

Water Scarcity Report

28th July 2022



Areas in the mid and north of Fife are counting-down to a Significant Scarcity situation. Once significant scarcity is reached, if necessary to protect the environment, SEPA has the power to suspend abstraction licences.

The Tweed catchment is now at Moderate Scarcity.

The Ythan, Dee and Don catchments, as well as the Firth of Forth, Firth of Tay and the Almond and Tyne catchments, remain at Moderate Scarcity.

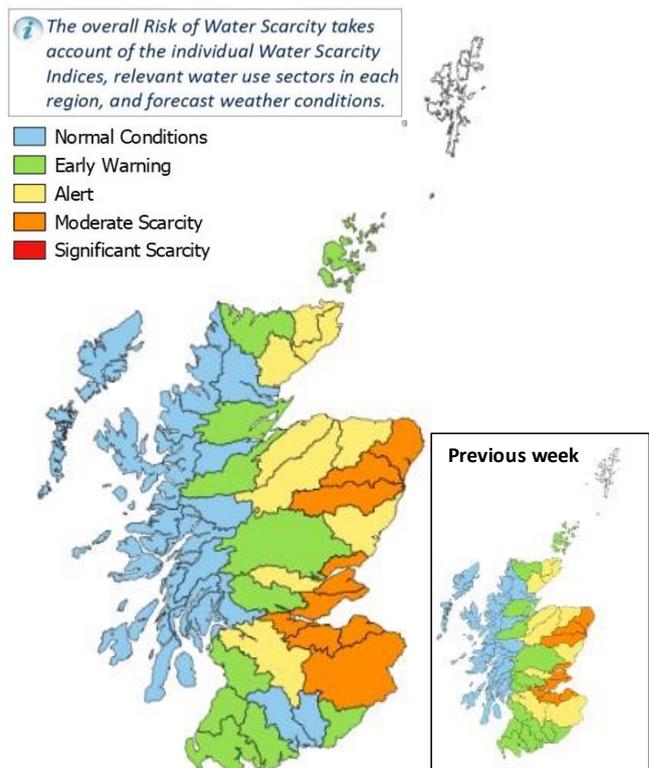
The Annan, Nith and Leven (Dunbartonshire) catchments have recovered to Normal Conditions.

Situation Summary

Rain over the weekend and on Monday has seen some temporary increases in river flows across most of the country. However, the areas most at risk of water scarcity saw little recovery.

The Borders saw less rainfall than most areas over the last week, and the continued low river flows mean that the Tweed catchment has been raised to Moderate Scarcity.

Even those parts of the east coast and central belt that saw an immediate increase in river flows remain vulnerable to further dry periods, with ground conditions remaining very dry and longer-term rainfall



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The areas shown in this map represent major river catchments. Details on how levels are set and actions required can be found in SEPA's National Water Scarcity Plan.

deficits remaining. There are therefore no improvements to the areas already at Moderate Scarcity and Alert status.

There has been sufficient recovery in rainfall in south-west Scotland that the Annan and Nith catchments have recovered to Normal Conditions. Ground conditions in the west of the country have improved sufficiently that the Leven catchment in Dunbartonshire has also recovered to Normal Conditions.

Areas in the mid and north of Fife are counting-down towards a significant water scarcity situation; it is likely that we will reach this point next week. If necessary to protect the environment, SEPA has the power to suspend abstraction licences. We are contacting affected abstractors to discuss what this will mean for them. Where suspension is required to protect the environment this would be for the minimum time necessary and would be lifted as soon as possible.

Groundwater levels are continuing to fall and are very low at some of SEPA's monitoring locations.

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/>.

You can help us by reporting any evidence you see of water scarcity. For details of information that would be useful to us and where to send it see: [Water scarcity in your area | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#).

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.
- Reduce evaporation losses by avoiding irrigating during the hottest time of day

- 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:-
waterscarcity@sepa.org.uk.

Public water supplies are operating normally.

