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WHAT DRIVES THE RECOVERY OF METAL FROM WASTES ?
AN EMPIRICAL MICRO-ECONOMIC STUDY OVER FRENCH WASTEFLOWS, 2005-2022

Recycling has been promoted as both an environmentally sound source of metals and a sovereign one, allowing countries to produce metals from domestic wastes. This article examines the factors explaining companies' behavior regarding metal recycling from wasteflows. Based on a sample of 564,574 aggregated wasteflows processed in France, between 2005 and 2022, we used logit regressions in order to determine which factors impact the probability for a waste to be recycled for it's metal. We found that the number of different wastecodes processed by a facility, the wasteflow mass, the potential zinc and aluminium revenues are negatively impacting the probability of a wasteflow to be metal-recycled. Using mundlak decomposition, we found that only zinc revenue deviation to the mean remain significant while the mean mass of waste is negative between wastes and facilities. On the opposite, iron potential revenue is the main driver of metal-recycling, even when controlling for waste composition and industry specific practices through fixed effects. Mostly, we identify strong inertia in the decision to recycle, inherent to waste and industry specific practices.