

## HEADLINE

**Moderate Scarcity is in place in Argyll, the Western Isles, and the north-west of the country.**

**An Alert remains in place of a risk of water scarcity everywhere else except the Northern Isles and south Scotland, which have an Early Warning in place.**

## Situation summary

River levels are still extremely low in north-west catchments. Evidence of environmental impacts and impacts on private water supplies have been reported and therefore a Moderate Scarcity level has been set for this area.

Ground conditions have continued to dry out across the country. Groundwater levels are very low for this time of year at most monitoring locations along the east coast. As groundwater normally sustains river flow during periods of dry weather, any subsequent period of low rainfall will likely result in very low river levels across this region. Therefore, the Alert level is in place and has been extended to a large part of the country in order to reflect the risk ahead.

Southern catchments may have higher resilience as groundwater levels are relatively normal for the time of year and may sustain river habitats longer.

Showers forecast across the country could cause a short-lived rise in river levels, but the amount of rainfall expected is unlikely to be sufficient to resolve the underlying water storage deficit.

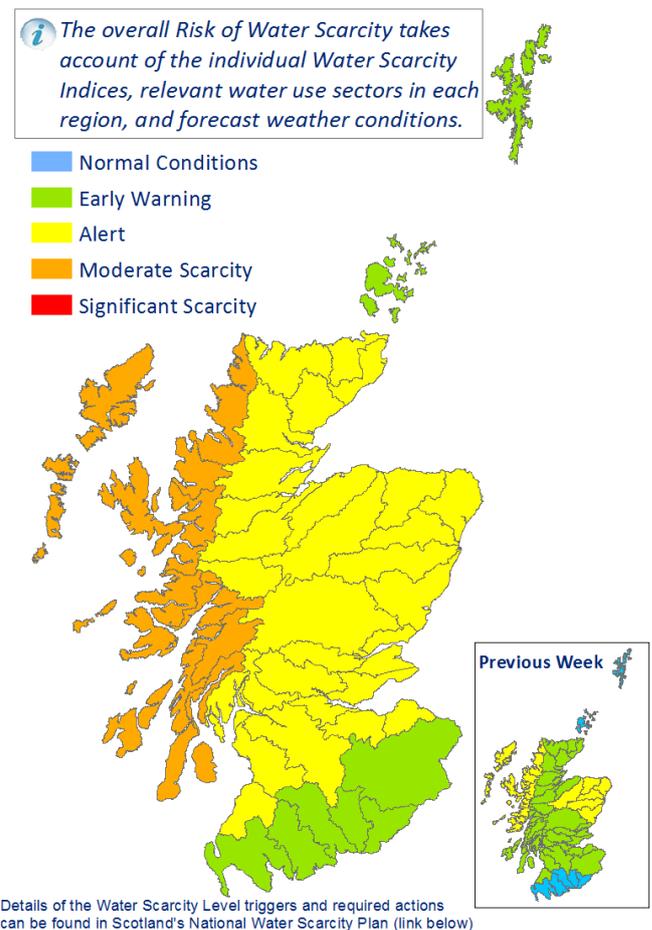
## Advice for water users

Water sources used for irrigating farm land are at risk of becoming limited in all areas of Scotland, with the exception of the south region. 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;

Managers of golf courses in these parts of the country are asked to do the same.

**Figure 1: Current Water Scarcity Level**



SEPA are monitoring the situation closely and coordinating steps to manage water resources in line with [Scotland's National Water Scarcity Plan](#).

General and sector specific advice for abstractors is available: [Advice for abstractors](#). Water abstractors with concerns about meeting licence conditions or wishing to discuss contingency measures should [contact their local SEPA office](#).

### Rainfall forecast (Source: Met Office 16/05/2019)

Largely dry on Friday. Some rain pushing into parts of the east later on Friday. Outbreaks of rain on Saturday, then scattered heavy showers on Sunday and Monday.

The longer-term outlook is uncertain. For May-June-July as a whole, the chances of above- and below-average precipitation across the UK are similar. On balance, drier-than-average conditions are marginally more likely. For further details on the seasonal forecast see the latest 3-month outlook summaries at <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/services/government/contingency-planners/index>.

