Impact Assessment (LCIA) 415
- 13.3.2.4 Interpretation 416
- 13.4 LCA Case Studies of Seven Single-Use Plastic Items Made from Bio-Based Resources: Highlights and Lessons Learned 417
- 13.4.1 Background, Aim, and Scope of the BIO-SPRI Study 417
- 13.4.2 Key Findings 419
- 13.4.2.1 Biomass Feedstock Acquisition 421
- 13.4.2.2 Manufacturing Phase: From Biomass to Polymers, Materials, and End Products 426
- 13.4.2.3 Distribution to End User: Impacts from Transportation 427
- 13.4.2.4 End-of-Life (EoL) Post-consumer Waste Management Scenarios 427
- 13.4.3 Comparisons with Petrochemical Plastics 431
- 13.5 Lessons Learned from the Case Studies and Looking Forward to a Circular Bio-Based Economy 432

13.A	General Structure of Classification and Characterization in LCIA, using the example of 16 Impact Categories Recommended by the EC EF (Environmental Footprint) Impact Assessment Methods	434
13.B	Normalization and Weighting Factors Recommended by the EF (Environmental Footprint) Method [12, 19, 46], Latest Update: May 2020	436
	References	436
14	How to Create “A New Plastics Economy”? Marketing Strategies and Hurdles – Finding Application Niches	441
	<i>Sil Nevejans and Stefaan De Wildeman</i>	
14.1	Introduction	441
14.2	Stories from the Past	442
14.2.1	Polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHAs)	442
14.2.2	Poly(lactic Acids) (PLA)	443
14.2.3	Poly(ethylene furanoates) (PEF)	444
14.3	Greenwashing vs. Growing Pains	444
14.4	From Idea to Product: “Technical Readiness Levels”	445
14.4.1	Defining the Technical Readiness Levels	445
14.4.2	Application of the TRLs	447
14.4.3	Product(ion) Validation	449
14.5	Five Innovation Rules to Create “A New Plastics Economy”	449
14.5.1	Target Small-Volume, High-Value Applications to Open New Market Space	450
14.5.2	Time Right Instead of Fast	451
14.5.3	Go Local	452
14.5.4	Take Risks	453
14.5.5	Go “Green”	454
14.6	Conclusion	455
	References	456
	Index	457

