

Buile agus Eagna na Sionainne



The mighty River Shannon, flowing north to south, bisects Ireland geographically, in mind and in spirit. Many centuries ago, large numbers of us were driven west across the Shannon; yet we continue to love the river for what it is, for its bounty, its sacredness; its integrity and authenticity.

But while we may appear to love the River Shannon, we are failing to recognise its importance and vulnerability; instead we have tried to tame it, tried to confine it within artificial banks, used it for the disposal of waste, and promoted the river as a location for industry, with little or no control over potentially adverse consequences. We have also inadequately protected its unique ecosystems and habitats from the Cuilcagh Mountain to the Shannon Estuary, where the River merges with the Atlantic Ocean; and we have never developed an integrated plan for taking care of this great waterway.

The **Shannon Rights Alliance** has been born from an awareness of these problems, and our aim is to create a new approach, based on recognising and becoming more aware of the inherent **wildness** and **wisdom** of the river; as expressed in our vision and call to action:

“Buile agus Eagna na Sionainne”

A major part of our aim is to reignite peoples’ awareness of the authenticity of **Sinann** (the possessor of wisdom) as the Shannon’s mythological river deity, and to appropriately honour her.

To achieve these aims we need more than the usual systems of protection; we need to give a legal right to the River Shannon, a right no different from that afforded under our Constitution and our legal system any person or company. We ask why should

a polluting company have legal rights when the river being damaged has none? In an increasing number of countries worldwide, legal rights are now being granted to specific features of the natural environment, including mountains and rivers; and we see no reason why this should not be possible in Ireland.

To further this aim, we have lodged a formal declaration with the United Nations (see <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/building-towards-recognition-nature-rights-river-shannon>), and we are looking for your support to enable us to continue this important work.

Remember that caring for this great river has the potential to create a deep connection and powerful link between the communities which have been separated by Ireland’s internal political border; and it equally holds the potential to heal long-standing divisions and wounds in our country.

Please contact us via email or telephone