Further details on the current situation are provided in the following figures:

14/05/2019

### Precipitation Indices

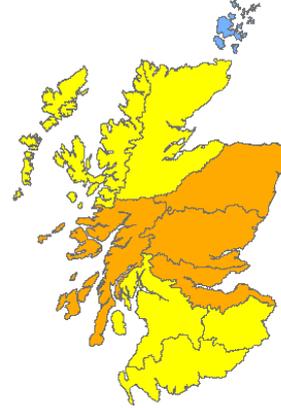
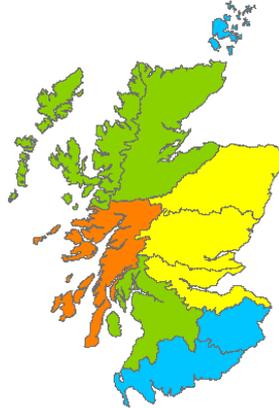
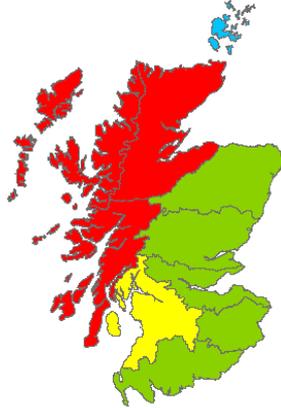
Rainfall over the past 30 days



Rainfall over the past 90 days



Rainfall over the past 180 days



These maps show how low current rainfall totals are for this time of year, relative to historical averages, over the past 30, 90 and 180 days.

- Normal conditions
- Quite dry
- Dry
- Very dry
- Exceptionally dry

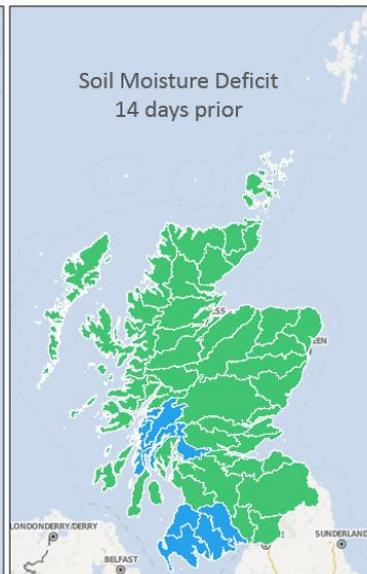
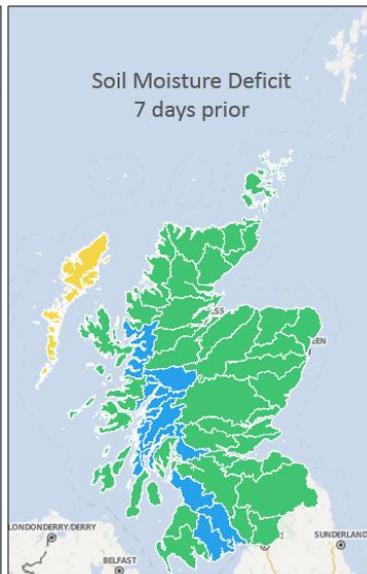
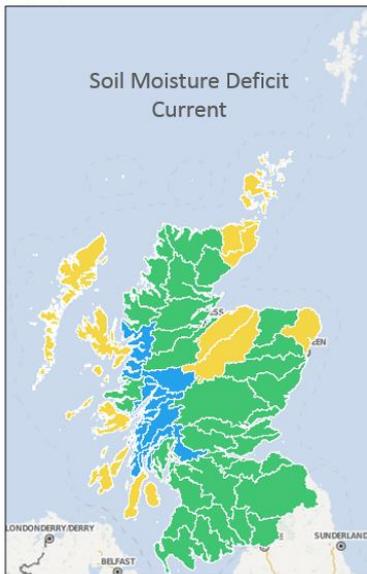
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### Soil Moisture Deficit

Soil Moisture Deficit Current

Soil Moisture Deficit 7 days prior

Soil Moisture Deficit 14 days prior



These maps depict the latest Soil Moisture Deficit (SMD) data \* and the SMD 7 and 14 days prior.

