



Drinkable Rivers

In 2005, a dutch university lecturer, Li An Phoa, canoed the full length of the Rupert river in Canada. All along the way, she could drink water straight from the river. Three years later, Li An came back and found she could not drink from the Rupert anymore. The river was polluted as a result of dams and mining. Fish died, people got ill. The delicate balanced ecosystem was destroyed. Li An realised that drinkable rivers are an indicator of healthy living. Indeed, when we can drink from our rivers, it means that a whole ecosystem is healthy and in balance.

The water, the river banks, the river bed, the insects, the wildlife, the birds and butterflies... everything thrives.

Li An suggests we use drinkable rivers, as a guiding principle for our societies, as opposed to economic growth. Radical, yet easy to understand and we do it by asking this simple question - "Does this behaviour/action/policy or innovation contribute to drinkable rivers?"



Rivers support all life on earth, they are our life blood. We cannot live without water, after all we are made up of 70% water. All living beings are part of a watershed around rivers, so everyone benefits from drinkable rivers.

Li An set about creating DrinkableRivers.Org a grass roots initiative spreading drinkability of rivers as a new way to measure a truly healthy and thriving society. Teaching us all to respect, care, and love our rivers through all our daily actions.

Li An and her partner Maarten are currently walking the whole length of the Thames and started at the source near Kemble. Several of us went along to wish them well and marked the occasion with a picnic and some songs. Li An and Maarten will sample the water quality as they go and lodge overnight with locals. We were lucky enough to host them in Ashton Keynes for one night in September. Take a look at drinkablerivers.org and watch the TED talk or maybe join them on a section of the walk, the schedule is on their website.



Take the first step today by pledging to simply thank the water, every time you turn on the tap. Aren't we lucky for this gift right into our homes?

Gilly Riddington
We Are Nature

Source: drinkablerivers.org