

# The Peatlands of Ireland

Peatlands cover 16.2% of the land mass of the island of Ireland and 17.2% of the area of the Republic of Ireland. This percentage is only exceeded in global terms by 3 countries: Finland, Canada and Indonesia.

Undrained peat consists of 95% water and 5% solids material. The solids are composed of the partly decayed remains of a variety of plants. The plant remains include roots, stems, leaves, flowers and seeds. In some locations the solids material is made up of a mixture of partly decayed remains of plants and trees. In such cases the residue of trunks and root of trees such as yew, oak, pine and birch are found.

Peatlands (or boglands) are areas where peat accumulates over hundreds, or thousands, of years and where depths are at least 45cm. However, in the vast majority of instances, their depths range between 2m and 12m.



*One of Bord na Móna's famous bog trains transferring peat*

Peatlands are a very important part of the history, culture and economy of Ireland. These vast areas of land are amongst our greatest natural assets and their uniqueness can be compared to the semi-tropical and tropical rainforests in a number of remote regions in the world.