SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: CLOONSNAGHTA LOUGH

SITE CODE: 001004

This site is situated in Co. Clare, 3 km north-west of Killadydysert. It lies in gently undulating terrain and is separated from the adjacent Gortglass Lake by a glacial ridge. The lake is surrounded by patches of blanket bog, acid grassland with some gorse and willow scrub.

Open water is the largest component of the site and because of the historical presence of Arctic Char (*Salvelinus alpinus*), is also one of the most important habitats. Aquatic plants include Quillwort (*Isoetes lacustris*), Water Lobelia (*Lobelia dortmanna*), Shoreweed (*Littorella uniflora*), with White Water-lily (*Nymphaea alba*) in deeper water.

Patches of blanket bog are present around the lake. These are small, individually not more than 2ha. In addition to a number of *Sphagnum* species, other plants include Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cross-Leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*) and Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*).

Wet grassland makes up almost 50% of the total site area. Noteworthy here is the presence of Hard Rush (*Juncus inflexus*) growing in this acid grassland.

Other habitats include willow and gorse (*Ulex* spp.) scrub with some Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*).

The basic interest of this lake is the presence of Arctic Char, which have been recorded from Cloonsnaghta Lough in 1972. No recent survey has been undertaken and its current status is uncertain. This species is listed in the Irish Red Data Book as threatened in Ireland.

The site is important primarily for its population of Arctic Char, a species that is listed in the Irish Red Data Book.

16.11.2009