\*MORECS data obtained from MetOffice

- No Deficit
- Quite Dry
- Dry
- Very Dry
- Exceptionally Dry

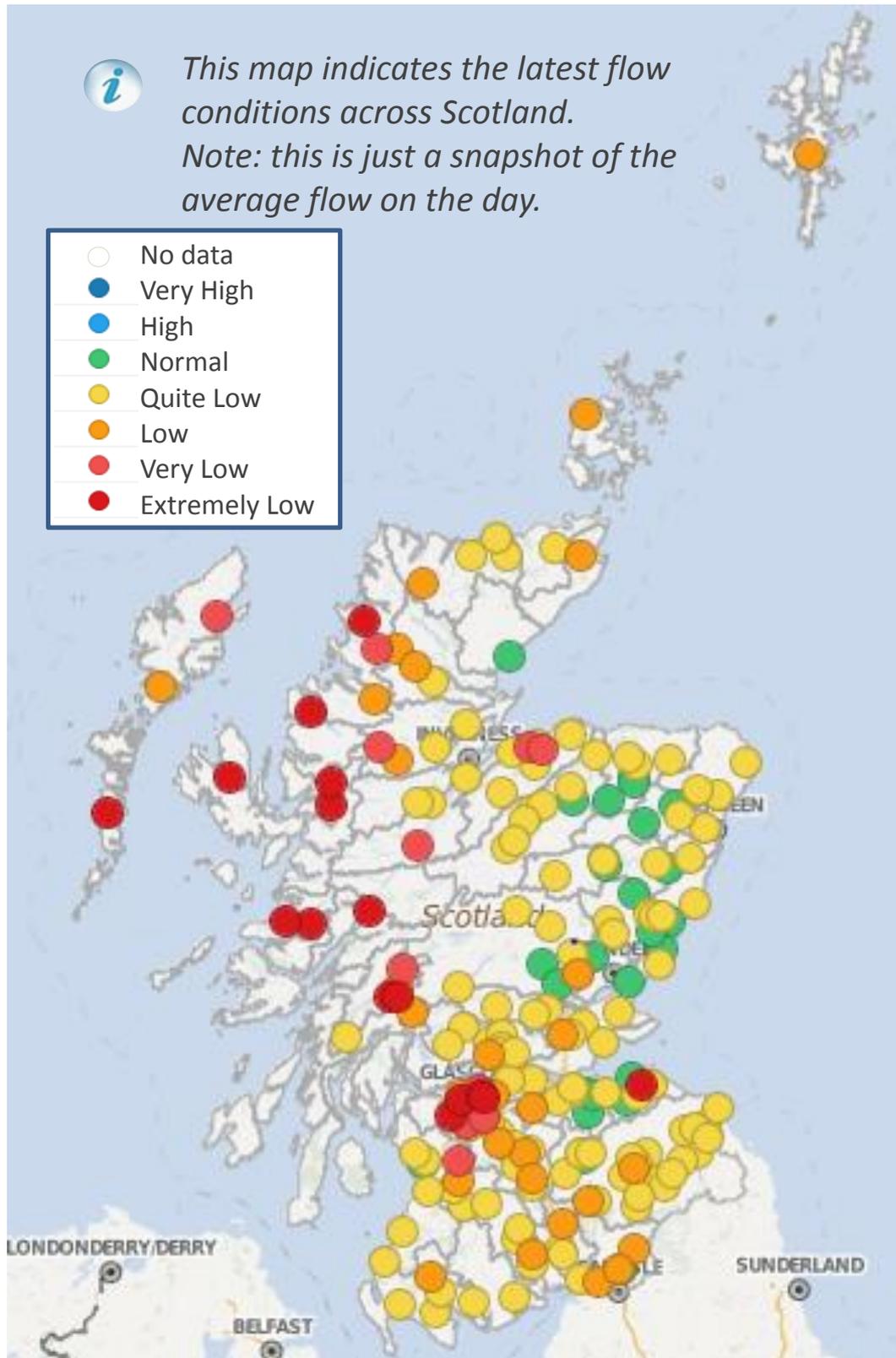
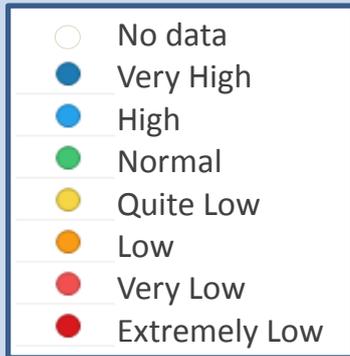
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## Current Flow Conditions



