



Global Waste Management Outlook



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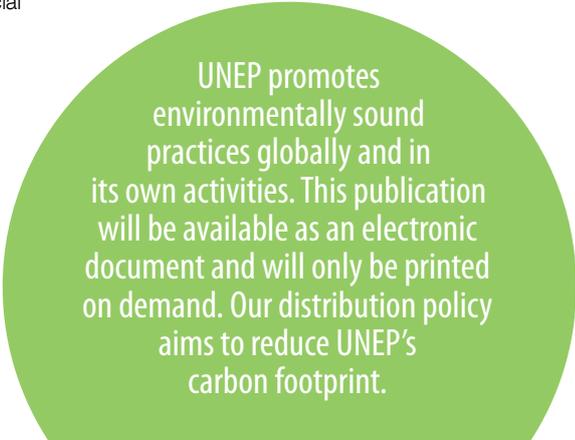
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Foreword

Good decision-making about how we manage the waste we create is one of the most important contributions humanity can make to reducing its impact on the natural world. The Global Waste Management Outlook (GWMO) is being released at a critical moment, one where the world is considering a new regime to keep global warming to below 2 degrees above pre-industrial temperatures, and, at the same time, discussing what the future development agenda will look like and how it will be funded.

Environmental sustainability is the core issue that will need to be addressed for development to focus on human well-being and yet stay within the limitations of planet's capacity. Environmentally sound waste management is one of the key elements for sustainable development.

Already, science has demonstrated that we are on an unsustainable path, and that urgent and united action is required to correct this. The global population, currently at 7.3 billion, will grow in the coming decades to 9 billion and perhaps 11 billion by the end of the 21st century. Some 80% of this growing population will live in cities, most of which are yet to be built. Of this projected 9 billion people, 3 billion will belong to the middle class, with sufficient disposable income to purchase the consumer goods that others enjoy elsewhere in the world, further draining the planet's already strained natural resources.

Moving to a circular development model – which works to reduce waste before it is produced, but which treats waste as a resource when it is – is essential, and holistic and integrated sustainable waste management will be crucial.

The GWMO is the first comprehensive, impartial and in-depth assessment of global waste management. It reflects the collective body of recent scientific knowledge, drawing on the work of leading experts and the vast body of research undertaken within and beyond the United Nations system. The six chapters inform the reader about trends, provide an analysis on governance and financial mechanisms, and offer policy advice on the way forward. The main document targeting professionals is accompanied by two summary documents, one for decision makers and the other for the public more broadly.

This GWMO offers a profound analysis of the enormous potential better waste management provides to assist in meeting the sustainability challenges ahead.



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