

REPORT

First Nations in Quebec Waste Management Symposium

May 30 to June 1, 2023 in Odanak and Wôlinak
7th edition



FNQLSDI
FIRST NATIONS OF QUEBEC AND LABRADOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

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INTRODUCTION

The 7th edition of the First Nations Waste Management (WM) Symposium was held on the Ndakina, W8banaki ancestral territory. This year, knowledge sharing between Nations was at the heart of the activities. The WM team wanted this regional event to focus on getting to know each other, helping each other out, and co-creating solutions - all in good fun, of course! The event was intended to be a major annual gathering of the First Nations WM Community of Practice, enabling participants to forge links with their peers. Thanks to the contributions of 67 people, including 48 First Nations stakeholders, 4 Indigenous Services Canada advisors and 12 FNQLSDI members, the event was once again a resounding success.

DAY 1 - MAY 30, 2023

Welcoming Remarks

Laura Morgan - Interim WM Coordinator

The Symposium began with a welcome from Laura Morgan, Interim Coordinator of the FNQLSDI's WM sector. Laura went on to thank the Symposium hosts, the W8banaki Nation communities of Odanak and Wôlinak, for welcoming us to their ancestral territory. To thank the land that welcomed us all for the next three days, Gabriel Bordeleau-Landry offered an opening ceremony. This was followed by an overview of the event and technical reminders from Catherine Talbot, Team leader of the FNQLSDI's WM sector and event moderator.

Sharing Circle: Integrating participants into the community of practice

Johnny Wylde - Kina8at

The Symposium began with a sharing circle led by Johnny Wylde of Kina8at. This pause was intended as a moment for everyone to reflect on the link between their daily actions and the importance of protecting Mother Earth. At the same time, the sharing circle enabled participants to get to know their peers a little better, break down certain barriers, and start the event on a common footing.

Sharing successful stories

Composting in Listuguj

Marie-Christine Roussel Gray - Environmental Coordinator, Listuguj

Nearly a year after composting began in Listuguj, Marie-Christine Roussel Gray reports encouraging results. Since August 2023, 14 tonnes of material have been composted by approximately 20% of the community's population. Marie-Christine reported on the advantages and disadvantages of the composter and collection equipment, observed after ten months of operation. In particular, she mentioned the regular support received from Brome Compost, the manufacturer of the thermophilic composter, and from the FNQLSDI, but that it is sometimes difficult to identify the right parameters to modify to obtain compost of satisfactory quality. Winter conditions are also a constraint on the proper operation of the composter, as the outlet has frozen on a number of occasions.

In terms of equipment, roll-out bins that lock would be worth considering, as white buckets have a number of disadvantages: both the organic matter and the lid freeze in winter, and their white color makes it difficult for operators to collect the buckets in winter, as they blend in with the snow. Marie-Christine underlined the importance of remaining flexible, being open to change, and not hesitating to come up with new ideas to facilitate and encourage participation. It's a safe bet that many participants with composting projects in mind learned from the Listuguj experience.

Opening of the Kebaowek Ecocenter

Matt Chevrier – Ecocenter Administrator, Kebaowek

Matt Chevrier recounted the many steps involved in developing the ecocenter project in Kebaowek. One of the first steps was to create spaces for discussion and give community members a voice, notably by holding information sessions. Matt mentioned the importance of identifying partners and allies at local, regional and provincial levels, such as the Band Council, community radio or the Health Centre. External collaborators such as the FNQLSDI, the MRC and neighboring municipalities can also support and help implement the ecocenter project. Communication is a decisive pillar in the success of a WM project. That's why Matt suggests using local resources to reach all audiences. Whether it's our allies in the various departments of the Council, social networks, or even information booths at community events, these communication efforts can encourage members to put their shoulder to the wheel. Finally, he emphasized the importance of remembering why we do what we do: we are the representatives for a better, cleaner, and more sustainable future for generations to come.

