

# Water Situation Report

8<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## HEADLINE

**Orkney is now at Moderate Scarcity.**

**Irvine and Ayr have improved to Alert level.**

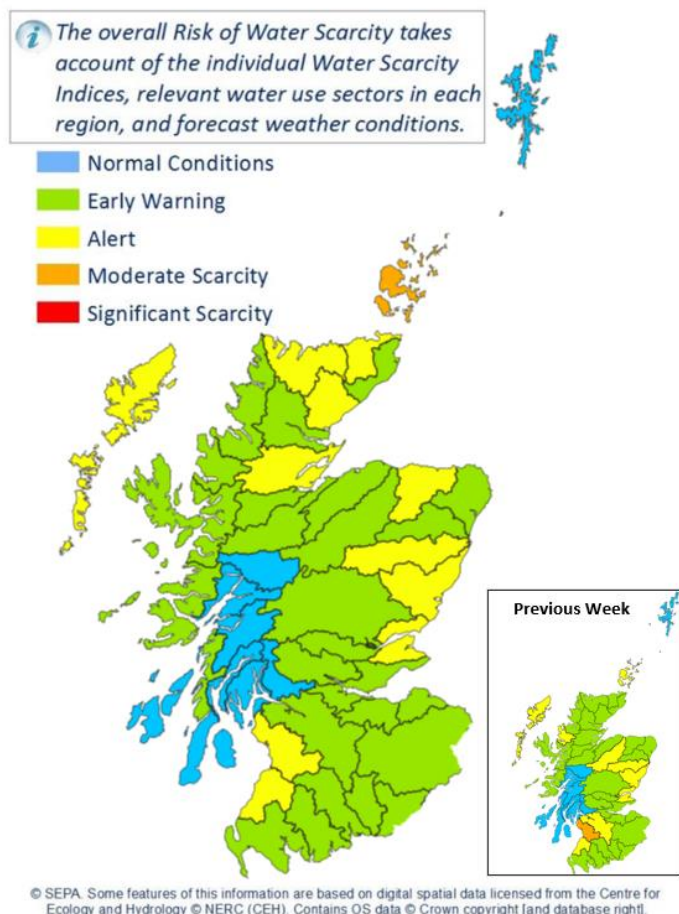
**New Alerts have been placed over areas of north, north-east and south-west Scotland.**

**Early Warning is in place over the majority of the country.**

## Situation Summary

With heavy showers across some parts of the country last week, some river levels and ground conditions have temporarily recovered. Most notably in Irvine and Ayr where water scarcity level has now been improved from Moderate to Alert. The Alerts for the Clyde and Spey catchments, and the Loch Maree area, have also been downgraded to Early Warning.

However, June has received well below average rainfall across the country. Although river levels in some areas have recovered in the short term, ground conditions remain widely dry,



and further periods of dry weather may cause conditions to deteriorate rapidly.

Continuing dry ground conditions and local impacts have led to a Moderate Scarcity in Orkney. New alerts have also been placed over some areas in the north and north-east of the country. Rainfall is forecast for the north-east over the next week, but there is very low certainty over amounts and exact locations.

Groundwater levels are falling as normal for the summer but so far remain within the normal range for the time of year.

SEPA is monitoring the situation closely and coordinating steps to manage water resources in line with Scotland's National Water Scarcity Plan which is available on SEPA's website: <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/water-scarcity/>.

## Advice for water users

Water sources used for irrigating farm land are at risk of becoming limited in the Alert and Moderate areas. We are urging farmers in these areas, especially if taking water from burns and small rivers, to:

- Only irrigate when, and only as much as, absolutely necessary;
- Make sure irrigation equipment isn't leaking.
- Try to irrigate at night to reduce evaporation losses.
- Explore how you and your neighbours in the same river catchment could avoid irrigating at the same time.
- Consider whether you could switch to using groundwater rather than river water if conditions worsen. If you would need a new borehole to do this, your local SEPA office will be able to help and advise.

Managers of golf courses are asked to do the same.

For the most up to date advice please see: [Advice for abstractors](#).