Weather forecast (28/07/22)

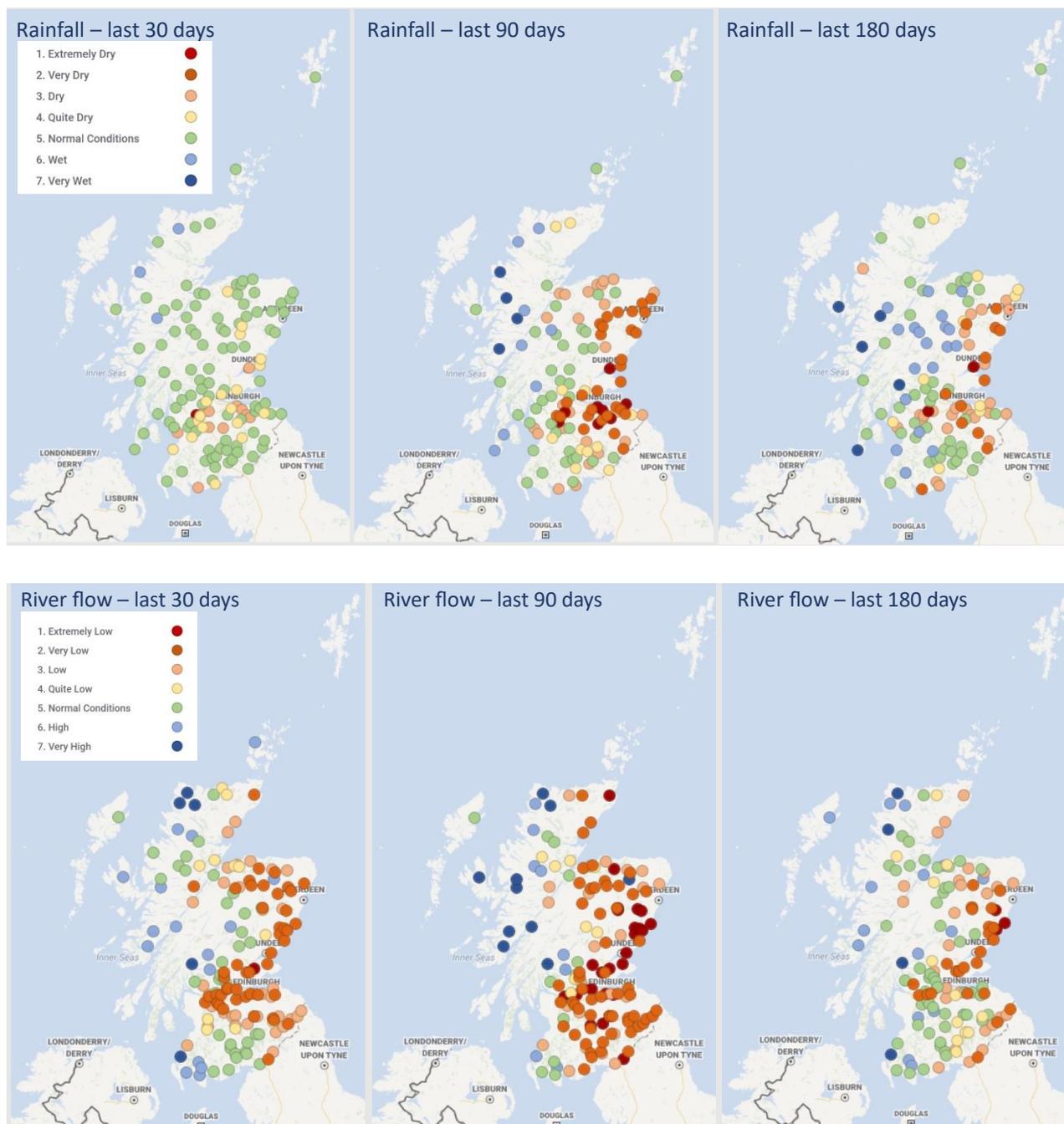
Showers spreading north over Scotland on Thursday, perhaps heavy in places. Scattered showers on Friday then more persistent rain reaching the west in the evening. This rain will move east over the country on Saturday morning followed by some showers. Scattered showers on Sunday and Monday with a chance of more persistent rain in the south for a time.