*This map indicates the latest flow conditions across Scotland.*

*Note: this is just a snapshot of the average flow on the day.*





## 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.

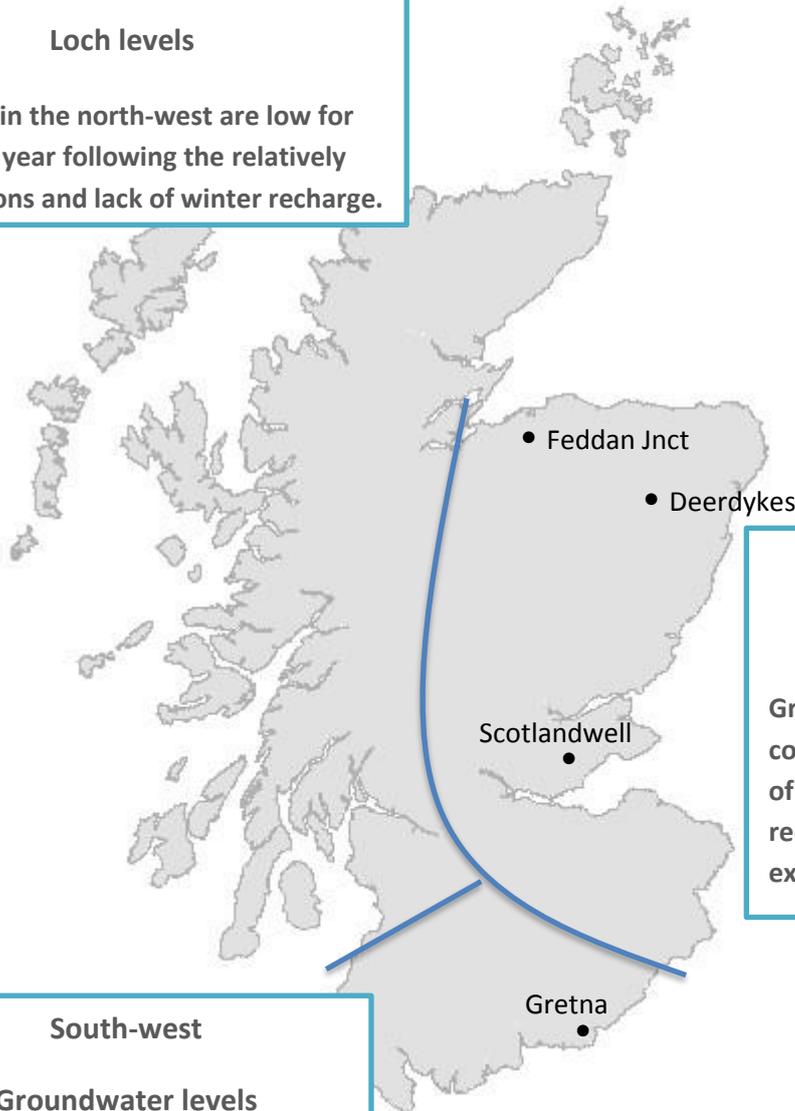
Please note that the map below does not reflect conditions in managed water supply reservoirs.



### North-west

#### Loch levels

Loch levels in the north-west are low for the time of year following the relatively dry conditions and lack of winter recharge.



### East

#### Groundwater levels

Groundwater levels along the east coast are still very low for the time of year compared to the long-term record (see the graphs below as an example).

### South-west

#### Groundwater levels

Groundwater levels in this region are average for this time of year.



These charts show the trend in groundwater and loch levels since autumn 2018 at selected monitoring sites in the northeast (see map above). The white zone represents the observed range in the long-term record. The black line shows the actual groundwater level and the dashed line is the long-term average trend.

Record high groundwater level
Normal groundwater level range
Record low groundwater level

