

Press Release

Gormley confirms end of derogation allowing turf-cutting on limited number of bogs

Less than 5% of peatlands will be affected.

The Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local, John Gormley, T.D., following a Government decision, has confirmed that the derogation granted in 1999 to allow a continuation of non-commercial turf-cutting has ended for 31* raised bog Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Further turf-cutting or associated drainage works on these sites cannot proceed without the express consent of the Minister. It is estimated that about 750 people have been harvesting turf from these bogs in recent years.

Similar derogations will end for a further 24 SACs at the end of 2011 and for 75 Natural Heritage Areas at the end of 2013. In total, these sites make up less than 5% of peatlands in the State where turf-cutting is feasible. The remaining 95% of peatlands will be unaffected. Cutting on blanket bog Special Areas of Conservation which occur predominately on the western seaboard, will be allowed to continue under the restrictions introduced in 1999.

These raised bogs contain rare and threatened natural habitat that is protected under National and European law. They are on sites that are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs). Turf-cutting and associated drainage damage the bogs and the continuation of these activities is incompatible with their preservation.

The Minister also announced that his Department will provide interim funding to address the immediate needs of those who have been relying on these bogs to source their fuel. The scheme will offer an interim financial contribution towards the fuel costs of affected turf-cutters for next winter.

The Minister said his Department will be writing to affected parties in the 31 raised bog sites in the coming days providing the details of the interim compensation scheme. In addition work has begun on identifying alternative and suitable turbary rights for the affected parties, where appropriate and available.

The Government has requested the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of the Attorney General to undertake further work in regard to how the interests of affected parties can be addressed in the longer term.

The Minister has also announced the closure, for the time being, of the Voluntary Bog Purchase Scheme to new applicants but confirmed that applications currently with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government or Office of the Chief State Solicitors Office would be progressed.

Minister Gormley stated that it was important that the needs of affected turf-cutters be addressed in a satisfactory way. “The Government has considered certain recommendations and options presented by the Inter-Departmental Working Group. The issues raised are complex and require some further consideration. We have to meet the needs of affected parties in a positive way and ensure that we put in place measures to help them meet their current and future energy needs.”

Raised bogs have almost vanished due to land reclamation, drainage and turf extraction. The sites affected by these restrictions are among the best examples of the tiny portion of what is left in Europe. The scientific advice to the Government is clear, continued turf-extraction and conservation of these sites are incompatible. The legal advice is also clear, the Government has no option but to ensure that the required protection is given to these sites by firstly ending the damage that is being caused by turf-cutting and associated drainage and then ensuring that these sites are restored. It is also clear, however, that a number of people rely on these bogs for their fuel needs and the Government intends to find the most appropriate way of meeting these needs. The interim fund aims to address their fuel needs for this winter as the details of longer-term arrangements are finalised.

Inter-departmental Group

In 2009 the Minister announced the establishment of a working group to examine and report on issues involved in halting the damage to these sites being caused by turf-cutting and undertaking the restoration of these bogs. This Group reported back to the Minister recently, after having consulted with interested parties, on costs of implementation, possible sources of funding and on the administration of the ending of the derogation and restoration of these bogs. The Working Group was made up of officials from relevant Government Departments, Offices and Agencies.

Bogs Contribute to Carbon Reduction, Reduced Flooding and Water Quality

The Minister added that intact bogland is a valuable long term resource as a carbon sink and a defence against flooding. “Active or growing bogs take carbon from the atmosphere and store it. Restoring these bogs will be positive in terms of climate change mitigation”. Intact bogs also serve as reservoirs for water and help to mitigate against flooding.

* Previous statements had indicated that 32 sites would be affected this year. Lough Ree SAC was originally designated in 1997. However it was only designated for the protection of raised bog in 2002 when a large area of raised bog was added to the site. The derogation for this site therefore ends next year.

