

Lough Nillan Bog (Carrickatlieve) SAC [000165]
This large upland site of 4160ha lays just south of Glenties, in the west of the Bluestack Mts of Co Donegal. Qualifying habitats include [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) of c.2600ha (63%), and [3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*); the latter features c.11 small to medium sized lakes, many of which are surrounded by blanket bog. Main land-uses and impact activities are sheep grazing (NB over-stocking in the past), turf-cutting and commercial conifer afforestation.



LOWLAND BLANKET BOG

Areas of conifer forestry, though excluded from the SACs, have impacted the peatlands by way of the loss and fragmentation of habitats, changes to hydrology and trophic status of soils and , increasing acidity, leaching to streams, and harbouring of predators that are reducing the populations of ground-nesting birds like Curlew, Golden Plover and Dunlin



HEAVY IRON LEACHING, CARRIED AND DEPOSITED IN AN UPLAND STREAM THAT DRAINS AFFORESTED PEATLAND

Conservation Action Plans are drawn up in consultation with stakeholders. They propose actions to maintain or improve the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) habitats and features.



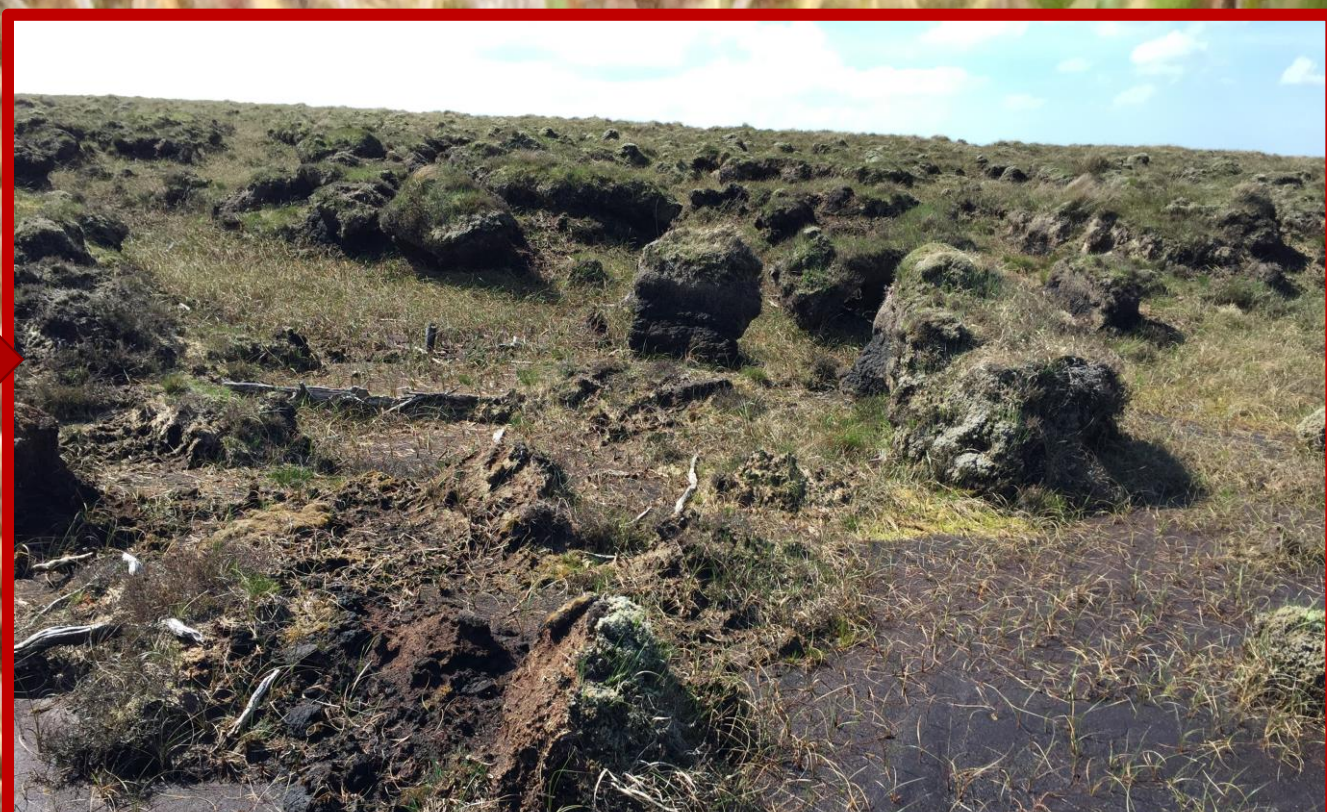
Pristine waters in upland rivers will be achieved by careful management of wetland habitats within the watershed



Water quality is indicated by the occurrence of sensitive species of aquatic flora and fauna



TRANSITION MIRE AND QUAKING BOG IS AN ANNEX I HABITAT TYPE



AREA OF DEGRADED LOWLAND BOG IS THE LEGACY OF HISTORIC OVER-STOCKING



PEAT HAGGS ON A MOUNTAIN PLATEAU . BARE PEAT IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO WEATHERING AND SHEET EROSION

Sheep grazing levels have moderated since the widespread over-stocking of the 1990s. However, there is still a legacy of degraded bog which continues to deteriorate in places due to weathering, instability and erosion; vegetation is slow to recolonise the bare peat. Recovery is progressing naturally in some situations, afforded by the respite from trampling. Continued stocking of sheep may be a barrier to recovery.



THE IMPACT OF CONCENTRATED REGULAR MOVEMENTS OF SHEEP

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ERODED BARE PEAT CAN STABILISE AND RECOVER WHEN COTTON GRASS BECOMES ESTABLISHED, SPREADING BY RHIZOMES, FOLLOWING A REDUCTION IN LIVESTOCK



Some heath, bog and upland grassland mosaics can support higher stocking levels than.....

.....sensitive basin or saddle blanket bog. Attaining the correct stocking level may require adjustments based on the overall proportions of sensitive and more robust habitat types if resorting to excessive fencing of the uplands is to be avoided.



SEVERAL MEDIUM-SIZED OLIGOTROPHIC LAKES REPRESENT ONE OF THE QUALIFYING ANNEX HABITATS IN THIS SAC. THE TARGET QUALITY OF THESE LAKES IS CLOSELY LINKED TO CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT IN RELATION TO STOCKING LEVELS AND OTHER POTENTIALLY DAMAGING ACTIVITIES



WET, DEEP PEAT BLANKET BOG CONTAINING DYSTROPHIC POOL SYSTEMS OCCURS AS BOTH UPLAND AND LOWLAND BOG TYPES