Workshop: Mentoring on WM issues and co-creating innovative solutions

Participants were first invited to discuss issues related to one of the six themes of their choice: *EcoNation*, *ecocenter*, *composting*, *transportation*, and *community mobilization*. Following a vote, three priority themes were chosen, and participants were able to brainstorm solutions to address these issues. Here are a few of the ideas put forward for the *ecocenter*, *community mobilization* and *composting* themes.



Figure 1. Subgroup on “Ecocenter”



Figure 2. Subgroup on “Mobilization.”



Figure 3. Subgroup on “Compost”.

Subgroup on “Ecocenter”

Gabrielle Lamouche - Communications Officer, Kanesatake

Paul Rabbitskin - Public Services Manager, Mistissini

Table 1. Summary of discussions on ecocenters

Challenges	Proposed solutions
Materials dropped off at the ecocenter: burning and people's bad habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a technician on site to educate ecocenter users about proper sorting and safety measures; - Install surveillance cameras; - Adjust opening hours according to traffic.
Tires: difficult to recover in remote areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on common actions, regroup several communities and ask RECYC-QUÉBEC to take action; - Sort aluminum rims VS steel rims, economic advantage (\$); - Don't use balers to compress tires, as it breaks the balers.
Cardboard: large volumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Install a baler to save on the cost (\$) of transporting recyclable materials.
Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): many players to contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If possible, minimize the number of contacts by making agreements with Laurentides Resources for several materials (oils, paints, inorganics, batteries).
Fluorescents : Storage conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure you have a dry place to store neon lights.
Training: needs are still present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report training needs to the FNQLSDI at any time.
Lack of awareness of the ecocenter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make members aware of the ecocenter vocation: it's a transitional site, not a dumping ground! ; - Make the ecocenter a meeting place, as Kanesatake did.

Subgroup on “Community mobilization »

Matt Chevrier - Ecocenter Administrator, Kebaowek

Table 2. Summary of discussions on community mobilization

Challenges	Proposed solutions
How to get people involved (new project)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement a community awareness plan; - Create flyers ; - Organize community gatherings, community dinners; - Partner with other events; - Educate the public; - Before planning an event, think about who you're targeting, and plan activities accordingly!

Table 2. Summary of discussions on community mobilization (cont.)

Challenges	Proposed solutions
How to get people involved (new project)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make information simple and accessible (different age groups, for example) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Children: games o Seniors: something they like to do (talk, play, dress up) - Public works: newsletters for reminders.
How to mobilize adults (the most difficult group to engage)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simplify the message; - Be accessible (door-to-door, videos, social media, Tik Tok for young adults).
How do you get the chief and the Council on board (difficult to get to the top ranks)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be determined, get out there; - Use word-of-mouth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Snowball effect: if you get people on board, more and more people will join in, and eventually you'll reach the Band Council. - Over time, it gets easier.
Someone who wears many hats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build a team; - Call on other communities, municipalities, FNQLSDI; - Collaborate with neighboring municipalities (same issues); - Don't be afraid to talk to people; - Communication is key: build bridges between silos.
How do you get people to come?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use a fun activity to raise awareness. E.g.: take them on a boat trip or hunting trip.
Retain young people with potential (because they can earn more money in a big city)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasize that this is their home community, and explain that they can make a difference in their community; - Trust them to reach their full potential; - Organize a job fair; - Try to raise funds to recruit young people; - Spot the passion: through different events, you can try to spot the passionate.
How to attract the attention of young people?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show visitors around the facilities; - Young people ask the best questions (children are not yet closed-minded); - Share your knowledge; - Involving young people is the future!

Subgroup on “Composting »

Marie-Christine Roussel Gray - Environmental Coordinator, Listuguj

Table 3. Summary of discussions on composting.

Challenges	Proposed solutions
How to start a composting project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the quantities of organic matter (OM) to be processed. - Identify the site. - Identify possible methods and make a choice. - Conduct interest surveys, communicate with our members to get their opinions. - Communicate with other communities to learn from each other. - Start small (pilot project) and grow. Allows us to test equipment and methods, create a buzz, and adjust as needed.
How can we encourage people to get involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold draws. - Raise awareness in schools. - Clean residents' bins to keep them clean and odor-free.

