

KERRY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Cummeenduff Glen
Other names used for site	The Black Valley, <i>Com Uí Dhuibh</i>
IGH THEME	IGH7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Bunbinnia, Cloghernooch, Cockow, Derrygarraiv, Dromluska, Eskwacruttia,
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Killarney
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	73, 83
ITM CO-ORDINATES	482930E 581280N
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER	78
GSi BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.	20
GIS CODE	KY041

Outline Site Description

A deep, U-shaped valley with a series of lakes.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The bedrock in Cummeenduff Glen comprises chloritic sandstones and siltstones of the Devonian (355–410 million years old) St. Finan's Sandstone Formation. At the northeastern end of the glen, this formation passes into the Glenflesk Chloritic Sandstone Formation, its lateral equivalent. The glen itself is of Quaternary Period age, formed during the last Ice Age.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Cummeenduff Glen is a U-shaped valley, formed by the action of a glacier that formed in the Kerry Mountains during the last Ice Age. The glacier developed on the southeast flank of Broaghnbinnia Mountain, initially scooping out a corrie or cirque before extending northeastwards to form the valley. The valley is almost 3 km long and its floor is between 300 and 600 m wide. Much of the valley floor is occupied by Cummeenduff Lough. The corrie at the head of the valley hosts Lough Duff. Both lakes, as well Lough Reagh, lie along the Gearhameen River, which flows northeastwards from Cummeenduff Glen towards the Upper Lake of Killarney.

The walls of the valley are largely bare, apart from some recent forestry plantations on the northern side, and they display rugged topography typical of ice scoured landscapes. Along the valley floor, rock exposures have been moulded into *roches moutonnées*, lying parallel to the long axis of the valley.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

Cummeenduff Glen is a fine example of a U-shaped glacial valley, displaying the various features associated with an ice-scoured landscape. The corrie at the head of the valley is evidence of the initial formation of the glacier on the southern flank of Broaghnbinnia Mountain.

Management/promotion issues

Cummeenduff Glen is a relatively remote, largely unspoiled valley on the southern side of the Macgillycuddy's Reeks. There are several small farms within the valley as well as some holiday cottages. A narrow, paved road runs along the south side of the glen, skirting Cummeenduff Lough. The valley is largely within the Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC and proposed NHA (site code 00365). Its geological features of interest are large-scale glacial features that are within the SAC/pNHA boundaries and therefore do not require further protection or promotion.



View east along Cummeenduff Glen from road below the head of the glen.



Western end of Cummeenduff Glen, view toward the Lough Reagh corrie. The waterfall visible in the centre of the photograph is immediately below the lake, and on the Gearhameen River, which flows northeastwards along the floor of the glen.



View of Brassel Mountain on north side of glen, showing ice-scoured hillside, with roches moutonnées visible on valley floor.

Gallagher et al., 2026. Geological Survey Ireland.

