



2BR-24e-b

# CERTIFICATION

Environmental Conformity Marks

## Our logos – OK Biodegradable SOIL and OK Biodegradable WATER – What do they mean?

### OK BIODEGRADABLE SOIL CERTIFIED PRODUCTS



**Application:** The OK Biodegradable SOIL certified products find their main application in the agricultural and horticultural field (e.g. agricultural films, flowerpots, ...). These products do not necessarily need to disappear fast, but sometimes need to last for one or two years, depending on their agricultural or horticultural functionality.

A good example of an OK Biodegradable SOIL product application is mulching film: mulching film is applied to the soil and after use it can be ploughed in the soil where it will naturally disappear without affecting the environment in any way.

**End of life:** Products certified for OK Biodegradable SOIL guarantee biodegradation in a natural soil environment. The great surplus value of biodegradable agricultural and horticultural products is that they are applied in a natural environment and no effort is needed to remove them after use since they have proved to biodegrade on the spot and not to exert any negative influence on the environment.

### OK BIODEGRADABLE WATER CERTIFIED PRODUCTS



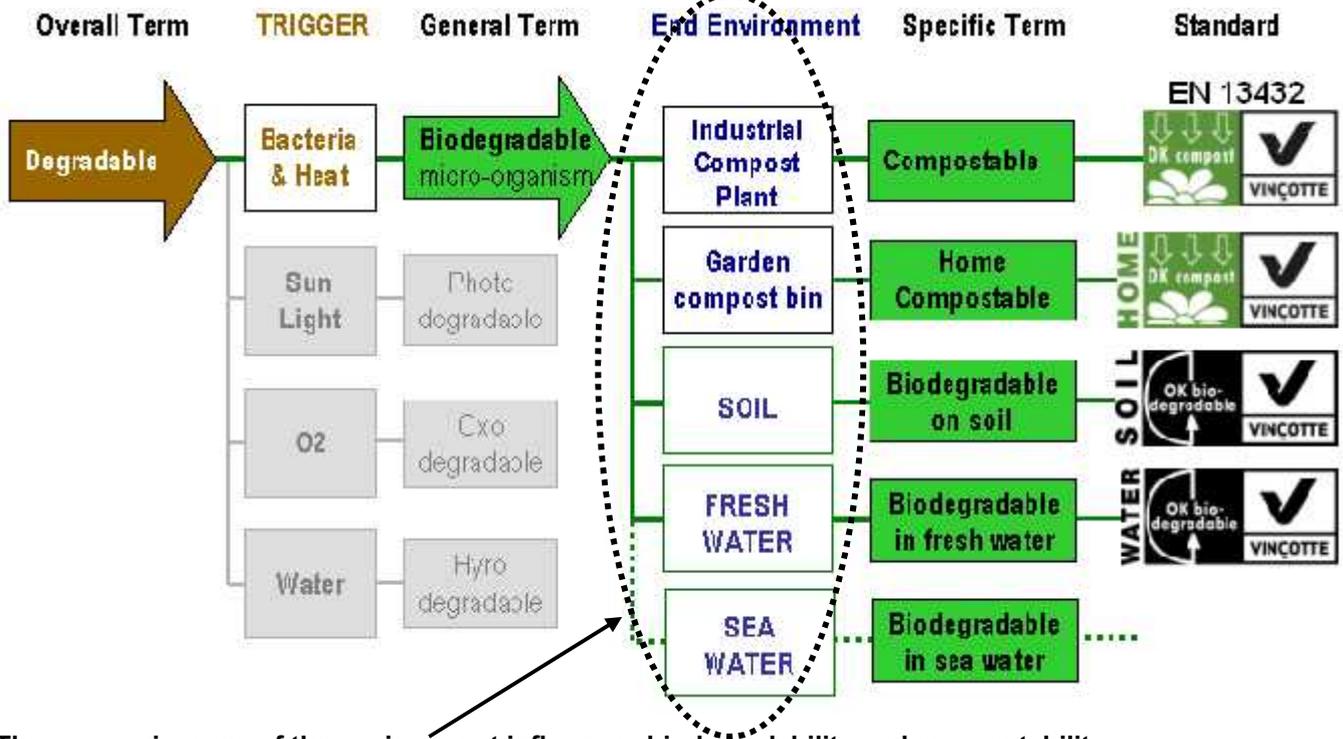
**Application:** The OK Biodegradable WATER certified products could be any product that has practical advantages by biodegrading in water.

**End of life:** Products certified for OK Biodegradable WATER guarantee biodegradation in a natural fresh water environment, and thus substantially contribute to the reduction of waste in rivers, lakes or any natural fresh water. Note that this not automatically guarantees biodegradation in marine waters.

*Important remark : As heavy metals are submitted to local regulations, it is necessary to verify that the level of heavy metals of this certified product does not exceed the concentrations admitted in the region where it is sold.*

# Biodegradable ≠ Compostable ?

The terms “biodegradable” and “compostable” are often confused. Additionally biodegradability and compostability depend strongly on the environment where a product is broken down. In the figure<sup>1</sup> below an overview is given of the different terms concerning degradability and compostability.



## The aggressiveness of the environment influences biodegradability and compostability

Each environment (compost, soil, water, ...) has different temperatures and microorganisms, resulting in varying biodegradation rates. The temperature in an industrial compost plant for example is the highest, and thus is this environment the most aggressive towards biodegradable material. The descending range of aggressiveness of the different types of environments is:

AN INDUSTRIAL COMPOST PLANT > A GARDEN COMPOST BIN > THE SOIL > FRESH WATER > MARINE WATER

An example: a plastic that is biodegradable in an industrial composting plant (most aggressive environment) will therefore not always biodegrade in water or the soil, or even not in a home composting bin (because of the lower temperatures).

## Not all biodegradable products are compostable

A biodegradable product can be broken down by micro-organisms, but that does not necessarily mean that this product can be converted into compost of good quality. A biodegradable product must fulfill two requirements in order to be “compostable” (according to EN 13432):

- it may not affect the composting process (e.g. slow down the process because the product is too thick), and
- it may not deteriorate the compost quality (e.g. because it includes chemicals with toxic effects on plants).

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Australia



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