DAY 2 - WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 2023

Update on the WM initiative by Indigenous Services Canada

Isabelle Déry - Senior Environmental Advisor, Indigenous Services Canada

Isabelle Déry provided an overview of the First Nations Waste Management Initiative (hereafter, Initiative), which was renewed in 2021 for seven years, until 2028. She explained the distinction between projects funded by the Initiative and those funded by operations and maintenance (O&M). The nuts and bolts of a successful funding application were also identified. A summary is given in the table below.



[Presentation FNWM Initiative](#)

Table 4. Key ideas on funding applications

Distinctions	Explanations
Initiative VS O&M	<p>Initiative → for the implementation of waste management projects</p> <p>O&M → to support ongoing costs associated with new infrastructure and additional waste management services.</p> <p>Eligible activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waste Management Plans, studies, municipal-type service agreements, landfill sites. - Domes, redevelopment of existing spaces, small garages, or sheds*. - N.B. O&M needs must be presented in the form of a project, with activities, costs, and durations. <p>*Re-use buildings, with access to water, electricity, and heating, <u>are not funded</u>, as there is no O&M envelope for these buildings. The building's survival could not be assured.</p>
Project management fees VS Administration fees	<p>Project management fees: costs related to fees for the project manager (salary, insurance, transportation, accommodation for the project manager). Often, the mandate falls on the Council's internal employees, and they are therefore already paid from other envelopes.</p> <p>Administration fees: expenses that are difficult to quantify and not necessarily included in other project expenses. Ex: use of office space, accounting, cheque issue, etc.</p> <p>N.B. There are no administration fees in O&M, as each O&M activity is expected to be an expense in the application (e.g., gasoline).</p>
Important elements of a funding application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Context - Cost breakdown - Estimated benefits (e.g., increased health/safety in the community, information/awareness/education in schools) - Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If project with awareness-raising activities, provide narrative report with photos. o If construction of infrastructure, provide certificate of completion; o If a machine is purchased, provide the invoice. - You can submit funding applications at any time. - For projects over \$1.5 million: Project Brief

Workshop: Writing effective funding applications

Environmental Advisors Team, Indigenous Services Canada

Following Isabelle Déry's presentation, the ISC and FNQLSDI teams held a workshop on writing effective funding applications. Using a template and a role-playing situation, participants were invited to write a draft of an ideal funding application, thanks to tips and tricks from the ISC team.



[Project presentation form](#)



Figure 4. Writing workshop with an ISC advisor



Figure 5. Writing workshop with an ISC advisor.

Sharing successful stories

First Nations Environmental Contaminants Program

Anita Devadason – Program Officer, First Nations, and Inuit Health Branch, ISC

In this block focused on environmental contamination, Anita Devadason introduced the First Nations Environmental Contaminants Program (FNECP). This ISC funding aims to "identify, investigate and, where possible, reduce the impact of exposure to environmental hazards". Eligible communities must be located south of the 60th parallel, which corresponds to all First Nations and some Inuit communities in Quebec. In addition, the contaminants of interest to the FNECP include persistent organic pollutants (POPs), heavy metals and agrochemicals. Project proposals can be submitted from the end of June to the end of October 2023.

Site internet : [First Nations' Portal on Environmental Contaminants and Health](#)

Adresse courriel : fnecp-plcepn@sac-isc.gc.ca



[Presentation Contaminants Program](#)

Sharing the good deed: Mohawk Council of Kanesatake Environmental Contaminants Health and Impact Study Project

Eugene Nicholas - Director, Ratihontsanonhstats Kanesatake Environment; Isabelle-Anne Bisson, President, TerraHumana Solutions

Eugene Nicholas and Isabelle-Anne Bisson shared their success story of collaboration between Kanesatake community members, academia (McGill) and researchers. The project grew out of members' concern about the dump and the high incidence of cancer. With funding from the 2019-2024 FNCEP, a multidisciplinary team led by Eugene was formed to conduct contaminant analyses in soil, food and water, in order to identify the health risks associated with these contaminants. After sampling over 100 sites, the team concluded that 15% exceeded heavy metal guidelines (water, soil and plant samples). The project will continue until 2024 for further sampling and analysis. Thanks to this project, Kanesatake has acquired "a solid foundation to further research and catalyze efforts to better monitor, assess and remediate contaminated sites."



