

**POLYMERS AND ENVIRONMENT:  
TRENDS, PRACTICES AND PROSPECTS**

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**ABSTRACT**

Polymers alone or as elements of composite materials are in extensive use to cover both everyday needs and in numerous high-tech applications e.g. in aeronautics, space research, information technology and medicine. However, they are much too often blamed for their negative effect to the environment and many misconceptions on this matter, even in the scientific community, are around. The purpose of this work is to briefly discuss a number of efforts, current practices and trends in this direction, especially in handling polymer's waste, polymers' recycling and degradable polymers, as well as the role of thermodynamics in these efforts.