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## **Eco Performance Award goes to Global Merino**

The California based company Global Merino has been recognised with the Eco Performance Award for its sustainably produced and biodegradable functional fabric. The winning fabric *GM 1754* is made from 64% polyester and 36% merino and, despite its being a blend, is categorised as biodegradable, due to the special polyester used in the fabric. In addition to being made from recycled PET, it decomposes much faster than conventional polyester, the company reports.

Performance Days, a leading trade fair for functional fabrics, will take place from 26-27 April in Munich, presenting the latest trends for Summer 2019, with a focus topic *Biodegradable: Back to Nature*.



“The focus topic is an important concept not only in avoiding waste and preserving the environment, but also with respect to the responsible and sustainable use of resources,” organisers report. “It is all about the vision of supplying more functional fabrics that decompose at the end of their useful life as a result of biological action. Such solutions were nearly non-existent until now and are gaining in importance as the world's population continues to grow and the waste dumps grow ever larger.”

#### Waste prevention

Recycling is one possibility for exploiting waste products, but second-hand materials (PET-bottles, fishing nets) or garments made from synthetic fibres (like polyester or polyamide) are not always collected and recycled everywhere in the world. Furthermore, even if the textiles are collected, the problem is often caused by their composition because, at the present time, only pure substances can be recycled.

“Consequently, much clothing finds its way into landfills, waste incineration plants, or is just dumped on the side of the road. Valuable resources are lost and even worse, sensitive ecosystems are harmed since synthetic fibres can last well over 100 years until they are decomposed,” organisers explain.

“In addition, another effect is becoming more and more evident: tiny fibre particles can separate from the fabric in landfill and even during the use of the textile. Laundering or rainwater carries these particles into streams and rivers so they can reach the oceans where they enter the food chain of fish and other marine life – ultimately landing in our own stomachs.”

#### Rapid biological decomposition

The answer to this global problem may be clothing produced from biodegradable fabrics. Natural fibres decompose quickly. Cotton, wool, and reclaimed fibres, such as modal or Tencel, only require a few months to a year. Fibres that rapidly decompose to biomass at a compost site, a landfill or even in water can help reduce the volume in the landfills and conserve resources. That explains the current interest in natural and synthetic fibres like polyamide or polyester.

The winning fabrics GM 1754 from Global Merino is categorised as biodegradable. Special polyester used in the fabric makes this possible, according to the manufacturer. The fibres were tested under the standards of ASTM D5511 for *Anaerobic Biodegradation of Plastic Materials* (decomposition in the absence of oxygen). As a result, the merino wool used was 26% decomposed after 149 days; over the same period, the polyester fibre from CiClO when used as a staple fibre was at 20.7% or as a filament yarn already at 17.6%. In contrast, a virgin polyester fabric will only decompose a maximum of 4% after 991 days; while a fabric made from polyester supplied by CiClO can already reach 78% degradation in that time.

Global Merino founder Jose Fernandez will introduce his new fabric as part of the awards ceremony for the Eco Performance Award at Performance Days on 26 April.

[www.performancedays.com](http://www.performancedays.com)

- See more at: <http://www.innovationintextiles.com/eco-performance-award-goes-to-global-merino/#comments>