

## Reasons for designation as a Special Area of Conservation

Area name: **Slieve Gullion**

Administrative area: **Armagh**

Component ASSI: **Slieve Gullion**

This area has been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because it contains habitat types and/or species which are rare or threatened within a European context. The ASSI citation describes the special interests for which the site was notified in the Northern Ireland context. The interests for which the site was selected as ASSI may differ from the interests selected in a European context.

The habitats and/or species for which this area has been designated as a SAC are listed below. The reasons for their selection are listed, together with a brief description of the habitats and species as they typically occur across the UK. This area contains the interests described although it may not contain all the typical features.

### European interest(s):

#### 1. European dry heaths

- **for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.**

Dry heaths. These are heaths found on free-draining generally acidic soils such as sands or gravels which are poor in nutrients and occur both in the lowlands and the uplands. They are dominated by dwarf-shrubs of the heather family, most commonly heather *Calluna vulgaris*. There are several types of heath which are distinguished by the plants they support, such as bell heather *Erica cinerea*, bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*, crowberry *Empetrum nigrum*, bearberry *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* and western gorse *Ulex gallii*.

### The Register of European Sites in Northern Ireland

Register reference number: UK0030277

Date of Registration 30 March 2007

Signed by: G R Seymour

on behalf of the Department of the Environment