

LIMITS OF RECYCLING: HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

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Abstract

Solid waste recovery in Costa Rica is 1.26%; however, the National Strategy for Waste Separation, Recovery and Valorization (2016) establishes the goal of increasing the percentage of waste recovery to 15% by 2020. To achieve this, it is necessary to know the factors that influence the current percentage of waste recovery, and the challenges associated with the success and failure of recycling initiatives worldwide. This research explores the financial, institutional and technical barriers faced by key players in the value chain.

Literature related to success stories and recycling barriers. was collected from developed and developing countries. Information was provided by municipalities, public and private material refuse facilities (MRF), waste transforming companies, and exporters of secondary materials. It was determined a great variety of challenges. Some to be mentioned are budget problems to carry out recycling, lack of technology and human capital. Material refuse facilities and processing companies agree that the great challenges are mainly related to high production costs due to the price of electricity, social charges and taxes. The dependence of international markets and the prices set up by the companies are a big burden for a profitable activity. Some measures were proposed to overcome the challenges in order to increase recycling rates in Costa Rica.

Keywords: Solid Waste, Recovery Percentage, Municipalities, Collection centers, Recycling companies, Challenges, Financial, Institutional, Technical