

## CITATION

**LOCH AWE AND LOCH AILSH  
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**  
Highland (Sutherland)

Site code: 1710

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NC 246153 and  
NC 315110

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 15  
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 439 (Loch Awe)  
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 440 (Loch Ailsh)

AREA: 146.02 hectares

## NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

**Biological: Birds: Black-throated diver *Gavia arctica***

## DESCRIPTION

Loch Awe and Loch Ailsh Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) comprises two lochs, located about 8km apart, near Ledmore junction in the west of Sutherland. Loch Awe is situated in open upland terrain and is a shallow loch with a relatively diverse range of aquatic vegetation. Loch Ailsh is a shallow, nutrient-poor loch, almost completely surrounded by commercial forestry which was planted in the 1980s.

Loch Awe and Loch Ailsh each regularly support a pair of nesting black-throated diver *Gavia arctica*. These two pairs represent over 1% of the British breeding population and are therefore of national importance.

## NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1981 Act: 10 December 1999

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 29 January 2009

## REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 146.03ha).

Loch Awe and Loch Ailsh SSSI is part of Inverpolly, Loch Urigill and Nearby Lochs Special Protection Area (SPA) designated for black-throated diver (*Gavia arctica*).

Part of Loch Awe and Loch Ailsh SSSI overlaps part of the River Oykel Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated for the European species Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) and freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*).