

## **Microfibres, biodegradation and learnings from SUPD**

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Plastic pollution of the oceans has been in the focus of attention for quite some time now – from politics as well as from consumers. To fight this problem regulations like the Single Use Plastic Directive (SUPD) by the European Union have been issued. This regulation also targets several products, which incorporate fibers – therefore it is of relevance for the (cellulose) fibre sector. In addition, microfibres are a significant fraction of microplastic and a focus topic during the last years also.

For Lenzing as a leading producer of man-made cellulose fibres (Viscose, Modal and Lyocell) sustainability is a guiding principle. So, as a logical consequence Lenzing is active regarding the prevention of microfiber pollution of oceans (and soil). This includes the development of products and technologies as well as giving input to the (political) discussion – always based on scientific facts. To achieve this Lenzing is cooperating with universities research institutes and other partners, which is a need taking into account the complexity of the topic.

For some cases it is unavoidable that microfibres (or other products parts) are being released into the environment. Therefore, the understanding of their behavior in various environments is of high importance. From the point of view from Lenzing the biodegradability of cellulosic fibres is a potential option to avoid polluting the environment – although biodegradation is also seen controversially. To have sound arguments Lenzing is performing scientific studies in this field as well – once again with partners. These results are needed to develop (product) solutions and to give reasonable input to the (political) discussion (like the SUPD).