Mauritania

**Socioeconomic Profile**

Mauritania is a lower-middle-income country in West Africa bordered by Western Sahara/Morocco, Algeria, Mali, and Senegal. Its economy is dominated by agricultural production and extractive industries such as oil, gold, and copper. The country comprises 15 administrative regions and runs a presidential republic system of government.

Mauritania’s overall GDP (purchasing power parity) in 2019 was approximately $23.5 billion and it reported a GDP (purchasing power parity) per capita of $5,197. Though Mauritania has an area of 1,030,700 km², its population is only 4,525,696 (2019) and it has a population density of 4.27 people per km² (2018). The majority of Mauritania’s residents—54.5 percent of the total population (2019)—live in urban areas. In 2014, just over 1 million of Mauritania’s residents resided along the country’s coastline, particularly in the capital city of Nouakchott.

**Plastic Industry and Ecosystem**

In 2018 and 2019, Mauritania had no domestic resin production or conversion. Similar to its regional neighbors, Mauritania is a net importer of plastics. In 2019, 9.2 million kg of plastics were imported into

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population, 2019 (no.)</td>
<td>4,525,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density, 2018 (people per sq. km of land area)</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal population, 2014 (no.)</td>
<td>1,005,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of people living in urban areas, 2019 (%)</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total MSW generated, 2016 (tons/year)</td>
<td>454,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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216 Jambeck et al., “Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean.”
219 Ibid.
220 GDP, PPP (constant 2017 international $) and GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2017 international $).
221 World Bank Group, "World Development Indicators," 2020.
222 Ibid.
223 Ibid.
224 Jambeck et al., “Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean.”
the country, with PE and PP making up about 94.3 percent of the imports.\textsuperscript{225} Only 980,560 kg of plastics were exported from Mauritania that same year, 90.4 percent of which were classed as scrap plastic.\textsuperscript{226}

**Solid Waste Management**

Mauritania generates 0.36 kg of MSW per capita per day, amounting to an overall daily MSW generation of 1.2 million kg.\textsuperscript{227} About 82.4 percent of MSW generated in Mauritania is inadequately managed.\textsuperscript{228} Plastic waste accounts for about 9 percent of MSW arisings\textsuperscript{229} with a daily generation rate of about 146,100 kg.

**Legislation, Policies, and Other Initiatives**

The government ministry responsible for municipal waste management in Mauritania is the Ministry of Environment.\textsuperscript{230} Currently, waste management in Mauritania is driven by the following law:

- Law No. 2000-045: This law spells out the general principles of Mauritania’s national policy on environmental management and includes waste management.\textsuperscript{231}

In 2012, the government introduced a decree—Decree No. 2012-157—that banned manufacture, use, and import of plastic bags.\textsuperscript{232}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{225} UN Comtrade, “UN Comtrade Database,” 2019.
\item \textsuperscript{226} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{228} Jambeck et al., “Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean.”
\item \textsuperscript{229} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{231} Chatham House, “Policies.”
\item \textsuperscript{232} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
Plastic Waste in Mauritania

Plastic Generation Hotspots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Locale</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Plastic Waste (kt)</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Area (km^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kaedi</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>0.1359</td>
<td>11,602</td>
<td>40.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Selibabi</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.1685</td>
<td>14,392</td>
<td>44.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nouadhibou</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1.7784</td>
<td>151,575</td>
<td>150.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Aleg</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0.0467</td>
<td>3,988</td>
<td>12.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nouakchott</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.0591</td>
<td>1,371,226</td>
<td>445.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ayoun El Atrous</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0.0626</td>
<td>5,345</td>
<td>17.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nema</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>0.1728</td>
<td>14,755</td>
<td>34.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Annual National Plastic Waste Generation: 53.36 kt

West Africa Regional Gap Analysis: Plastics Circularity

World Bank Group