[Presentation Kanesatake contaminants project](#)

Infrastructures fieldtrip

Wôlinak Composting and HHW Depot

Clarisse Bernard - Project Officer, Wôlinak

At the municipal garage site, participants made their first stop at the building housing the Wôlinak community's thermophilic composter. The team from the Bureau Environnement et Terre (BET) plays a central role in the composting service: it carries out door-to-door collection from participating families and replaces each full bucket with a clean, empty one. The material is then taken to the Joracan thermophilic composter, where it is composted after a few weeks. For now, around ten families are taking part in the composting program, but BET would like to see the service expanded in the short to medium term. To publicize the initiative and increase participation, the Bureau plans to be present at community events and raise awareness of the importance of sorting organic materials.



Figure 6. Explanations in front of the composter shed.



Figure 7. HHW drop-off area, open one Sunday a month.



Figure 8. Scales, buckets and countertop bins for organics collection.



Figure 9. [Joracan thermophilic composter](#) in isolated shed.



Figure 10. [BOD group](#) bucket wash station in garage.

Odanak Ecocenter

Stéphanie Harnois - Environmental Project Manager, and Edward Coughlin - Ecocenter attendant, Odanak

Stéphanie Harnois and Edward Coughlin presented the facilities of the Odanak ecocenter, open since 2019. Several clearly identified sections enable proper sorting of end-of-life materials, such as construction, renovation and demolition (CRD) materials, electronic products, batteries, compact fluorescent tubes, 1 lb and 20 lb propane tanks, as well as organic (oils and paints) and inorganic products. An enclosed area is also dedicated to mattresses and box springs, as their metal and wood structures can be found at a recycling facility in Montreal. The Odanak Ecocentre also accepts loads of soil and excavated soil, which is sifted to recover roots, tree trunks and branches. In the reception building, there's a sheathing machine for electrical wires and cables. This acquisition enables precious metals such as copper to be sold to a scrap metal dealer. At the entrance to the site, opening hours are clearly indicated, as are other useful information for visitors.



Figure 11. Explanations on the sorting platform



Figure 12. Drop-off zone: HHW, propane tanks, electronics, and upholstered items



Figure 13 Aerial view of the Odanak ecocenter.

DAY 3 - THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2023

Raising awareness among young people to reduce GHG emissions

Fanny Jahan - Environmental Project Manager, Coop FA

Coop FA specializes in environmental education (EE) projects for schools, citizens and organizations. Fanny Jahan presented one of their projects that they carry out in some participating schools: EcoLabs. Classes wishing to participate must choose from among 10 project themes, including composting, a thrift store, school material recovery and a mini-ecocenter. At the start of the project, the Coop FA leads classroom activities to explain the links between the chosen project and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction. Students then set up a mini-company in the form of a coop, and carry out their project throughout the year. At the end, they calculate the GHGs avoided thanks to their project. Coop FA coaching is offered throughout Quebec. It is currently only available in French, but hopes to extend its audience to English-speaking schools within the next 1-2 years.



[Presentation Waste & GHG Coop FA](#)

Why and how to raise awareness: Tips and tricks from Kahnawà:ke

lotshatenawi Reed - Communications Liaison, and Holly McComber, Waste Management Director, Kahnawà:ke

lotshatenawi Reed and Holly McComber began by explaining the importance of educating our community about the sound management of waste in order to promote pride and respect for our environment, and that of future generations. To achieve this, they suggested getting involved in community events and collaborating with other sectors, an approach they apply in Kahnawà:ke. They reiterated the importance of preparing in advance, in particular through an annual calendar of events. One can also create an activity binder, which lists awareness-raising activities and the resources needed to carry them out, for each recurring event identified in our calendar.



