

Water Situation Report

1st July 2021

HEADLINE

Irvine and Ayr have been raised to Moderate Scarcity level.

Alert level has been placed over Eilean Siar (Western Isles), Orkney, part of the north-west Highlands, the Spey, east Scotland and south-west Scotland.

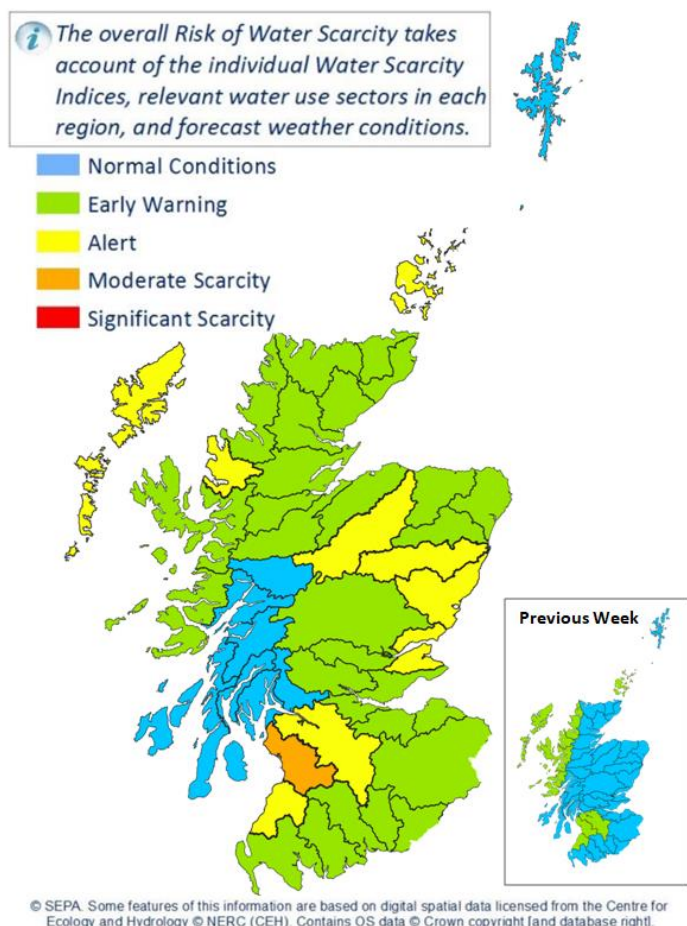
Early Warning is in place over the majority of the country.

Situation Summary

June has seen well below average rainfall across the country. Ground conditions have continued to dry rapidly over the past two weeks. Most of the country has been raised to Early Warning level as conditions could deteriorate rapidly if the dry weather continues.

In north- and south-western catchments, where this follows a relatively dry spring, many rivers have had prolonged low flows and depleted water resources. The water scarcity level has been raised accordingly.

River levels are now also low across eastern catchments. These levels are not unusual for the time of year but with low rainfall forecast in the short term this situation could persist and result in impacts to the environment and affect water supplies. As a result, the Spey catchment and catchments



between north Fife and Aberdeen have also been raised to Alert level. 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.

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](#).