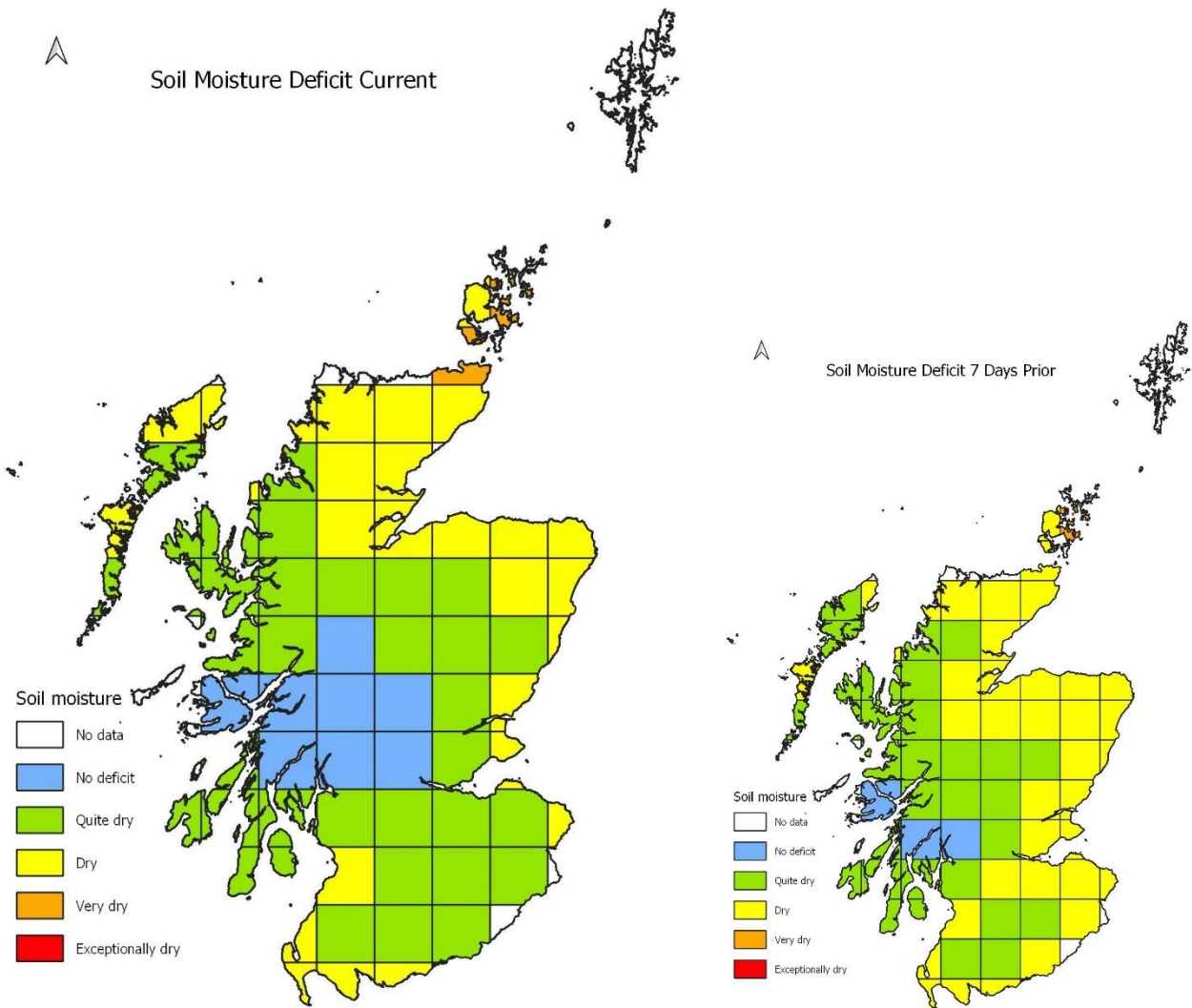
Water abstractors with concerns about meeting licence conditions or wishing to discuss contingency measures should get in touch at the following e-mail address [water scarcity mailbox](#).

### **Weather forecast (07/07/21)**

Scattered showers are forecast on Friday, with more widespread heavier showers Saturday and Sunday, with perhaps some longer spells of rain on Sunday.

The longer-term forecast suggests that, for the UK, there is an increased likelihood of hot, dry weather compared to normal, with a greater chance of impacts from hot weather than normal.

