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SOLID WASTE RECYCLING IN TUNISIA: OPERATIONALIZATION STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GREEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPEMENT

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In Tunisia, one of the most pressing challenges, especially after the Tunisia's 2011 revolution, is the enhancement of the solid waste management strategy by emphasizing recycling and resource recovery. In 2012, the national production of MSW, in Tunisia, is estimated 2.423 million tons with an annual growth around 2.5%. Expressed per capita, the annual production of MSW is evaluated to 0.8 kg/day in urban areas and to 0.2 kg/day in rural ones. Since Tunisia economy is based on agriculture activities, agricultural waste are around 4.033 million tons per year. The e-waste annual production is estimated to 90.000 tons per year whereas packaging waste and used tyres generation are estimated to 99.000 and 15.000 tons per year, respectively. Medical waste production is estimated to 16.000 tons per year whereas industrial waste generation is about 116.000 tons per year. So far, the recovery of materials that are either recyclable or reusable is performed in Tunisia, since 2001, with MSW recycling rate around 5%. Many national programs of specific waste recycling were established since 2001, such as the "Eco-Lef" program for plastic wastes, the "Eco-Zit" program for used lubricating oil recycling, a program for waste cooking oil (WCO) recovery, a program for used battery management and a program for electrical and electronic equipment recycling. This paper presents a critical assessment of the current practices related to waste recycling options in Tunisia, namely the national programs adapted for recycling and for resources recovery and highlights the opportunities that could be exploited for the creation of jobs to face the current and future challenges. The final objective of this paper is to advance some suggestions and recommendations to improve these recycling options.

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