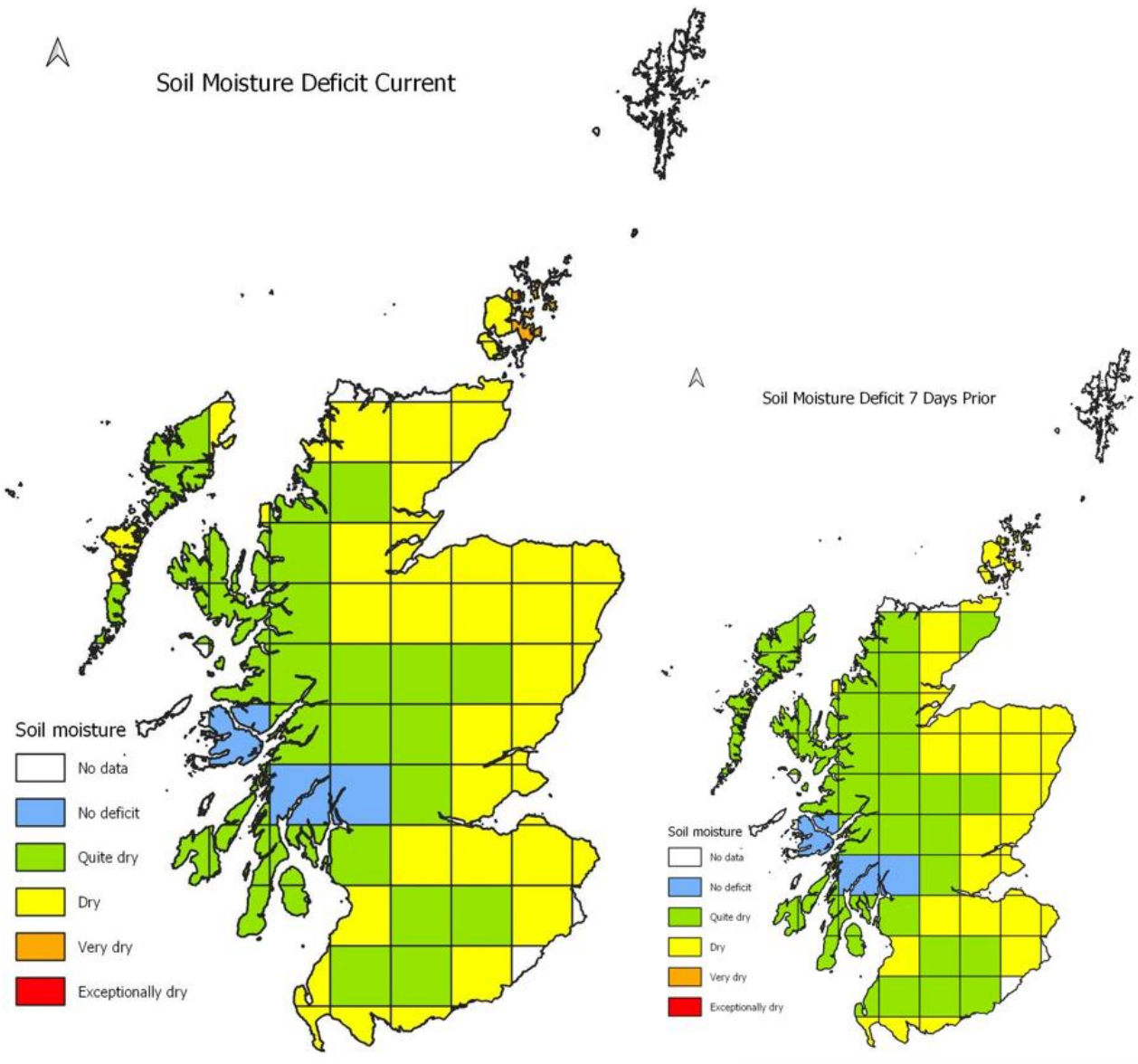
Water abstractors with concerns about meeting licence conditions or wishing to discuss contingency measures should [contact SEPA](#).

Weather forecast (01/07/21)

Showers over southern parts of the country on Friday. These will become more frequent and spreading north-west on Saturday, then heavy and perhaps thundery on Sunday and Monday with some longer spells of rain. Eastern catchments will remain largely dry.

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:



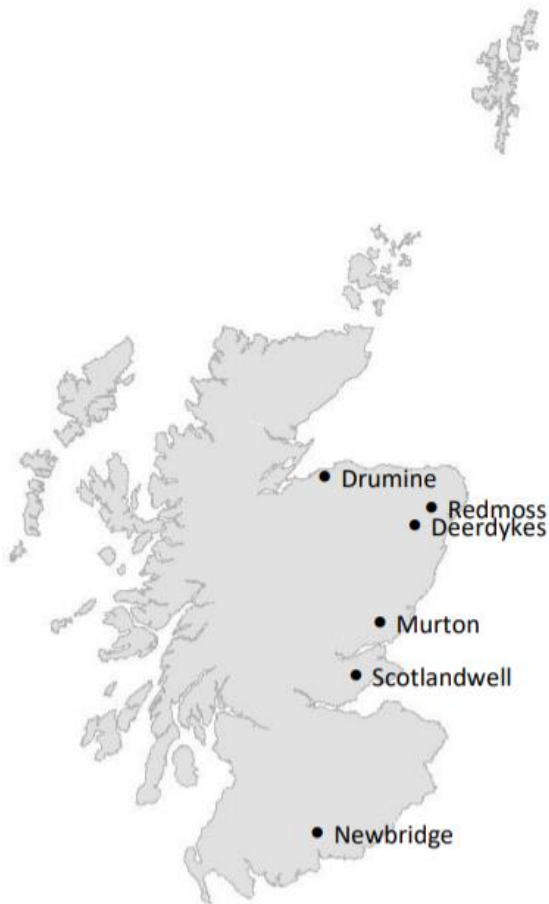
These maps depict the current latest Soil Moisture Deficit (29th June 2021) and 7 days prior for comparison. Based on the MORECS data obtained from the Met Office.



