



MARINE PROFESSIONAL

Reducing our environmental footprint

The IMarEST's *Marine Professional* magazine is now being distributed to members subscribing to the printed version in a new bioplastic packaging made from potato starches.

Bioplastics are thermoplastic polymers made from renewable resources such as natural and sustainable potatoes instead of crude oil. The bioplastic granules can be processed on standard machines to produce thermoplastic resins - biopolymer materials which can be used in the same way as traditional synthetic plastics. All raw materials used in the production and manufacture of the bioplastic are in compliance with relevant food contact directives. The packaging is fully biodegradable - breaking down within six months and is 100% compostable, so can be disposed of on a compost heap, garden waste or food waste bin.

While this is a strong step in reducing the magazine's environmental footprint, it is not a perfect solution and is a way off the IMarEST's zero-carbon aspiration for the magazine. We are aware that there is not yet a fully decisive and conclusive figure on the level of carbon footprint reduction that bioplastics provide within the published literature and there is contention over their appropriateness within the marine environment.

As such, to mitigate this as much as possible, the eco-friendliness of the magazine has been further improved through an increase in its ongoing digital content portfolio and a reduction of its publication frequency from twelve issues per year to six larger 'bumper' issues per year. This reduces the impacts of transportation without any reduction in editorial content received by the readership.

The IMarEST vision going forward is to gradually migrate the magazine towards full digitalisation in the future, with a view to becoming near-carbon neutral. However whilst the demand from members to receive a hard copy of the magazine prevails we will take whatever measures are feasible to mitigate the impact as best we can. Members wishing to help reduce the environmental footprint of the magazine can do so by switching to digital only by contacting the Membership team at membership@imarest.org.