**Further details are available in the following figures:**



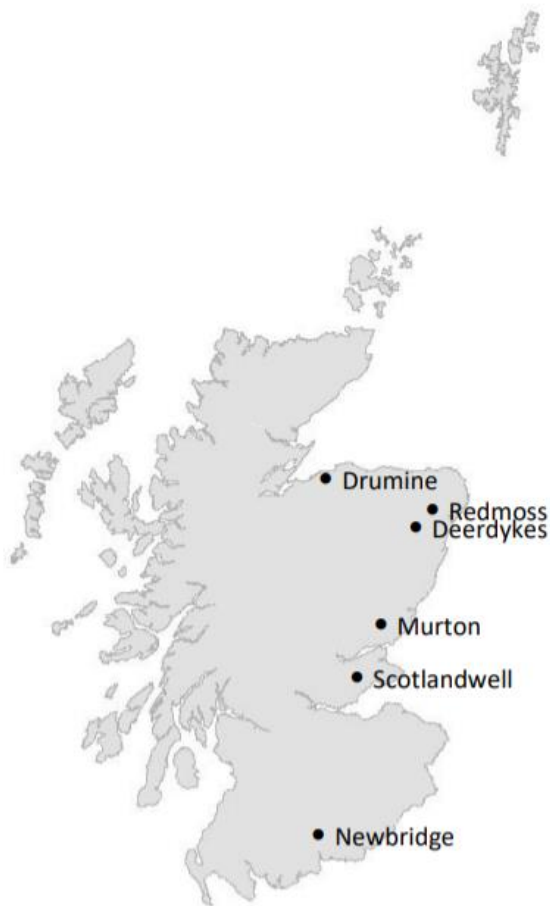
**These maps depict the current latest Soil Moisture Deficit (6<sup>th</sup> July 2021) and 7 days prior for comparison. Based on the MORECS data obtained from the Met Office.**



## Natural water storage situation

In each river catchment there is some degree of water storage, which can maintain river flows even when it is not raining. This natural water storage is mainly held in lochs and groundwater. When natural storage has been depleted it will take a lot of rainfall for levels to recover.

