



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



United Nations

Office for
Sustainable
Development



How the Waste Policy Support Platform Supports Action to Halt the Waste Crisis

Simon Gilby
18 November 2024

The Waste Crisis: Key Statistics

2.3
Billion Tons

Municipal solid waste (MSW) generated annually.

62
Per Cent

Percentage of MSW that is managed in controlled facilities

90
Per Cent

Percentage of waste in low-income countries that is discarded in unregulated dumps or burned openly

- Plastic waste increased by **126 per cent** between 2000 and 2019.
- **62 million tons** of e-waste was produced in 2022, an **82 per cent increase** from 2010.
- Greenhouse gas emissions have **more than doubled** in the last 50 years.
- The waste sector contributes an estimated **20 per cent** of human-caused methane emissions.
- In total, since 1950, 79% of the **plastics** produced have been deposited in **landfills** or in the **environment (e.g. as marine litter)**

Waste-Specific SDGs



11.6.1 Proportion of MSW collected and managed in controlled facilities out of total MSW generated by cities

12.3.1 (a) Food loss index; and (b) food waste index

12.4.1 Number of parties to international agreements on hazardous waste and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement

12.4.2 (a) Hazardous waste generated per capita; and (b) proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment

12.5.1 National recycling rate, tons of material recycled

14.1.1 (a) index of coastal eutrophication; and (b) plastic debris density



Waste Impacts ALL Sustainable Development Goals

	1 NO POVERTY  Waste picking is an important livelihood for the urban poor	2 ZERO HUNGER  Organic waste can fertilize new food	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  SWM prevents disease and food contamination	4 QUALITY EDUCATION  Environmental and health training awareness	5 GENDER EQUALITY  Relieve and ease burden of poor waste management on women	
	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION  Better SWM goes hand-in-hand with better WASH	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY  Waste to energy as an optional energy source	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  Green job growth in collection, recycling and treatment	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  R&D in recycling and treatment innovation	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES  SWM can increase the economic potential of the urban poor	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  SWM makes cities more sustainable
	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  Shift to waste reduction and resource management	13 CLIMATE ACTION  Reduce GHGs through less dumping and burning	14 LIFE BELOW WATER  Prevent plastic pollution in the ocean that harms sea life	15 LIFE ON LAND  Less land pollution leads to healthier environments	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS  Better governance of environment and resources	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS  Work together and create public-private partnerships

Graphic supplied with assistance from Zoë Lenkiewicz, WasteAid UK and contributor to Be Waste Wise.