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Supporting information

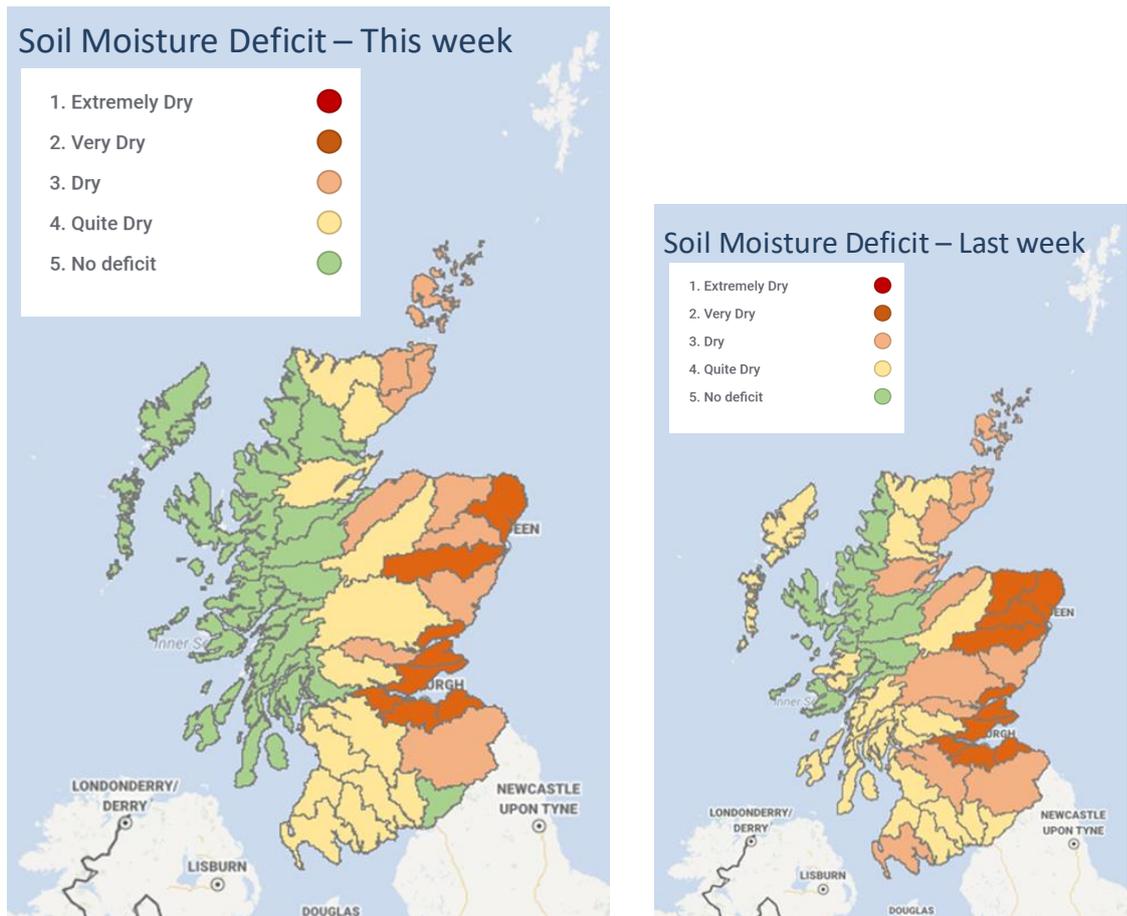
Rainfall and river flows:

These maps show rainfall (top row) and river flow (bottom row) relative to the long-term average, for this time of year, over 30 days, 90 days and 180 days. River flows have been lower than normal for the time of year in most areas apart from the northwest. Rainfall has been low across some parts of the central belt, Fife, and upper Tweed, but generally normal elsewhere.



Soil moisture deficit:

These maps show this week’s soil moisture deficit, alongside last weeks for comparison. This is obtained from the Met Office Rainfall and Evaporation Calculation System (MORECS). Soil moisture deficit in the east and south-west is still high in many areas, indicating that soils remain dry.