[Presentation Kahnawake awareness](#)

Workshop: Communications plan

*lotshatenawi Reed - Communications Liaison, Kahnawà:ke;
Holly McComber, Waste Management Director, Kahnawà:ke;*

Following their presentation, lotshatenawi, Holly and Catherine Talbot asked participants to identify events planned in their community for the coming year. They were then asked to think about awareness-raising activities on the sound management of waste, and the human and material resources they would need to carry them out at these community events.

Table 5. Key ideas for a communication plan.

Activities	Ideas
Pow wow	Hold an awareness-raising booth on composting.
Fishing tournament	Install recycling bins and promote awareness of the importance of not throwing earthworms and minnows into the lake. In addition, fishing with traditional hooks could be encouraged, by proposing that participants carve their own fishing hooks and lures when they register.
Shooting competition	Collect shell casings littering the ground during the event and at the end.
Hunting season	Communicate messages about disposing of waste in the right places, not in the nature. Encourage members to leave carcasses where they were shot, and not to waste anything.
Opening of the ecocenter	Offer free food and promotional sweaters to publicize the site and its purpose.


[Calendar template](#)

[Activities template](#)

[Template – Job offer: communication liaison](#)

Training on household hazardous waste management, handling and storage

Marie Poirier, Executive Assistant and Ecocenter Manager, RIGIDBNY

An optional HHW training session by Marie Poirier was offered after the Symposium. In the coming weeks, participants will receive a certificate of attestation and a participant's workbook via their Band Council. For more information on training:

Website: [RIGIDBNY / training courses](https://rigidbny.com/training/courses)

E-mail address: info@rigidbny.com

BOOTHS

Throughout the event, two booths were available to participants.



Figure 14. Community of practice booth.

The first booth was designed to raise awareness of the **Community of Practice**, an initiative of the First Nations Regional WM Committee in Quebec, which aims to provide a platform for meetings and exchanges between First Nations WM stakeholders. The booth was also an opportunity for those not yet part of the Community of Practice to sign up.

For more information, to register or for a reminder of how the platform works, please contact us by clicking on the following link:

[Make an appointment - Marcel Rodriguez](#)



Figure 15. Interactive.map booth.

The purpose of the **Interactive Map** booth was to share information with participants to update the data for the first version of the interactive map created in 2019. This map presents the WM infrastructures and resources to contact for each community encountered during the regional portrait. An updated digital version of the map is currently under development.

Did you run out of time to tell us about a new WM project in your community? Simply send us a message including your latest achievements:

Matieresresiduelles@iddpnql.ca

ECORESPONSIBILITY

As part of our efforts to organize an eco-responsible event, we paid particular attention to the sound management of waste and greenhouse gas emissions. In both cases, participants were notified at the opening of the Symposium to make them aware of this collective effort.

Firstly, sorting stations featuring the composting, recycling and garbage streams were located at the entrance to the reception hall, as well as near the buffet. Sorting posters at both stations showed which materials were accepted and rejected in each stream.

Secondly, the mileage of each participant was requested at their reception, to calculate the carbon emissions generated by their travel. For the entire duration of the Symposium, the transportation of organizers, guests and participants generated 10.65 tonnes of CO2 equivalent. To offset these emissions, 76 trees will be planted by the end of 2023-2024.

Finally, two second-hand (reusable) 30-piece dinnerware sets were used at the event's community supper and were then offered as gifts to the host communities. One set for the Odanak community center and the second for the Wôlinak green committee.

