

# **Can Plastics Save the World?**

**Christian Paulik**

Institute for Chemical Technology of Organic Materials  
Johannes Kepler University Linz  
Austria

Plastics are the materials of the 21st century! Our modern life is depending on the availability and the performance of targeted material solutions, which only can be realized by plastics. The annual production of polymeric materials exceeded 300 million tons in 2015 [1] making this class of materials an important economic factor. On the flip side of this very successful development plastics are considered to be responsible for many ecological problems e.g. marine littering. In this sense plastics are a very controversial topic to discuss.

However, the 17 sustainable development goals to transform our world formulated by the UN [2] can only be reached by the correct usage of polymeric materials.

In the lecture the benefits and drawbacks of plastic materials, including bio-based plastics with special respect to the UN SDG goals will be addressed.

## **References**

- [1] Plastics – the facts 2016, PlasticsEurope 2016.
- [2] <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/> assessed 02.01.2018.