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Groundwater levels:

 **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.

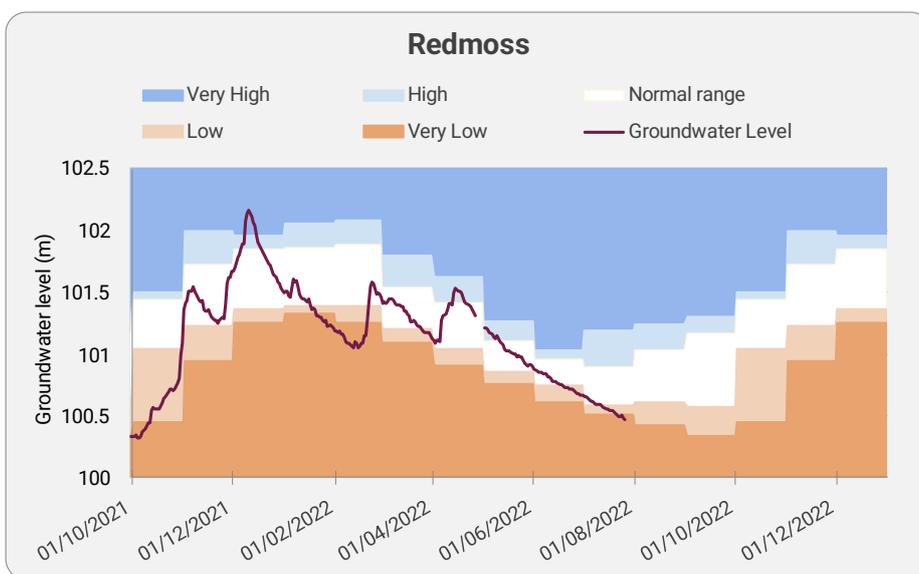
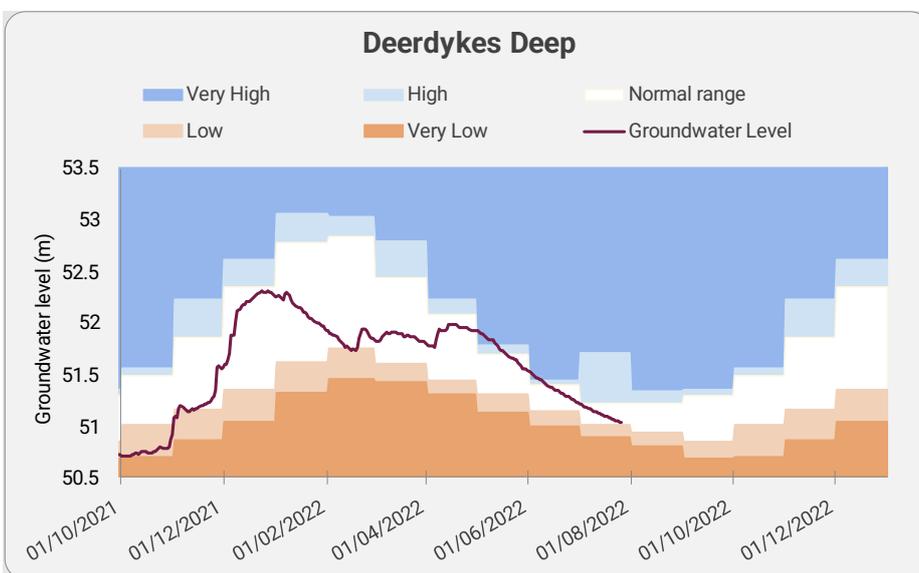
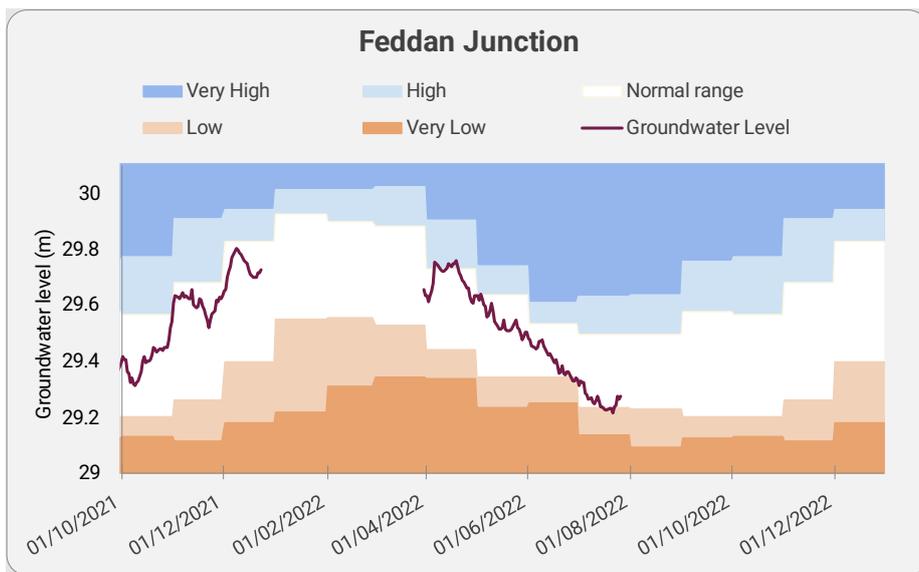