SAC 1997 - 1999 – Raised Bog Derogation now ended				
No #	Year	Site Code	Site Name	County
1	1997	000006	Killyconny Bog (Cloghbally)	Cavan/Meath
2	1997	000231	Barroughter Bog	Galway
3	1997	000248	Cloonmoylan Bog	Galway
4	1997	000285	Kilsallagh Bog	Galway
5	1997	000296	Lisnageeragh Bog and Ballinstack Turlough	Galway
6	1997	000301	Lough Lurteen Bog/ Glenamaddy Turlough	Galway
7	1997	000326	Shankill West Bog	Galway
8	1997	000382	Sheheree (Ardagh) Bog	Kerry
9	1997	000391	Ballynafagh Bog	Kildare
10	1997	000457	Derrynabrock Bog	Mayo/Roscommon
11	1997	000497	Flughany Bog	Mayo/Sligo
12	1997	000547	Tawnaghbeg Bog	Mayo
13	1997	000566	All Saints Bog and Esker	Offaly
14	1997	000572	Clara Bog	Offaly
15	1997	000575	Ferbane Bog	Offaly
16	1997	000580	Mongan Bog	Offaly
17	1997	000581	Moyclare Bog	Offaly
18	1997	000582	Raheenmore Bog	Offaly
19	1997	000585	Sharavogue Bog	Offaly
20	1997	000592	Bellanagare Bog	Roscommon
21	1997	000597	Carrowbehy/Caher Bog	Roscommon
22	1997	000600	Cloonchambers Bog	Roscommon
23	1997	000604	Derrinea Bog	Roscommon
24	1997	000614	Cloonshanville Bog	Roscommon
25	1997	000641	Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog	Tipperary
26	1997	000647	Kilcarren-Firville Bog	Tipperary
27	1997	000679	Garriskil Bog	Westmeath
28	1997	001242	Carrownagappul Bog	Galway
29	1997	001818	Lough Forbes Complex	Longford/Ros
30	1997	002110	Corliskea/Trien/Cloonfelliv Bog	Galway/Ros
31	1999	000297	Lough Corrib	Galway/Mayo

SAC 2002 – Raised Bog Derogation ends in 2011				
No #	Year	Site Code	Site Name	County
32	1997 2002	000440	Lough Ree	Ros/LD/WM
33	2002	000595	Callow Bog	Roscommon
34	2002	002298	River Moy	Mayo/Ros/Sligo
35	2002	002331	Mouds Bog	Kildare
36	2002	002332	Coolrain Bog	Laois
37	2002	002333	Knockacoller Bog	Laois
38	2002	002336	Carn Park Bog	Westmeath
39	2002	002337	Crosswood Bog	Westmeath
40	2002	002338	Drumalough Bog	Roscommon
41	2002	002339	Ballynamona Bog and Corkip Lough	Roscommon
42	2002	002340	Moneybeg and Clareisland Bogs	Meath/Westmeath
43	2002	002341	Ardagullion Bog	Longford
44	2002	002342	Mount Hevey Bog	Meath/Westmeath
45	2002	002343	Tullaher Lough and Bog	Clare
46	2002	002346	Brown Bog	Longford
47	2002	002347	Camderry Bog	Galway
48	2002	002348	Clooneen Bog	Longford
49	2002	002349	Corbo Bog	Roscommon
50	2002	002350	Curraglehanagh Bog	Galway
51	2002	002351	Moanveanlagh Bog	Kerry
52	2002	002352	Monivea Bog	Galway
53	2002	002353	Redwood Bog	Tipperary
54	2002	002354	Tullaghanrock Bog	Roscommon
55	2002	002356	Ardgraique Bog	Galway

