

Recording No. 5 – Bill – British:

Scientists have created an enzyme that can break down used plastic bottles for recycling in a matter of hours. Engineered from bacteria found in leaf compost, the enzyme reduces PET bottles (made from polyethylene terephthalate, a form of polyester) to their chemical building blocks, which are then used to make high-quality new bottles.

Existing recycling technologies usually produce plastic suitable only for clothing and carpets. Carbios, the French start up behind the breakthrough, aims to be recycling at an industrial scale within five years.

“This represents a significant step forward for true circular recycling of PET,” says Professor John McGeehan, director of the UK-based Centre for Enzyme Innovation.