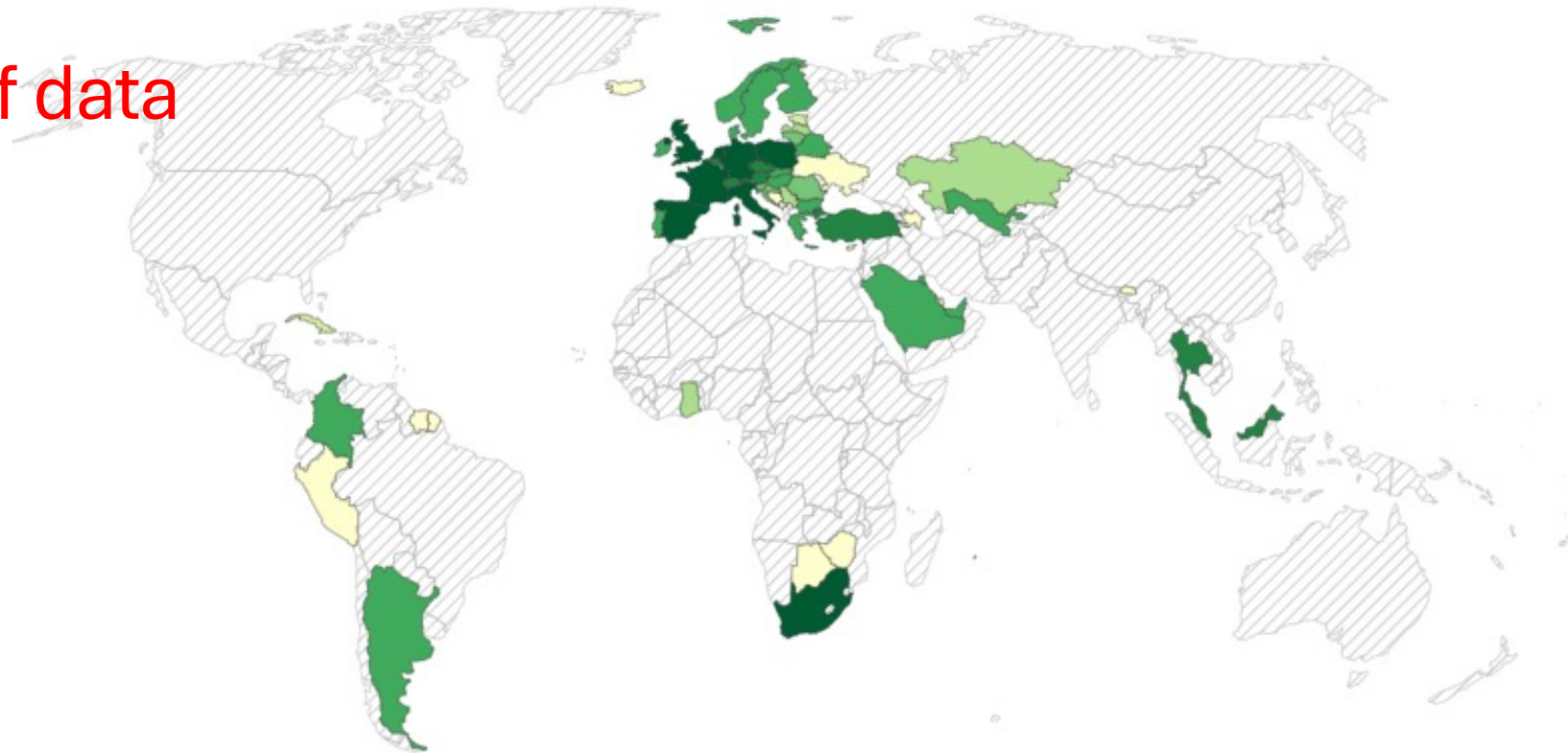
Municipal waste recycled, 2021

Municipal waste is waste from households and businesses, that would be collected by local authorities.

Table Map Chart

World

Lack of data



Data source: UN Statistics Division - [Learn more about this data](#)

OurWorldInData.org/waste-management | CC BY

Download

Share

Enter full-screen

Environment Statistics

Work Programme > Data

Country files from the UNSD/UNEP data collection

In September 2022 UNSD launched its 10th round of data collection for environment statistics. This website contains the most recent country replies to the water and waste data collection cycle, or from one of the nine previous collection cycles. The year in parentheses denotes the most recent collection cycle.

As part of its data validation process, UNSD may send questions to countries for clarification. A country file may be modified. If a country does not reply to UNSD's questions, UNSD may correct errors or lack clarity. Per demands from key institutional stakeholders and other users in general, files are finalised by UNSD.

The main aim of this webpage is to share country data and to avoid multiple collections of data. If countries collect these or similar data from countries are requested to coordinate with UNSD before launch.

For data for countries reporting to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), please refer to the OECD Data Explorer. For data for countries reporting to the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), please refer to <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

* denotes recently added

Date of last update: 26 September 2023

Suggested citation: UNSD, Country Files from the UNSD/UNEP data collection on environment statistics (2023). https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envstats/country_files.

Waste

- Algeria (2022)*
- Andorra (2022)*

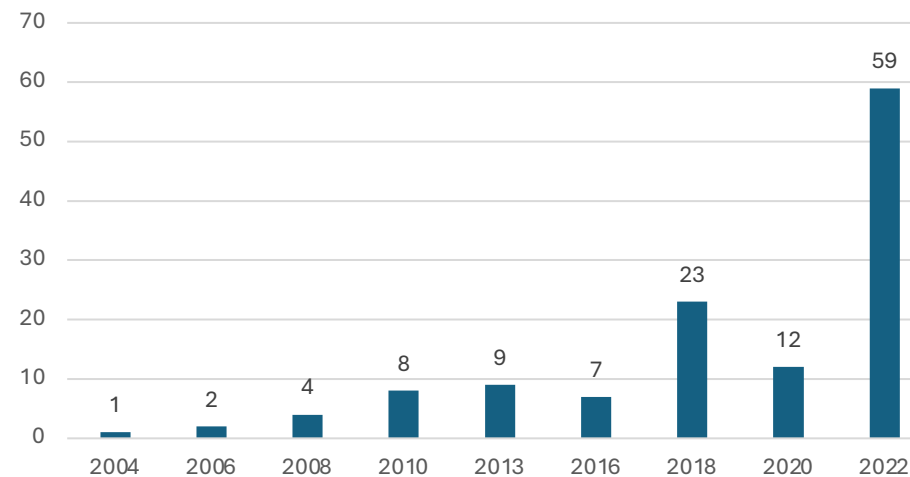
Water

- Algeria (2018)
- Andorra (2020)

