

# Good recycling, can it help the economy research paper example

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Landfill has for quite some time now been an economical and simple way for several countries to dispose of their waste materials. However, many things have changed over recent years and there is increased interest in landfill mining. Landfill sites are overstretched and exceeding their capacity at an alarming rate. Consequently, environmental awareness and safety concerns have taken center stage. Land mining refers to the excavation of old landfill sites and re-processing their contents. There are various explanations for this newly-profound interest that transcend the technological, economic and social dimensions of landfill mining. Landfill sites comprise of materials which can be recycled, composted or burnt for fuel. Basically, land fill mining involves recycling of the excavated or retrieved materials. Such materials often have value when recycled. These include metals, plastics, soil and organic material. Economically recoverable resource is very variable. The content of landfills is not fixed but varies not only with age and location, and even within a particular cell.

Recycling of waste materials has several economic benefits through its effect on the employment of resources such as capital, labor and land. This is because apart from alleviating land space to be put into alternative productive use, it also provides opportunities for heightened employment of capital and labor. To start with, technology has been employed to convert waste material into combustible energy. Such technology is used to change combustible material into fuel sources. Most of these sources of energy are produced in a manner that is an environmentally friendly and acceptable. This helps to meet the energy needs of the country without necessarily severely damaging the environment. Although landfill mining is a concept

that is over five decades old, recent developments in plasma technology, where unwanted material is superheated to produce a clean and relatively economical gas to generate electricity, are bound to make it more feasible. Recycling of soil in landfill sites has led to the reclamation of land. Such land is often located in close proximity with urban areas. This is because high population and industrialization attributed to such areas are lead to high disposal levels. The reclaimed land has the potential to be used for housing projects and thus the growth of urban areas. This leads to the extension of social utilities to settlements in the reclaimed lands and thus improves the quality of life of their inhabitants. The land can also be used as sources of organic fertilizers through the process of anaerobic decomposition. In addition, reclaimed soil is utilized as cover material, and sold as fill for construction sites amongst other beneficial uses.

Landfill mining companies have acted as sources of job opportunities for many people. For example, the UK Company Advanced Plasma Power is one of the most notable plasma gasification plants developed in the world and provides employment to many people. However, these employees are exposed to several risks because of the nature of the job. This requires that companies need to adequately train and equip their employees. This implies that companies may be forced to incur significant administrative and compliance costs in order to meet worker safety requirements.

Landfill mining is attracting significantly huge investment from energy companies and environmental organizations. Recent years have seen an upsurge in calls for clean energy sources and environmental conservation due to increased global warming concerns. For instance, the UK Company

Advanced Plasma Power is one of the most notable plasma gasification plants developed in the world. Another example is a landfill mining project in Belgium, located near the city of Hasselt, which is expected to be operational by 2015. It is expected to convert methane emissions into useable gas with a capacity of supplying power to about 60, 000 households (Wheeler).

Landfill mining has been an activity that has attracted significant interest from researchers all over the world. Increased concern about global warming has led to increased funding for research work meant to reduce the alarming rate of harmful gas emissions. Landfill mining is a considerably good way of recycling unwanted material and reclaiming land for more productive uses. However, it is essential that landfill mining activities are closely monitored. This implies that recycling of waste materials has drawn significant employment of research resources. Several environmental organizations have committed their time, funds and researchers towards the environmental effects of recycling activities.

In conclusion, landfill mining is an activity that is most often associated only with their negative impacts such as long-term emissions of methane gas, domestic pollution, underground water pollution, and urban development limitations. However, valuable recyclable materials previously considered to be unwanted material can be mined from landfills, creating a new source of such material. Such material has the possibility to create a new supply for diminishing supplies of rare earth and elements most of which are useful for many industries. As a result, recycling of materials obtained through the landfill mining process has increased capital, labor and land use. This has boosted the effective employment of these resources.

## Works Cited

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