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.

29th June 2021

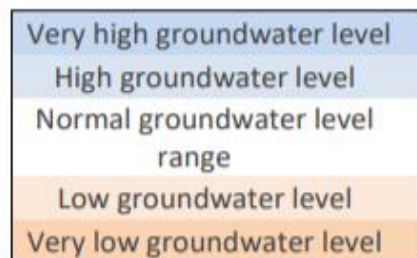


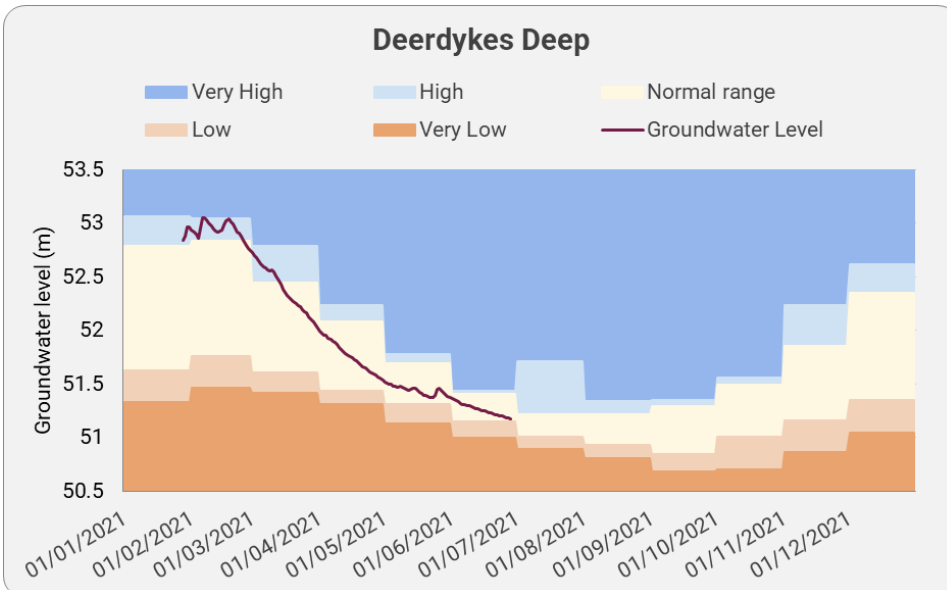