Waste

- Algeria (2022)*
- Andorra (2022)*
- Angola (2013)
- Anguilla (2010)
- Antigua and Barbuda (2022)*
- Argentina (2022)*
- Armenia (2022)*
- Azerbaijan (2022)*
- Bahamas (2013)
- Bahrain (2022)*
- Bangladesh (2022)*
- Barbados (2022)*
- Belarus (2022)*
- Belize (2013)
- Benin (2022)*
- Bermuda (2020)
- Bhutan (2020)
- Bolivia (Plurinational State of)(2022)*
- Botswana (2018)
- Brazil (2016)
- British Virgin Islands (2008)
- Brunei Darussalam (2020)
- Burkina Faso (2022)*
- Burundi (2020)
- Cambodia (2018)
- Cameroon (2010)
- Cabo Verde (2022)*
- Central African Republic (2010)
- Chad (2010)
- China(excl. Hong Kong and Macao)(2022)*
- China, Hong Kong SAR (2022)*
- China, Macao SAR (2018)
- Colombia (2018)
- Congo (2008)
- Costa Rica (2010)
- Croatia (2013)
- Cuba (2022)*
- Curaçao (2018)

Annual Number of Countries Reporting



The Importance of Waste Management Data

15
Years

Average age of waste management data from low-income countries

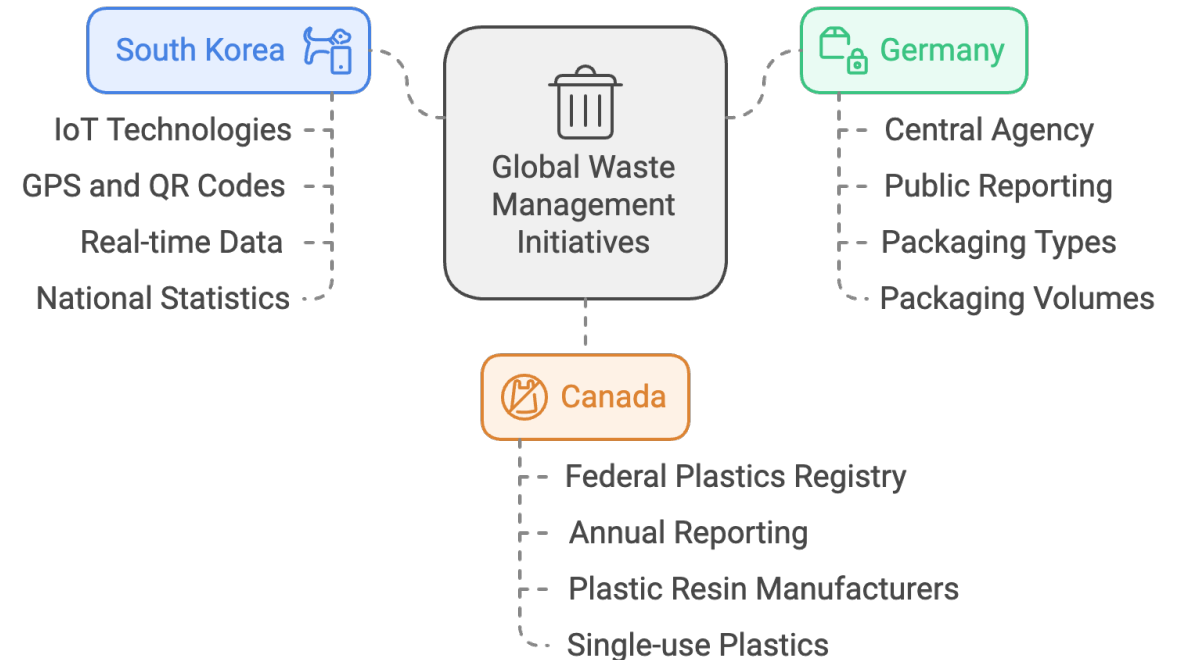
Accurate waste management data:

- Informs decision making
- Allows for the identification of baselines and trends
- Allows for appropriate resource allocation
- Attracts financial investment
- Provides the opportunity to monitor progress

