

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.)	1,005,481
Share of people living in urban areas, 2019 (%)	54.5
Total MSW generated, 2014 (tons/year)	202,274

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.¹ The country comprises 15 administrative regions² and runs a presidential republic system of government.

Mauritania's overall GDP (PPP) in 2019 was approximately \$23.5 billion and it reported a GDP (PPP) per capita of \$5,197.^{3,4} 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).⁵ The majority of Mauritania's residents—54.5 percent of the total population (2019)—live in urban areas.⁶ In 2014, just over 1 million of Mauritania's residents, resided along the country's coastline,⁷ 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 the country, with PE and PP making up about 94.3 percent of the imports.⁸ Only 980,560 kg of plastics were exported from Mauritania that same year, 90.4 percent of which were classed as scrap plastic.⁹

¹ CIA, *The World Factbook: Mauritania* (Langley, VA: CIA, 2021), <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/mauritania/#economy>.

² Ibid.

³ GDP, PPP (constant 2017 international \$) and GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2017 international \$).

⁴ World Bank Group, "World Development Indicators," 2020.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Jambeck et al., "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean."

⁸ UN Comtrade, "UN Comtrade Database," 2019.

⁹ Ibid.

Solid Waste Management

Mauritania generates 0.5 kg of MSW per capita per day, amounting to an overall daily MSW generation of 502,741 kg.¹⁰ About 82.4 percent of MSW generated in Mauritania is inadequately managed.¹¹

Plastic waste accounts for about 9 percent of MSW arisings, with a daily generation rate of about 45,000 kg, of which 82 percent is inadequately managed¹²; 900 kg/day of plastic waste is noted to leak into the environment.¹³

Legislation, Policies, and Other Initiatives

The government ministry responsible for municipal waste management in Mauritania is the Ministry of Environment.¹⁴ 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.¹⁵

In 2012, the government introduced a decree—Decree No. 2012-157—that banned manufacture, use, and import of plastic bags.¹⁶

¹⁰ Jambeck et al., "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean."

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

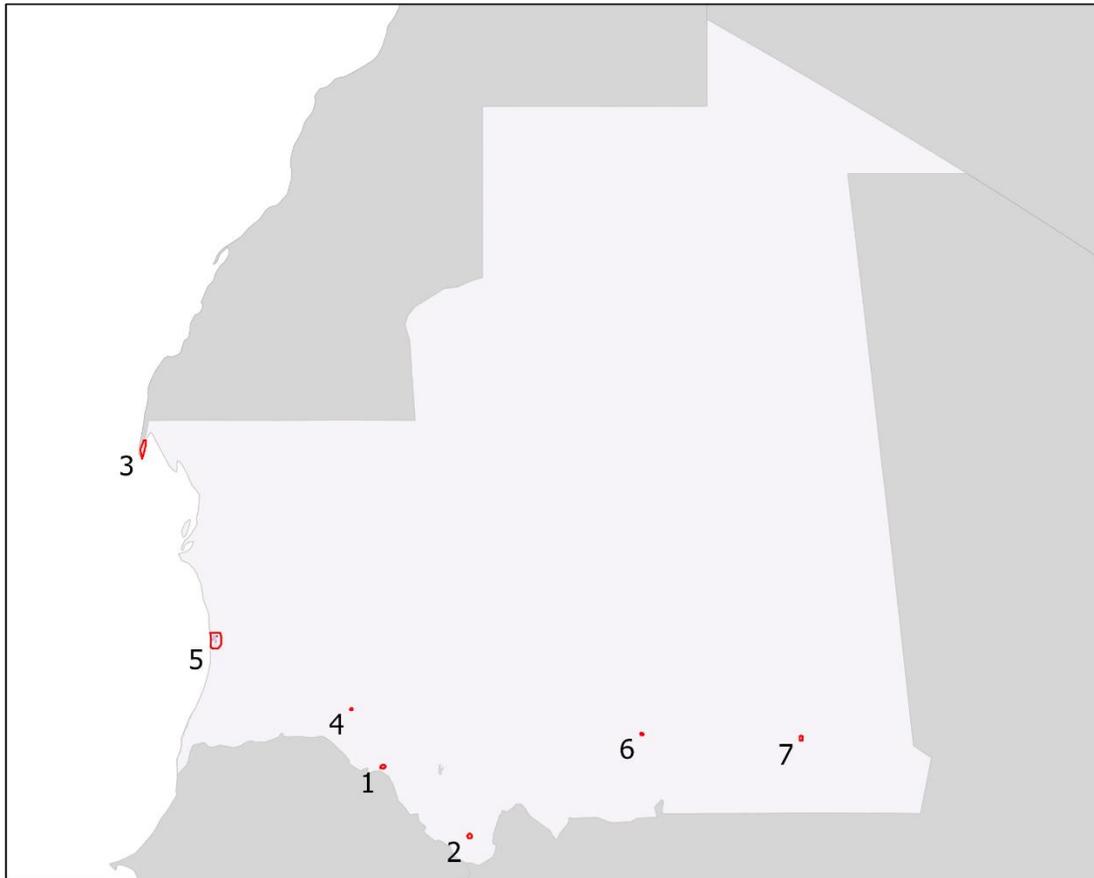
¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Chatham House, "Policies."

¹⁶ 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