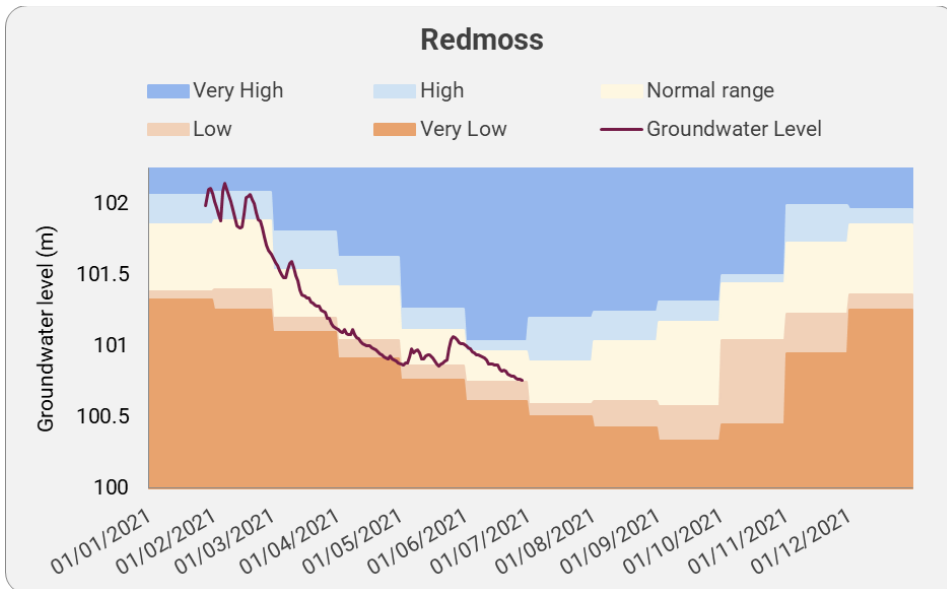
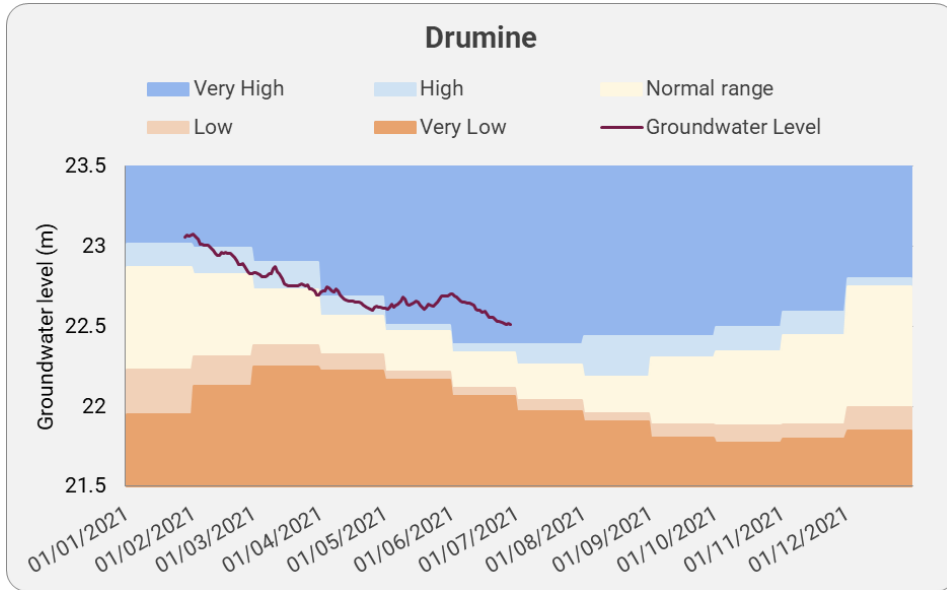
Groundwater levels are still all within the normal or high range for the time of year.