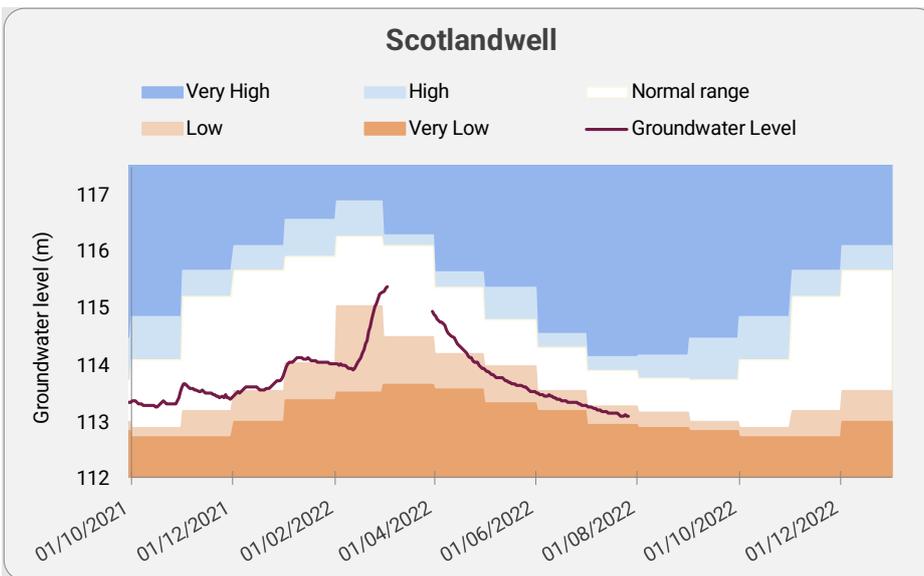
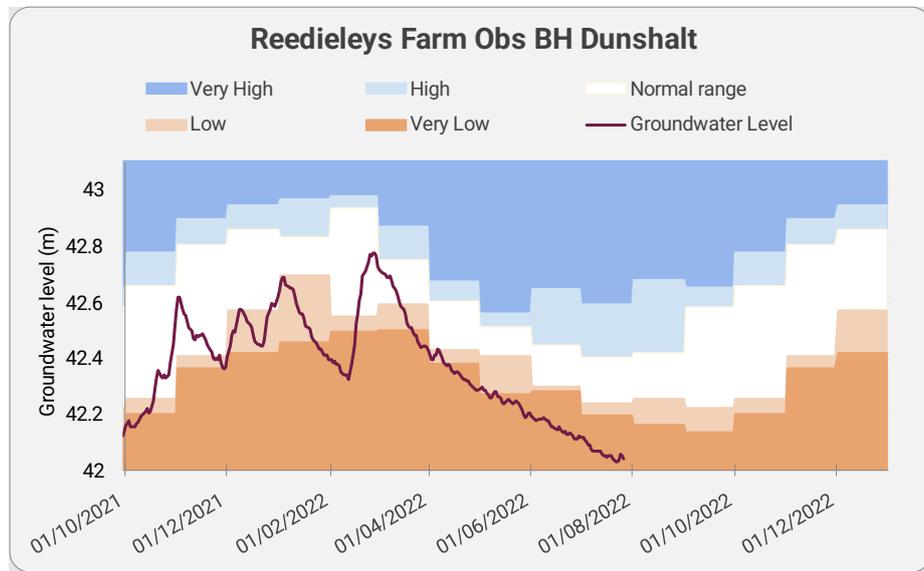
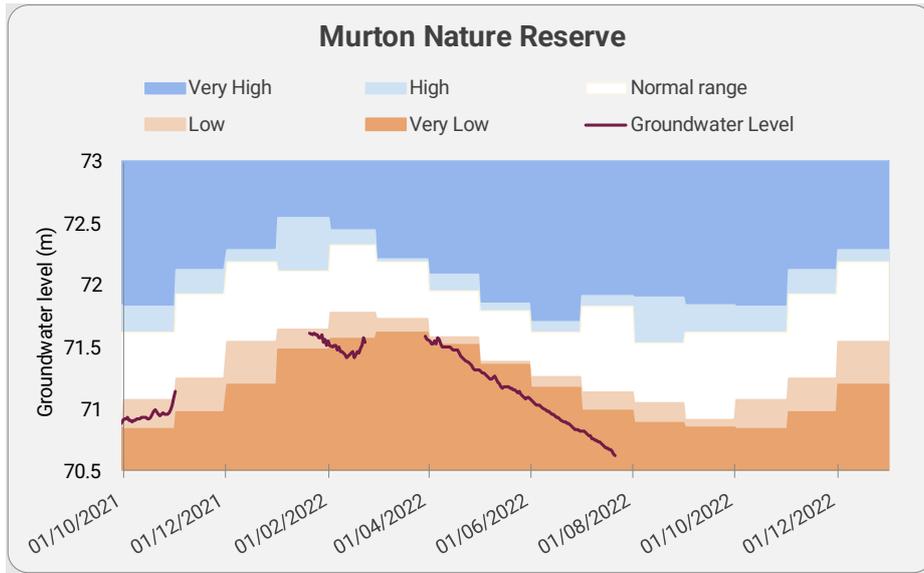
Groundwater levels at the monitoring sites in the east and south-west continue to drop and are now mostly very low for the time of year.