6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

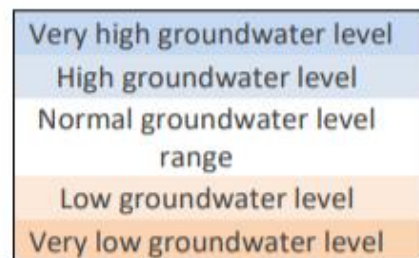


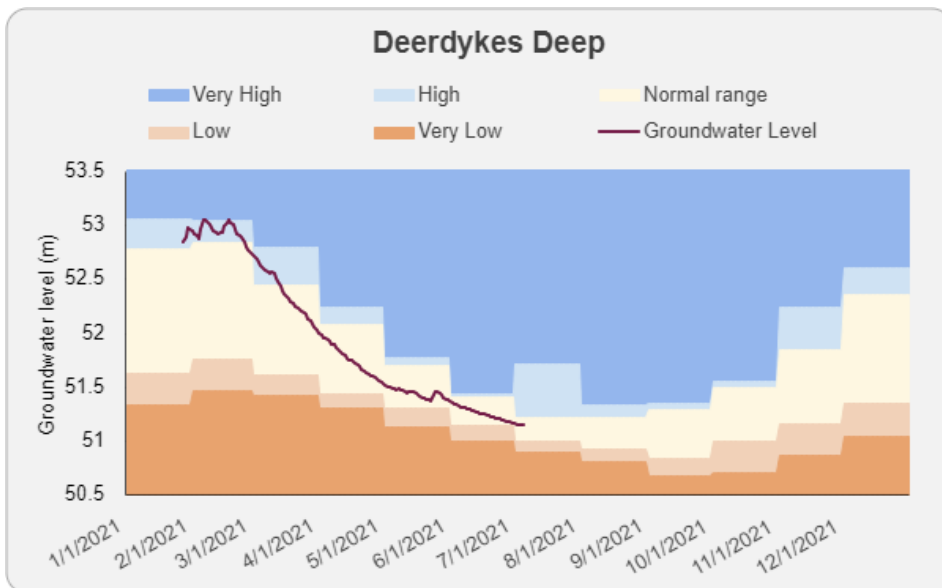
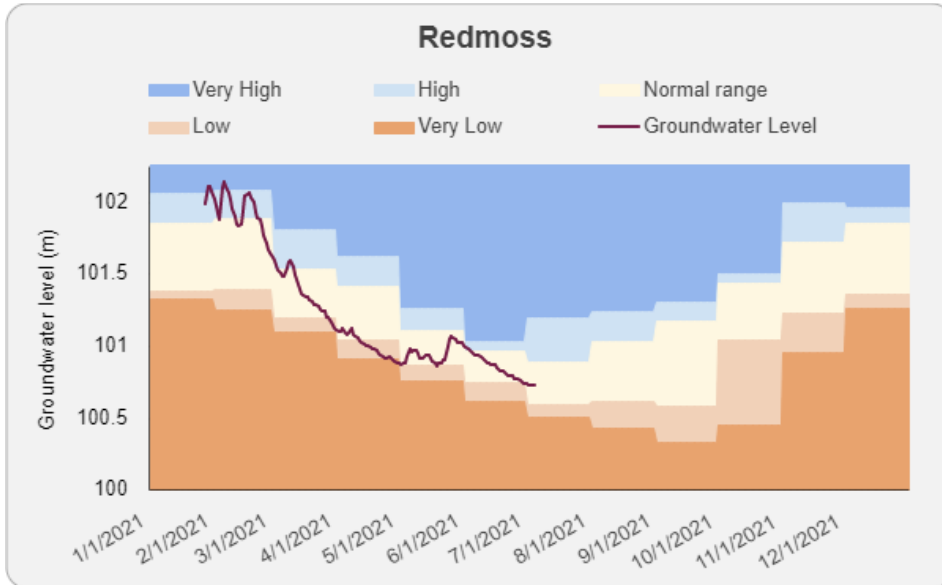
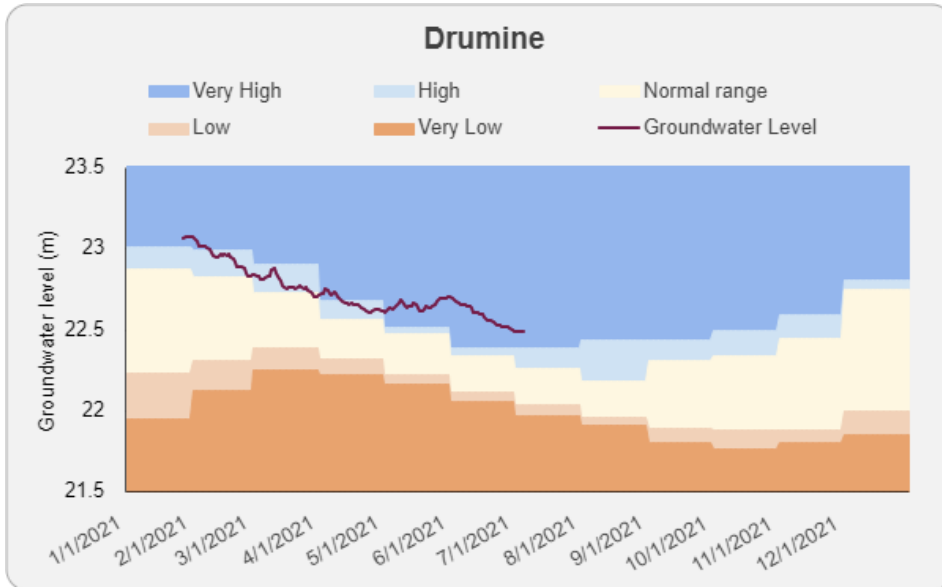
Groundwater levels are still all within the normal or high range for the time of year.