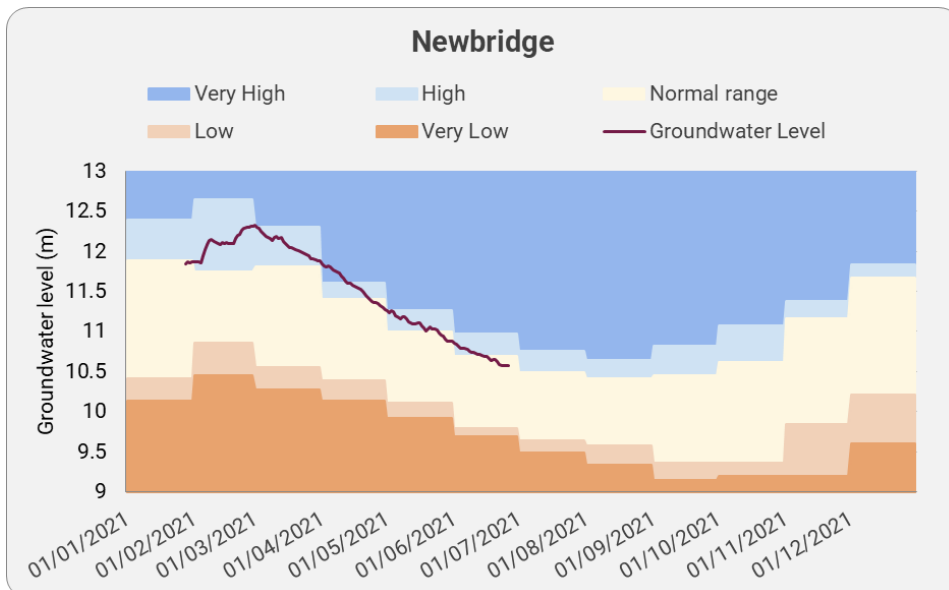
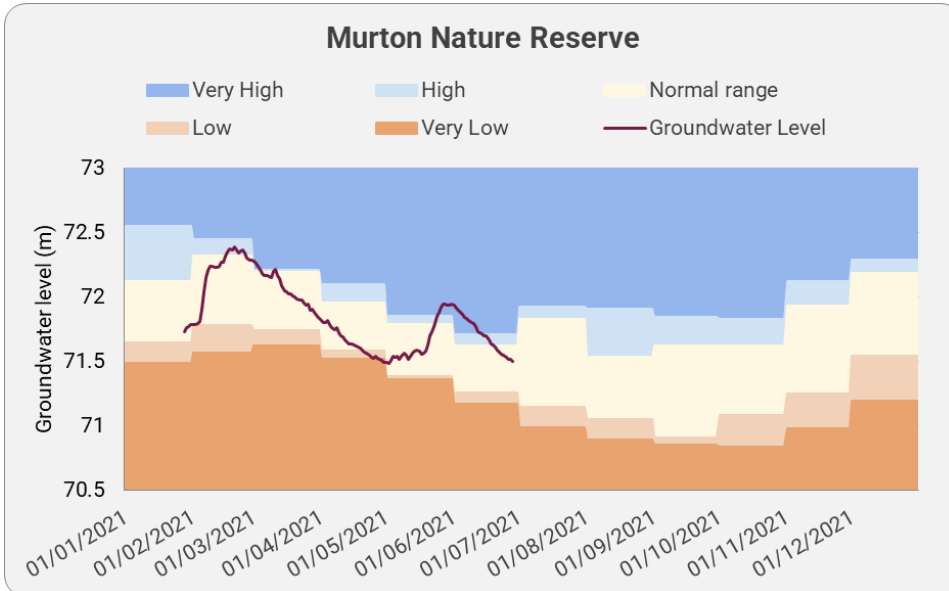
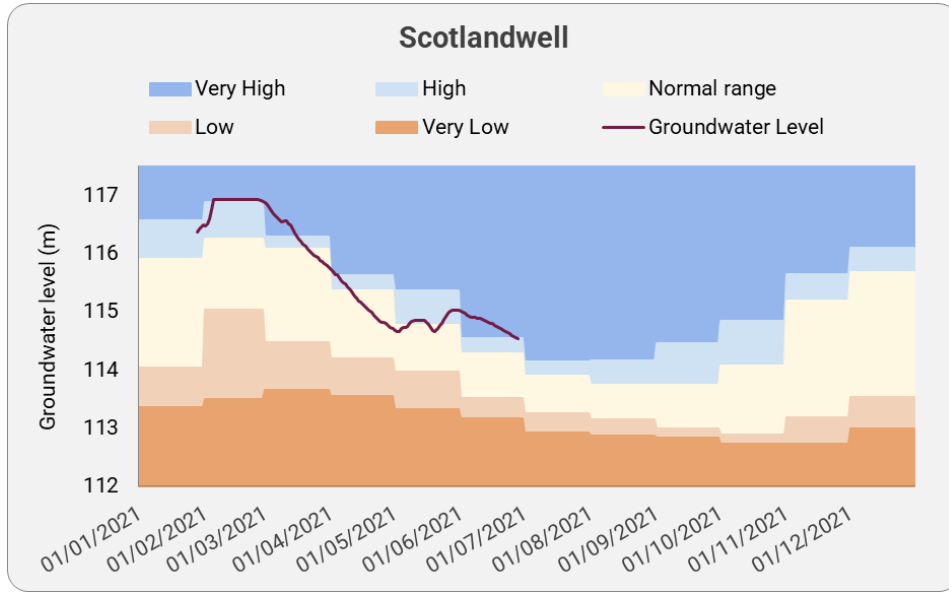
We have up to date data for 11 groundwater level monitoring sites, spread across the east and south-west of the country, giving a good picture of the current situation.

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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