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A glance at waste management in Mexico

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Mexico generated 53.1 million tons of municipal solid waste (MSW) in 2015. Per capita generation was 1.2 kg per inhabitant per day. MSW generation has more than doubled between 1992 and 2015, going from 21.9 to 53.1 million tons/year. The composition of the aforementioned waste is as follows, 52.4% organic; 34% of potentially reusable waste (13.8% paper and cardboard waste, 10.9% plastics, 5.9% glass and 3.4% metals) and the remaining 13.6% was made up of other waste (12.2%) and textiles (1.4%). Only 87% of MSW generated in Mexico is collected. It is estimated that 66% of the MSW collected is taken directly to landfills and 8% to controlled sites. 21% of the

MSW is deposited in open-air dumpsites or uncontrolled sites, a situation that mainly occurs in rural or semi-urban areas. Only 5% of MSW is recycled. MSW management is a two-part process: collection and final disposal. It is worth mentioning that of the 92.87% of municipalities in Mexico only 6.02% treat their MSW. Therefore the objective of this paper is to present a proposal to transform the current MSW situation in Mexico; it is an area of opportunity to contribute to the modification of public policies and benefit society through the incorporation of valorization techniques like composting and anaerobic digestion.

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