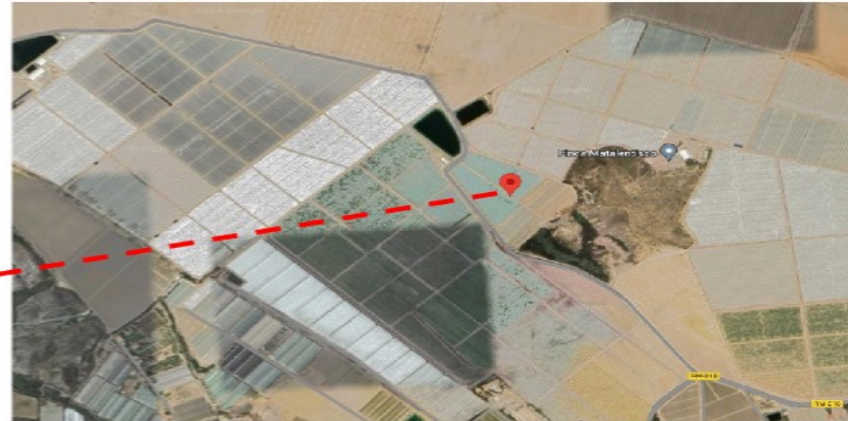
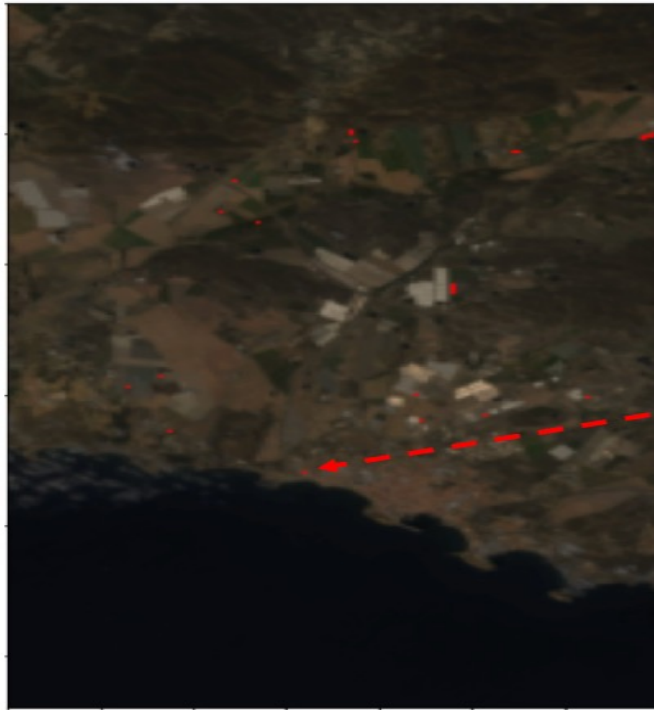
Digital Solutions for Data and Evidence-based policy

- **Digital Technologies in Early Stages:**
 - **Digital watermarks:** Traceable codes embedded on plastic products (tried by Procter & Gamble).
 - **Blockchain:** Decentralized storage and sharing of plastics information. **Sao Paulo, Brazil:** Blockchain piloted to monitor waste management.
- **Challenges:**
 - Requires **technical expertise** and **infrastructure** for implementation.
 - Highlights need for **technology transfer** and **capacity-building**, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

Country cases



Satellite Data



37°23'55.6"N 1°37'51.9"W

- Fig. 1 [Left] Detection of PVC plastics in a large concentration of hoop houses in an image captured by EMIT on June 22, 2023, of the coastal region of Murcia, Spain. Pixels highlighted in red indicate the detected plastics.
- [Right] A Google Maps image displays the location of the hoop houses associated with the highlighted pixel detection.



The Waste Crisis:

Accelerating National to Local Policy Action

Evidence-based strategies for sustainable solutions



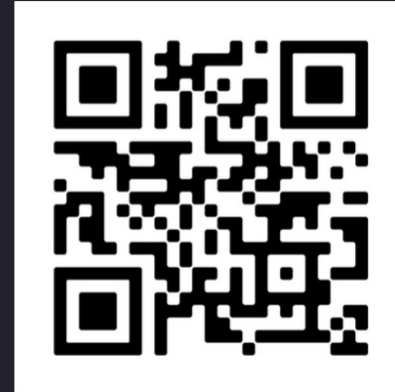
“THE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY POLICY SUPPORT SYSTEM” IS AN ONLINE PLATFORM SERVING AS A POWERFUL DATA-GENERATION TOOL FOR COUNTRIES TO DEVELOP EVIDENCE-BASED NATIONAL WASTE POLICY.

SCAN HERE FOR MORE BACKGROUND INFORMATION!

MAIN PUBLICATION



SUMMARY FOR POLICY MAKERS



Key messages for Policymakers

- Effective waste management for waste including plastics requires coordinated efforts across national and local levels.
- Stakeholder participation is necessary and should include businesses from throughout the life cycle of products, the scientific community, and the informal sector.
- Enhancement of source segregation is critical.
- Existing gaps in data, infrastructure and technology, and capacity must be assessed to plan effectively.

