

**Site Name: Meenaguse Scragh SAC**

**Site Code: 001880**

Meenaguse Scragh SAC, located 10 km south-west of Glenties in Co. Donegal, encompasses the catchment area of Lough Anarget, including the slopes and summits of Silver Hill, Binnacally and Lavagh Beg in its northern half. It is bounded to the south by a line of cliffs. The underlying rock is of Lough Eske psammites.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (\* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

[4010] Wet Heath
------------------

In the centre of this site is Lough Anarget, which has become overgrown by an extensive floating scragh composed of bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp, including *S. recurvum*). Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*) grows through the *Sphagnum* lawns in abundance. The scragh is surrounded on three sides by high mountains covered in acid grassland and wet heath.

The heath has species such as Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Heath Rush (*Juncus squarrosus*), Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), Heath Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*) and Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*). Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) occurs in small quantities. The acid grassland is dominated by Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and Mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*).

Blanket bog remnants occurs on the lower slopes and valley bottom, adjacent to the scragh, and supports Heather and hummocks of the moss *Racomitrium lanuginosum*. In the wetter areas, lawns of *Sphagnum* occur with species such as *S. recurvum*, *S. palustre* and *S. capillifolium*.

Peregrine are known from the site, and this species is listed in Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. The Red Data Book species Common Frog and Irish Hare are also found here.

The main land use is sheep grazing. The site is vulnerable to over-grazing which could lead to a reduction in species diversity, a rise in the trophic status of the wetlands on the site, and to erosion of the blanket bog. Much of the blanket bog and upland sections of the site are presently badly eroded.

The site is of particular importance for the presence of wet heath, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive, and is of interest for the well-developed scragh vegetation found at Lough Anarget.