

## My clean beach

### Data Interpretation

This card complements data cards 1 and 2. To make your recommendations known to the community, we suggest that you contact your local newspapers or elected officials (see the example letter and press release).

This card provides you with :

- Thoughts on how to interpret your results and make recommendations to elected officials, newspapers and users
- Illustrations of invasive plants and signs of erosion that you may encounter at your site



#### Interpreting the Debris Inventory

##### Is the debris of local origin?

*If this is the case, you could contact local businesses and inform site users about the impact their bad habits have on the environment. For example, you could display (with permission) the results of your cleanup (e.g., number of trash bags or quantities of specific types of debris) at the site entrance or on the door of a local business. You could also encourage businesses to install trash cans or ash trays.*

- Where are the users from? Do they belong to local communities or are they tourists?
- What types of people use the site? Are they hikers, cyclists, dog owners, hunters, fishermen, students, etc.?
- Are users part of an official club (e.g., an anglers' association, hunting club or birding club)?
- Are there restaurants/businesses nearby from which the debris could be coming? Can you identify a restaurant/business on the packaging?
- Are there construction sites nearby?
- Is there a marina or a port nearby?
- Is the site known for partying?
- Are festivals or special events held on the site?

##### Is the debris of foreign origin (brought in by the wind, sewers or current)?

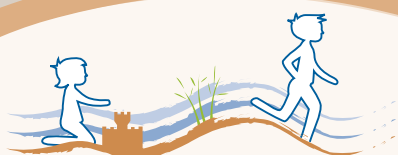
*If you believe this so, the problem is more difficult to solve since you cannot attack it directly. However, it is important to send your recommendations to your elected officials. They are the ones who can solve the problem.*

- Is your site in a bay where wind blows from far away?
- Are there sewers nearby?
- Could the debris be coming from a small river nearby?
- Could the current be carrying debris from upstream?

##### Could the debris be linked to a waste disposal problem?

*If so, contact your municipality or the site manager. You could recommend installing a trash can at a particular place. Don't forget that officials may be unaware of the problem.*

- Are there enough trash cans? Are they easy to find?
- Are there enough ash trays? Are they easy to find?
- Are the trash cans and ash trays emptied frequently enough?



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### Data Interpretation



#### Interpreting the Health Check data card

##### Is the riparian buffer zone significantly altered?

If your answer is “Yes” to any of the questions below, it is quite possible that your site’s buffer zone can no longer function effectively. Several solutions can restore it. You can plant vegetation on the rock embankment, leave uncut 15 m next to the river, or plant trees and shrubs with spreading roots. For more information (in French), visit [www.banderiveraine.com](http://www.banderiveraine.com).

- Is there a concrete wall or rock embankment?
- Are lawns the only vegetation growing near the river?
- Can you see bare ground between patches of vegetation?
- Is vegetation cut within 15 m of the shoreline?

##### Is your shoreline significantly eroded?

If your answer is “Yes” to any of the questions below, your site may be subject to severe erosion. There are several solutions that may help stop excessive erosion depending on the factor causing it. The first step is to restore the riparian buffer zone by planting trees and bushes. If the current is strong, it could be useful to install a vegetated rock embankment. On the other hand, if the problem is a steep slope, erosion can be controlled by making the slope gentler, installing wood blocks, and planting grasses, trees and shrubs. Lastly, if trampling is the problem, access to the shoreline should be restricted to less vulnerable areas, such as rocky slopes, docks and areas away from spawning grounds and marshes.

- Have you checked several signs of erosion on Data Card 2 – Health Check?
- Is the slope steep?
- What is causing erosion? Is it waves from boats, trampling by visitors or the current??

##### Is it possible to eradicate invasive species found on the site?

If you can answer “Yes” to some of the questions below then it’s still feasible to get rid of the invasive plants found on your site. Contact the watershed organization or ZIP committee in your area for assistance. They can monitor the population over the years. Indeed, it will be necessary to return to the same spot for several years to remove new shoots until no more seeds remain in the soil. If you want to remove the plants yourself, here’s what to do. First ask the owner’s permission. Then pull the plants up and burn them (or dry them out) to make sure they’re dead. Do not compost them. Make sure you pull up the whole plant since many species can propagate from cuttings.

- Are there a small number of individual plants?
- Are they concentrated in a single location?
- Are they easy to reach?

##### Have you found Japanese knotweed or water chestnut?

Both species are highly invasive and have very negative impacts on aquatic ecosystems. They aren’t yet very common in Québec, and it is crucial to eradicate them as soon as they are found. If you have seen these species, please, call a local conservation organization that will be able to monitor and control their population.

# Data Interpretation

## Identification of some erosion signs



Exposed tree roots



Bare soil near the shoreline



Vertical bank with exposed soil



Trees with horizontally scarred bark

## Identification of some invasive plant species



1 - Flowering rush



2 - Water chestnut\*



3 - Frogbit



4 - Eurasian watermilfoil



5 - Common reed



6 - Common canary reed



7 - Japanese knotweed\*



8 - Purple loosestrife

\*The water chestnut and the Japanese knotweed are highly invasive species. If you have seen these species, please, call a local conservation organization.

**Photographic credits** ( visit the [www.maproreplage.com](http://www.maproreplage.com) to see the rights attached to these pictures)

**Invasive plants** : 2,3,4 Otto Wilhelm Thomé; 5 Comité ZIP Ville Marie; 6 Mollivan Jon; 7 Michael Gasperl; 1,8 Christian Fischer.

**Erosion signs** : Louise Morin, Comité ZIP Ville Marie.