“To address the waste crisis, policymakers should create evidence-based public policies that guide the adoption of science, technology, and innovation, along with financing mechanisms and data management capacities.”

- The Waste Crisis: Accelerating National to Local Policy Action



Waste Management and Circular Economy Policy Support System

Embracing Holistic Solutions Beyond Plastics



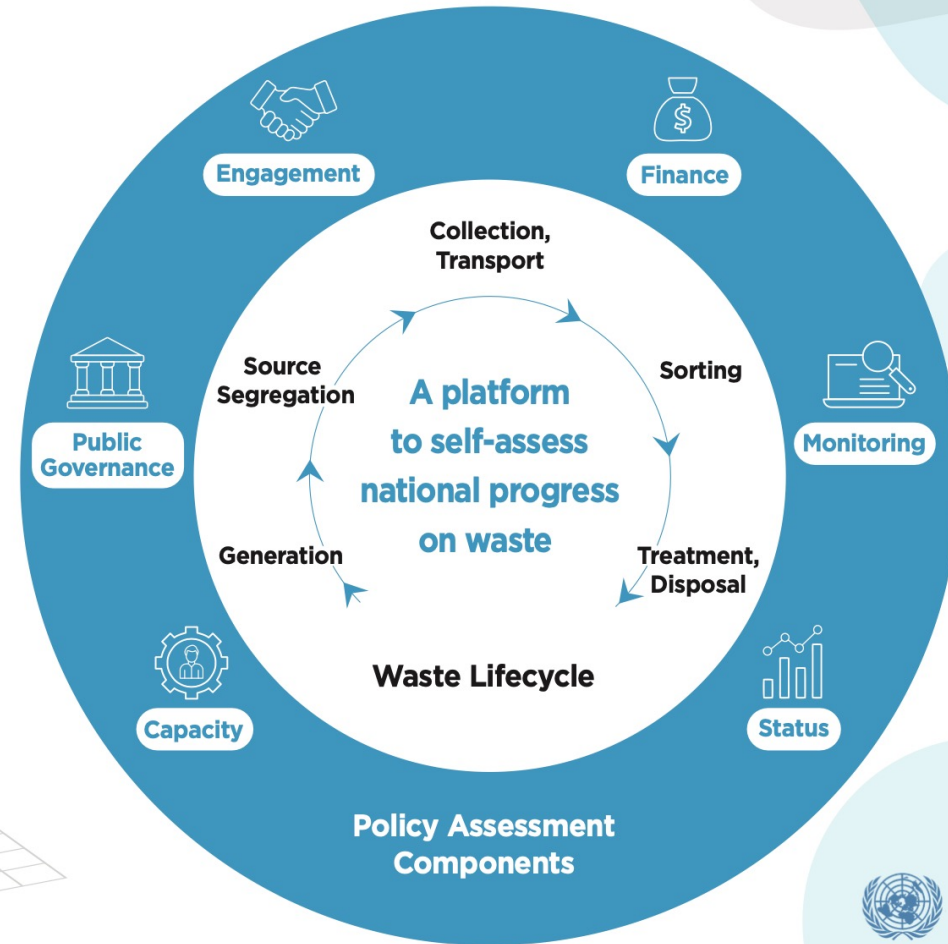
2.3 billion tons of MSW generation annually



90% of waste dumped or burned openly in low-income countries



20% of methane emissions come from waste



Waste Management and Circular Economy Policy Support System

Empowering UN Member States to Advance Sustainable Waste Management and Resource Circularity

[Click here to start](#)

1

Policy Assessment Area: General Data

2

Policy Assessment Area: Waste Management Implementation Framework (Household Solid Waste Management)

3

Policy Assessment Area: Waste Impact And Management Criteria

Capacity

Public Governance

Engagement Of Key Stakeholders

Finance

Monitoring

Budget

Financing Mechanism

Financial Incentives

General

Is waste management included in the national budget?

Yes

Partially

No

Is the waste management budget based on the National Waste Management Plan?

Yes

Partially

No

Next Steps

Regional Workshops to be held in East Africa, West Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean in 2025 (dates t.b.c.)

Interested countries should contact us for further details.





The Waste Crisis:

Accelerating National to Local Policy Action

Evidence-based strategies for sustainable solutions



MAIN PUBLICATION



SUMMARY FOR POLICY MAKERS



THANK YOU



United Nations

Office for Sustainable Development