

Waste Management: The European Union Rules

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Every year, some 2 billion tonnes of waste - including particularly hazardous waste - are produced in the Member States of the European Union, and this figure is rising steadily. Stockpiling waste is not a viable solution and destroying it is unsatisfactory due to the resulting emissions and highly concentrated, polluting residues. The best solution is, as always, to prevent the production of such waste, reintroducing it into the product cycle by recycling its components where there are ecologically and economically viable methods of doing so.

With a view to breaking the link between growth and waste generation, the European Union has provided itself with a legal framework aimed at the whole waste cycle from generation to disposal, placing the emphasis on recovery and recycling.

The general framework concerning all kinds of wastes will be presented and the legislation relative to the management of waste from the extractive industries will be describes in details. Some examples and present tendencies will be given.