

Fake fur is plastic poison, says new research

A scientific study unveiled today shows that fake/faux fur, an increasingly popular fashion choice that has been extensively promoted by animal rights groups and adopted by consumers as a result, does not biodegrade at all.

It follows many consumer brands' departure from using plastics in recent weeks, such as Morrisons' planned introduction of paper bags for fruit and vegetables, and Network Rail's move to ban the sale of plastic cutlery and cups in train stations by 2020.

The analysis was carried out by independent experts from the [Organic Waste Systems](#) laboratory in Ghent, Belgium, a world-leading specialist in biodegradability and compostability. They examined how both real and fake fur degraded in conditions set up to mimic closed landfill conditions, the so-called 'anaerobic biodegradation'.

The tests also looked at the average biodegradation of a number of natural products and found that real fur degrades at the same rate as an oak or willow tree leaf.

According to the analysis, the natural fur samples biodegraded swiftly, starting to disintegrate within days as micro-organisms consumed the carbon inside the fur.

The fake fur, however, showed no biodegradation at all. According to the researchers, this was not unexpected due to the composition of the synthetic fibres.

In addition, synthetic fashion materials are known to break down into ever smaller pieces, eventually forming microplastic fibres – a major contributor to plastic pollution.

Commenting on the report's findings, Mark Oaten, CEO of the International Fur Federation, said: *"Fake fur is simply another form of plastic. Frustratingly it has been promoted as the sustainable alternative to natural fur, but in reality it is highly polluting. An ethical stance concerned with the protection of individual animals is pointless if the ecosystem where the animals live is destroyed.*

"If fashion brands really care about sustainability, they should understand that fake fur, especially the kind used in so much fast fashion, will stay on a landfill for decades, perhaps centuries. It's not even

remotely the sustainable choice.

“Shoppers also need to be more aware that the plastic ‘alternative to fur’ promoted by the likes of PETA is an environmental nightmare waiting to happen.”

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About The International Fur Federation (www.wearefur.com)

The International Fur Federation (IFF) is the voice of the fur trade. Its CEO is former Member of Parliament and Member of the Council of Europe, Mark Oaten.

Formed over 60 years ago, the IFF protects the fur trade’s interests, promotes innovation and high standards and presents a factual image of the fur industry.

The IFF represents 49 national fur trade associations and organisations from 38 countries. Members are drawn from the entire fur supply chain: farmers, trappers, auction houses, merchants, brokers, buyers, dressers and dyers, designers, manufacturers, wholesalers, marketing organisations and retailers. In addition to the national member associations' offices, there is the IFF HQ in London and subsidiary offices in Beijing and Brussels.

The IFF promotes strict codes of practice that meet or exceed established and accepted standards for animal welfare, for wild and farmed fur. The IFF supports and encourages the introduction of animal welfare legislation that is based on sound scientific research and other practical considerations, around the world.