

Mauritania



Indicator	Data
Population, 2019 (no.)	4,525,696
Population density, 2018 (people per sq. km of land area)	4.27
Coastal population, 2014 (no.) ²¹⁶	1,005,481
Share of people living in urban areas, 2019 (%)	54.5
Total MSW generated, 2016 (tons/year) ²¹⁷	454,000

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.²¹⁸ The country comprises 15 administrative regions²¹⁹ 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.^{220, 221} 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).²²² The majority of Mauritania's residents—54.5 percent of the total population (2019)—live in urban areas.²²³ In 2014, just over 1 million of Mauritania's residents, resided along the country's coastline,²²⁴ 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

²¹⁶ Jambeck et al., "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean."

²¹⁷ Kaza, Silpa, Lisa Yao, Perinaz Bhada-Tata, and Frank Van Woerden. 2018. What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050. Urban Development Series. Washington, DC: World Bank

²¹⁸ CIA, *The World Factbook: Mauritania* (Langley, VA: CIA, 2021), <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/mauritania/#economy>.

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.²²⁵ Only 980,560 kg of plastics were exported from Mauritania that same year, 90.4 percent of which were classed as scrap plastic.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.²²⁷ About 82.4 percent of MSW generated in Mauritania is inadequately managed.²²⁸ Plastic waste accounts for about 9 percent of MSW arisings²²⁹ 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.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.²³¹

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

²²⁵ UN Comtrade, “UN Comtrade Database,” 2019.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Kaza, Silpa, Lisa Yao, Perinaz Bhada-Tata, and Frank Van Woerden. 2018. *What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050*. Urban Development Series. Washington, DC: World Bank

²²⁸ Jambeck et al., “Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean.”

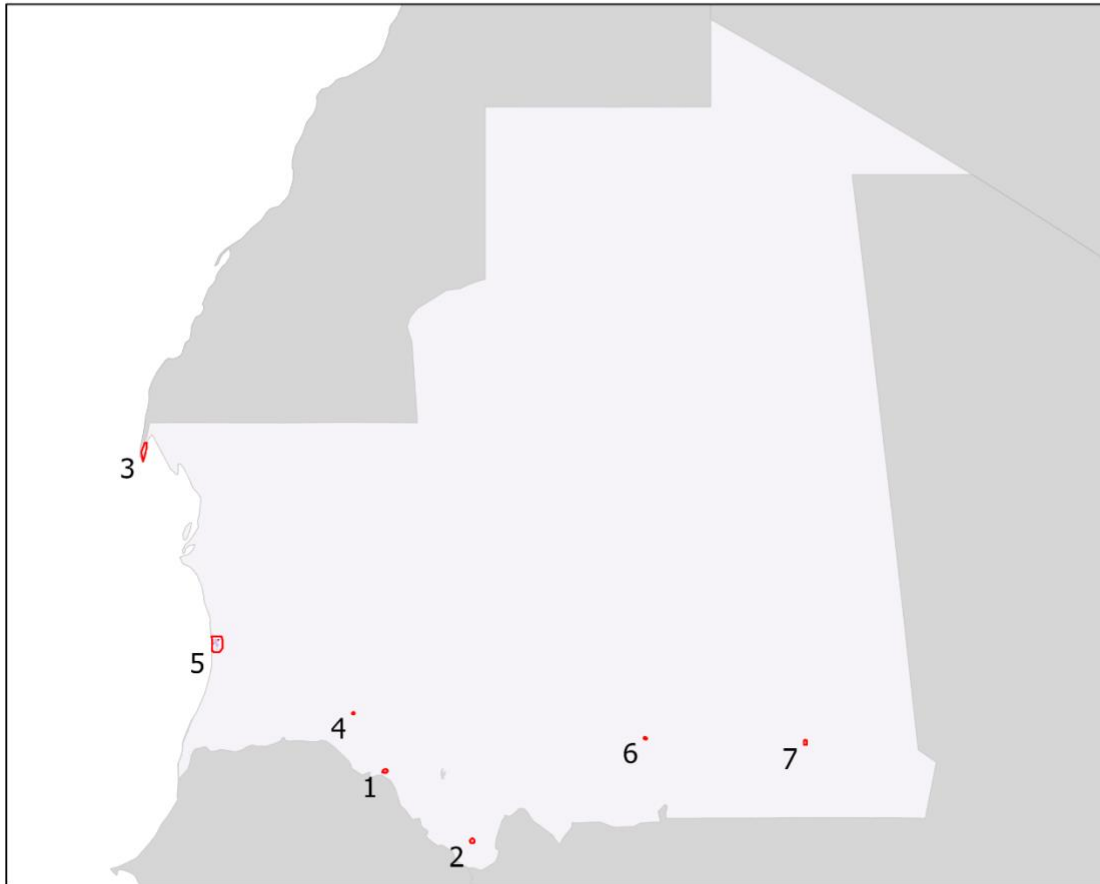
²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ GIZ, *Report on the Solid Waste Management in Mauritania* (Tunis: GIZ, 2013), https://www.resource-recovery.net/sites/default/files/mauritanis_ra_ang_web_0.pdf.

²³¹ Chatham House, “Policies.”

²³² Ibid.

Plastic Waste in Mauritania



Plastic Generation Hotspots

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

Annual Plastic Waste (kg/km²)



Hotspot Extent



Total Annual National Plastic Waste Generation: 53.36 kt

Location in Region

