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Original research paper

Environmental Biodegradation Control of

Polymers by Cleavage of Disulfide Bonds

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ABSTRACT

Ideal biodegradable polymers have high durability during use and high degradability in the natural

environment it enters after use. A trigger system that uses external stimuli to change the chemical

properties of a polymer or directly degrade the polymer to low molecular weight compounds is

suitable for controlling the biodegradability of a polymer. In this study, we adopted the reductive

cleavage of disulfide bonds as a trigger to control the biodegradability of polymers. We synthesized

polyesters with disulfide bonds and demonstrated that the environmental biodegradability of these

polymers could be triggered by cleavage of the disulfide bonds in a reductive environment.

Keywords: Biodegradable polymer; Disulfide bond; Reductive cleavage; Environmental biodegradability

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