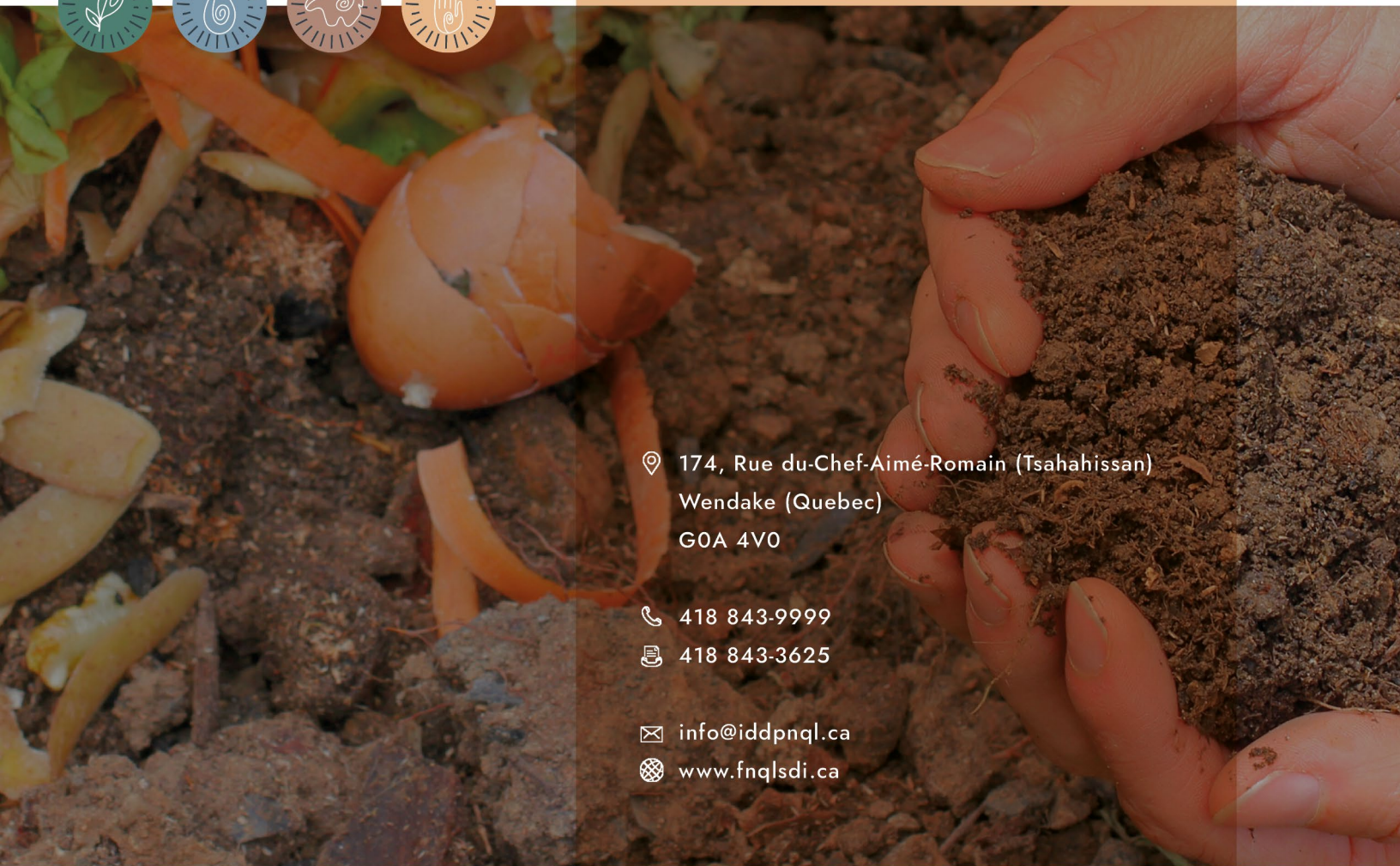
Acknowledgements

The FNQLSDI's WM sector team would like to thank everyone involved in WM in First Nations communities for coming to the Ndakina.

We hope that the gathering encouraged the sharing of experiences, capacity-building and networking among participants.

We would like to thank Stéphanie Harnois and Clarisse Bernard for their hospitality and their involvement in planning the event. Thanks to them, we were able to visit the WM infrastructures in Odanak and Wôlinak and enjoy moments of gathering and discovery of W8banaki medicinal and culinary traditions. A special thank you to Gabriel Bordeleau-Landry, who offered us his words of courage, mutual aid, and strength, as well as a traditional chant at the closing ceremony.

We hope this edition has lived up to everyone's expectations, and we look forward to seeing you at the next one!



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