

## DONEGAL - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Aillte Shliabh Liag</b>
Other names used for site	Slieve League Cliffs, <i>Sliabh Liag</i> , Slieve Leag
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH13 Coastal Geomorphology; IGH7 Quaternary</b>
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Ballymore, Cappagh, Croaghlin, Malin Beg, Shanbally</b>
<b>NEAREST TOWN</b>	<b>Carrick</b>
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>89, 90, 96</b>
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	<b>555177E, 877363N</b>
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER: 10</b>	<b>GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NOS. 3, 4</b>
<b>GIS Code DL041</b>	

### Outline Site Description

Slieve League comprises spectacular coastal cliff scenery, which is generally inaccessible, except for the viewing platform in the Bunglass public car park at the southern end of the cliffs.

### Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The cliffs have developed over the past 100,000 years, during and since the last ice age. The bedrock is Dalradian in age, with the primary rock type being thinly-bedded basal Slieve Tooley Quartzite Formation. Quartzites and gneisses of the Slieve League Formation occur at the base.

### Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Slieve League is a megacliff, with steep slopes in quartzite, rising almost 590 m above the sea.

There has been slumping on the seaward slope, and marine erosion has played only a small part in the shaping of the coastal profile, even though there is exposure to high-energy Atlantic waves.

There is also complex mass wasting with much of the steep (up to 60°) upper slopes covered with scree deposits. The scree slopes have residual buttresses of quartzite up to 12 m high that descend to vertical cliffs up to 200 m high, claimed locally to be the highest sea cliffs in Europe. The coastal slope is dominantly formed of four separate corrie walls shaped by glacial and periglacial action, which were invaded by the sea in Holocene times and then basally trimmed.

The steep slopes rise to One Man's Pass, a narrow ridge descending east of Slieve League, which is an arête with a north-facing corrie above Lough Agh.

The remainder of the site is predominantly covered with blanket bog. In places, deep erosion channels in the peat expose the full peat profile.

### Site Importance – County Geological Site; may be recommended as Geological NHA

The site is an important, internationally known, coastal feature associated with County Donegal. Landfall of the International Appalachian Trail (IAT) in Ireland has been designated as Slieve League. The area is designated as an SAC and proposed NHA (000189).

### Management/promotion issues

The site is generally well-managed and accessible by two well-maintained roads and footpaths, one leading to the Bunglass car park and the other giving access to the peaks for hill-walkers. The Bunglass viewing platform, with its information panel and partial boardwalk, offers an excellent view of the cliff features. However, significant peat erosion has been observed on and around pathways. A further threat may come from recreational or work-related quad biking. Leaflets detailing the corries on and around the mountain would be beneficial, as there are six corries in total, four of which have been inundated by the sea. Further promotion could be via the Bunglass information panel.



The Slieve League cliffs, viewed from the viewing point to the south.



The Slieve League cliffs, viewed from the sea.



