

# Waste Atlas

**Waste Atlas** <http://www.atlas.d-waste.com/>

The Waste Atlas project is an open-source platform that provides global data and insights about waste management, including waste generation, treatment, and disposal. It was created by D-Waste, a consultancy firm specializing in waste management, in collaboration with several partners including universities, NGOs, and professionals in the waste sector.

Key Features of the Waste Atlas Project:

- 1. Global Waste Data:** Waste Atlas compiles data from various sources to provide a broad picture of waste generation and management in countries around the world. It includes data on:
  - Waste generation per capita (how much waste people generate daily),
  - Waste composition (types of waste like organic, plastic, glass, etc.),
  - Waste management practices (landfilling, recycling, composting, etc.),
  - Landfill locations and capacities (focusing on regulated landfill sites).
- 2. Open-Access and User-Friendly:** The platform aims to make waste data more accessible to the public. It's designed as a user-friendly, open-access tool where individuals, researchers, and organizations can explore waste-related data and visualize it through an interactive map.
- 3. Interactive Waste Map:** Waste Atlas provides an interactive global map where users can explore waste statistics for different countries and regions. It allows you to compare countries based on various waste-related indicators like waste generation rates, treatment methods, and recycling performance.
- 4. Focus on Municipal Solid Waste (MSW):** The main focus of Waste Atlas is municipal solid waste (MSW), which includes everyday waste generated by households, businesses, and institutions. This differs from specialized forms of waste like hazardous or medical waste, though some data on hazardous waste might be available.
- 5. Country Profiles:** Waste Atlas provides detailed country profiles where users can see key statistics and trends related to waste management for individual countries. This includes information like:
  - Waste generation per capita,
  - Percentage of waste that is recycled, composted, or landfilled,
  - Methane emissions from waste,
  - Economic indicators related to waste management.
- 6. Comparative Analysis:** Users can compare waste data between countries,

helping to identify trends, challenges, and best practices in waste management. For example, countries with high recycling rates or innovative waste-to-energy technologies can be benchmarked against those with higher landfill dependency.

7. Partnerships and Data Sources: Waste Atlas aggregates its data from a wide range of data sources, including official government reports, the World Bank, UNEP, and peer-reviewed research studies. This diverse range of sources helps ensure the platform is comprehensive and up-to-date.

8. Waste Management Case Studies: The platform also features case studies that showcase waste management systems in specific cities or countries. These case studies provide detailed insights into how different regions are tackling waste management challenges, offering inspiration for similar projects globally.

#### How Waste Atlas Can Be Used:

1. For Policy Makers: Waste Atlas serves as a valuable tool for policymakers looking to design or improve waste management systems. By analyzing global trends and successful case studies, governments can make informed decisions about waste treatment, recycling, and reducing landfill dependence.

2. For Researchers and Academics: The platform is often used by researchers studying global waste trends. It provides a wealth of quantitative data, allowing for analysis of correlations between waste generation, GDP, urbanization, and other factors.

3. For NGOs and Environmental Advocates: NGOs can use Waste Atlas to track waste-related challenges globally and advocate for better waste management practices. By identifying regions that face significant waste management issues, they can prioritize action and raise awareness about the need for improved waste infrastructure.

4. For Businesses and Consultants: Companies in the waste management sector can use the data for market research, understanding trends in different regions, and identifying potential investment opportunities in waste infrastructure and technologies.

#### Limitations:

- **Data Gaps:** Since Waste Atlas relies on a variety of data sources, some countries, particularly in developing regions, may have incomplete or outdated data due to a lack of consistent waste management reporting.

- **Focus on Municipal Waste:** While it provides in-depth information on municipal solid waste, Waste Atlas does not extensively cover specialized waste streams like e-waste or industrial waste.

#### Example Insights from Waste Atlas:

- **Top Waste-Generating Countries:** The platform shows which countries generate the most waste per capita, with many developed countries like the U.S. and Canada ranking high in waste production.

- **Recycling and Composting Leaders:** Countries like Germany and South Korea, known for their high recycling rates, are featured as case studies for

successful waste diversion practices.

- Methane Emissions from Landfills: It also highlights the environmental impact of landfills, particularly in developing countries where landfill management is often poor, leading to high methane emissions.
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