**Raised Bog NHA
Derogation ends
in 2013**

County	Site Code	SITE NAME
Cavan	000985	LOUGH KINALE AND DERRAGH LOUGH NHA
Clare	000337	DOON LOUGH NHA
Clare	000993	AYLE LOWER BOG NHA
Clare	001020	LOUGHANILLOON BOG NHA
Clare	002307	CLOONLOUM MORE BOG NHA
Galway	000220	LOUGH NAMUCKA BOG NHA
Galway	000221	MOORFIELD BOG/FARM COTTAGE NHA
Galway	000229	BALLYGAR BOG NHA
Galway	000235	BRACKLAGH BOG NHA
Galway	000245	CLOONCULLAUN BOG NHA
Galway	000247	SLIEVE BOG NHA
Galway	000249	CLOONOLISH BOG NHA
Galway	000254	CRIT ISLAND WEST NHA
Galway	000267	FUNSHIN BOG NHA
Galway	000280	CASTLE FFRENCH WEST BOG NHA
Galway	000281	KEELOGES BOG NHA
Galway	000283	KILMORE BOG NHA
Galway	000284	KILNABORRIS BOG NHA
Galway	000292	LEAHA BOG NHA
Galway	000307	LOUGH TEE BOG NHA
Galway	000310	MENEEN BOG NHA
Galway	000321	RAFORD RIVER BOG NHA
Galway	001227	AUGHRIM BOG NHA
Galway	001240	CAPIRA/DERREW BOG NHA
Galway	001244	CASTLE FFRENCH EAST BOG NHA
Galway	001254	DERRINLOUGH BOG NHA
Galway	001255	DERRYNAGRAN BOG AND ESKER NHA
Galway	001264	ESKERBOY BOG NHA
Galway	001280	KILLACLOGHER BOG NHA
Galway	001283	KILLURE BOG NHA
Galway	001303	MOORFIELD BOG NHA
Galway	002344	ANNAGHBEG BOG NHA
Galway/Ros	000222	SUCK RIVER CALLOWS NHA
Kerry	000333	ANNA MORE BOG NHA
Kerry	001352	BUNNARUDDEE BOG NHA
Kildare	001388	CARBURY BOG NHA
Kildare	001393	HODGESTOWN BOG NHA

Laois	002357	CLONREHER BOG NHA
Laois/Tipperary	000652	MONAINCHA BOG/ ballaghmore
Leitrim	000691	RINN RIVER NHA
Leitrim	001405	CASHEL BOG (LEITRIM) NHA
Leitrim/Longford	000422	AGHNAMONA BOG NHA
Leitrim	001420	CORRACRAMPH BOG NHA
Leitrim	001423	CLOONAGEEHER BOG NHA
Leitrim/Longford	000694	WOODDOWN BOG NHA
Longford	001448	FORTHILL BOG NHA
Longford	001450	MOUNT JESSOP BOG NHA
Meath	001324	JAMESTOWN BOG NHA
Meath	001580	GIRLEY BOG NHA
Meath	001582	MOLERICK BOG NHA
Offaly	000570	BLACK CASTLE BOG NHA
Offaly	000921	SCREGGAN BOG NHA
Offaly	002033	DAINGEAN BOG NHA
Offaly	002355	HAWKSWOOD BOG NHA
Offaly/Tipp	000564	RIVER LITTLE BROSNA CALLOWS NHA
Offaly/Tipp	000890	CANGORT BOG NHA
Offaly/Wmeath	000565	CLONYDONNIN BOG NHA
Roscommon	000591	BELLA BRIDGE BOG NHA
Roscommon	000603	CORNAVEAGH BOG NHA
Roscommon	000605	DERRYCANAN BOG NHA
Roscommon	001623	CARRICKYNAGHTAN BOG NHA
Roscommon	001652	TULLAGHAN BOG (ROSCOMMON) NHA
Roscommon	002072	LISNANARRIAGH BOG NHA
Tipperary	000640	ARRAGH MORE BOG NHA
Tipperary	000642	BALLYMACEGAN BOG NHA
Tipperary	000648	KILLEEN BOG NHA
Tipperary	000937	SCOHABOY BOG NHA
Tipperary	001684	LORRHA BOG NHA
Tipperary	001853	NORE VALLEY BOGS NHA
Westmeath	000674	BALLYNAGRENIA AND ballinderry
Westmeath	000677	CLONCROW BOG (NEW FOREST) NHA
Westmeath	000684	LOUGH DERRAVARAGH NHA
Westmeath	001725	NURE BOG NHA
Westmeath	001812	LOUGH GARR NHA
Westmeath	002323	MILLTOWNPASS BOG NHA