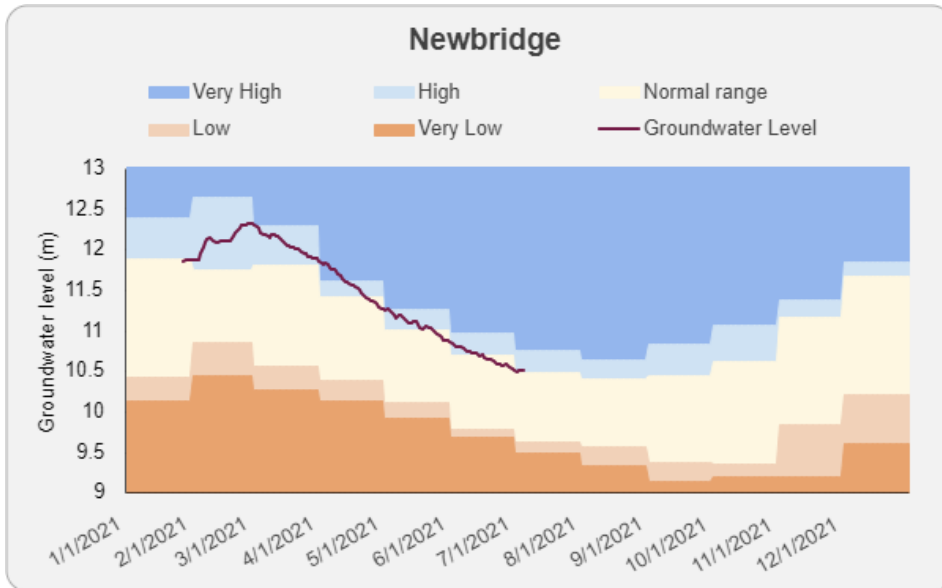
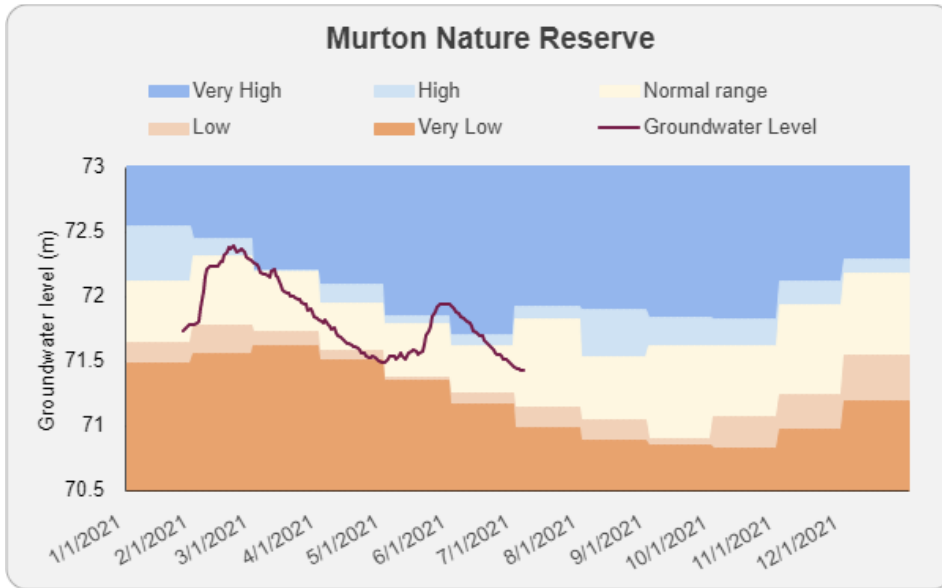
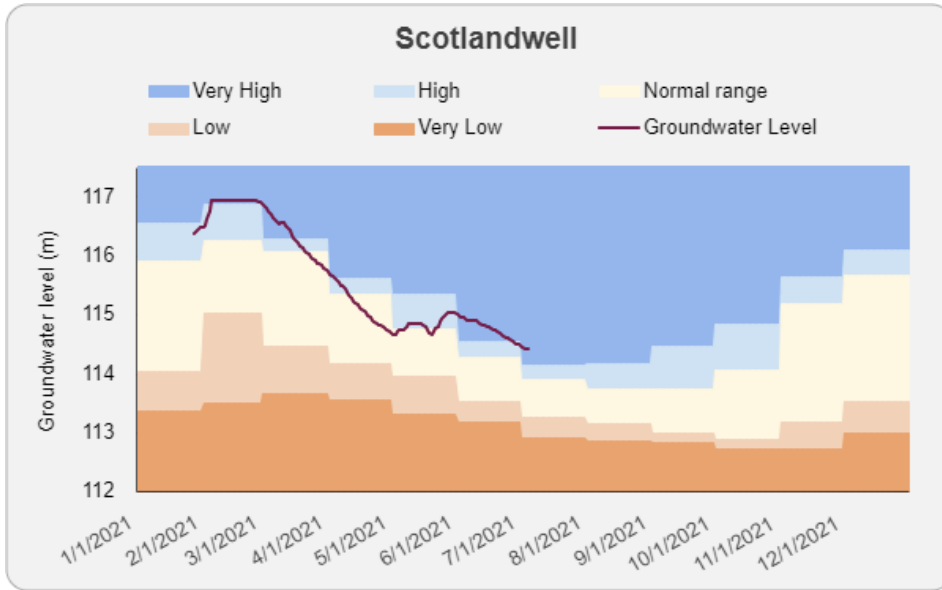
We have up to date data for 11 groundwater level monitoring sites, spread across the east and south-west of the country, giving a good picture of the current situation.

Loch level data is not currently available.

The following charts show the trend in groundwater level (GWL) since start of the year at selected monitoring sites (see map above). The black line shows the recorded groundwater level. This is plotted over level trend bands, which are based on the long-term record of mean monthly level values.







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Strathallan House, Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4TZ