

Oil-based chemicals are used in everything from pillows to house paint. What are possible substitutes?

Petrochemicals are in everything from cleaning agents, paints and cosmetics to pillows, acrylic worktops and much of our clothing and footwear.

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The bioeconomy is an economy whose resources and industrial base rely on natural resources – either renewable or bio-based sources from plants, animals, fungi and microbes. It has been part of European policy since 2012 and part of government policy since 2018. And as Ireland's first bioeconomy action plan (2023-2025) is signed off by the Government, experts argue that developing bio-refineries where new bio-products can best be tested for the market will be a key element of a sustainable economy in the future.

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Examples include MoEa, Italian-designed leisure shoes made in Portugal from fruit peelings mixed with cotton or recycled plastic; the Dutch Biobuddi, children's toy blocks made from sugar cane; and Scottish Vegware, single-use food containers made from bio-plastics.

"The bioeconomy is crucial for Ireland to become sustainable, yet most citizens haven't heard about it. We want to bring this information directly to people so that they can be informed and active in our sustainable journey," says Amanda Mathieson, public engagement manager at BiOrbic.

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here**](#)