

## SUSTAINABILITY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

Waste is a fact of life. Almost any human activity generates waste; that is the production of unwanted or undesirable output. This could be liquid, solid, or gaseous. This could be perspiration, food scraps, construction-demolition waste, or sanitation waste. Nature also produces waste, but our concern is for the study of human activity. On one hand our society is consuming natural resources at a prodigious rate. On the other hand the production of waste is reaching epic proportions. Landfill capacity is being taxed. This challenges a basic tenet of sustainability; that of maintaining operations today without sacrificing future possibilities. Strategy for management of waste such prevention, recycling and reuse will be discussed. Actions by some leading companies will be presented. For example, an incredible number of water bottles head for landfill after a paltry 28% recycling rate, considering we don't know how long it takes for that plastic to disintegrate. Regarding sustainability, management of waste is a critical element in a company's ability to maintain ISO 14001 accreditation.