



Workshop

“Towards a Harmonized Roadmap to Advance the Biodegradability Assessment of Water-Soluble and Dispersible Polymers”

October 6 -7 October, 2026

Brussels, Belgium

Water-soluble polymers are widely used in many industries and can enter the environment through a range of pathways. Despite their significance, research gaps need to be filled to understand their environmental behavior and to assess their biodegradability as current test methods, were mainly designed for small molecules or solid polymers. The workshop will serve as a platform to discuss recent advancements in polymer analytics, (bio)degradation science, and modeling techniques, while also evaluating the effectiveness of current methods and exploring opportunities for better assessments.

The workshop will bring together experts from academia, industry, regulatory agencies, and research organizations to examine key scientific challenges in assessing these materials, including the applicability of current methods and opportunities for future advancement.

- Share current scientific knowledge and new insights about the environmental assessment of water-soluble polymers.
- Assess current experimental methods and pinpoint limitations or areas for adaptation.
- Explore how modeling and In Silico methods support degradability evaluations.
- Develop a roadmap to guide future research and support regulatory decision-making
- Identify priority research needs and develop recommendations to support more robust, harmonized approaches for evaluating the environmental biodegradability of water-soluble and water-dispersible polymers.



Steering Committee

- Glauco Battagliarin, BASF, Germany
- Guillaume Cottin, L'Oreal, France
- Pippa Curtis-Jackson, United Kingdom Environment Agency, UK
- Roel Evens, SETAC Europe, Belgium
- Ryan Heisler, International Collaboration on Cosmetics Safety (ICCS), USA
- Theodora Nikolakopoulou, EU Commission - DG GROW, Belgium
- Michael Sander, ETH Zurich, Switzerland
- Teresa Steininger-Mairinger, BOKU University, Austria
- Huichun (Judy) Zhang, Case Western University, USA

Anticipated output

- A synthesis paper will be published open access in SETAC Press
- A summary will be published in SETAC's member journal, the Globe
- Platform and/or poster presentations at the SETAC Europe annual meeting in Geneva (25 – 29 April 2027) and the SETAC North America annual meeting in Long Beach, USA (31 October – 4 November).