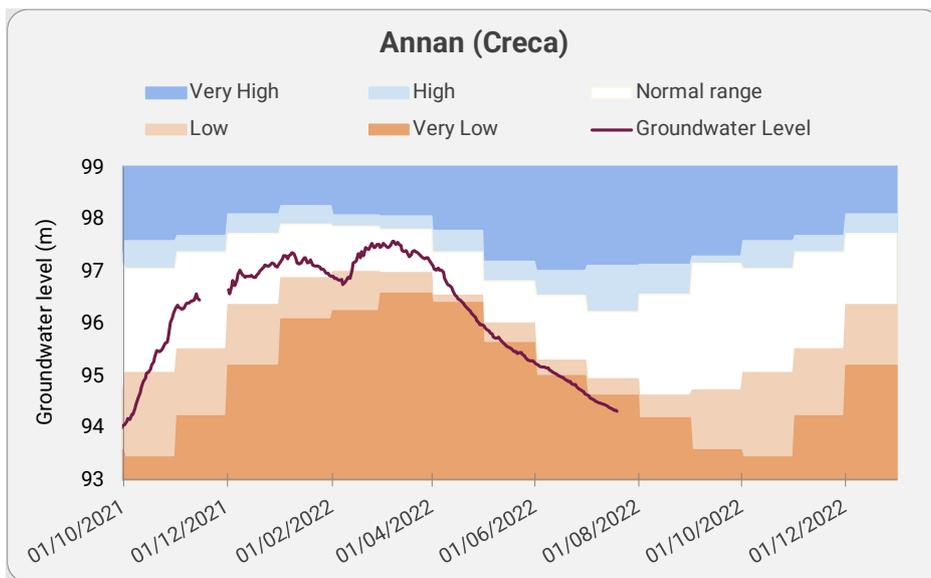
Groundwater levels at the monitoring sites in the north and north-east are also dropping, with some now very low for the time of year.

Loch level data is not currently available.

The following charts show the trend in groundwater level (GWL) since October 2021 for selected monitoring sites (see map above). The dark 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.







Flow, Rainfall and Groundwater data are accessed via SEPA’s [time series data service](#) (API). SEPA's live data are subject to ongoing quality control and periodic review.

For information on accessing this document in an alternative format or language please either contact SEPA by telephone on 03000 99 66 99 or by email to equalities@sepa.org.uk

If you are a user of British Sign Language (BSL) the Contact Scotland BSL service gives you access to an online interpreter enabling you to communicate with us using sign language.

<http://contactscotland-bsl.org/>

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