



METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

ESTIMATED SOIL MOISTURE DEFICIT OVER GREAT BRITAIN

AT 0900 ON 28 MAY 1980

The five days following the publication of the previous bulletin (14 May 1980) were rain free throughout the United Kingdom. The dry weather which had persisted from near the end of April at many places was brought to an end by general rainfall on 19-20 May; only the Northern Isles, parts of eastern Scotland and East Anglia escaped some rainfall. Amounts on 19th exceeded 10 mm in parts of south-west Scotland, north-west England, west Wales (particularly on the hills) and south-west England. Drier weather returned from 21st and many places remained rain free for the rest of the fortnight. Most places, however, experienced one or two days with mainly light rain and amounts exceeded 10 mm on 25th in west Lancashire and on 26th on the Central Pennines, the mountains of South Wales and in east Devon. Rain fell over much of Scotland on 27th and was heavy, exceeding 10 mm, in the east where the whole month previously had been very dry.

In parts of south-west Scotland, north-west England and North Wales there were almost four weeks without rain from 24 April. The spring (April-May) has been one of the driest on record so far. Total rainfall for April and May to date, over England and Wales generally, is 36 mm. The previous lower total (for the whole of April and May) was in 1844. Over Scotland, the total for April-May 1980 (to date) is easily the lowest on record for these months. An index of daily rainfall is available for England and Wales generally from 1950. In the 31 years, the 8 weeks from 2 April 1980 have been the driest for a spring period. (An eight week period in August-October 1959 was drier). Over Scotland, too, the eight-week period from 1 April was the lowest from the commencement of the record in 1965 but the index is more uncertain for Scotland.

Soil moisture deficits for areal land use on 28 May were greater than any end of May values, in a series back to 1941, over most of northern England, much of midland England and, by a substantial margin, over Wales. Values were also higher than previous end of May maxima at most Scottish stations, again often by a substantial margin; the Scottish series began in 1961. General deficits for areal land use exceeded average for the time of the year over all River Divisions and River Purification Boards and exceeded three times the average over Welsh rivers and Solway, Clyde and Tay RPB.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION : £22.73 per season (post free)

Apply to: Director-General  
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ESTIMATED SOIL MOISTURE DEFICIT (S.M.D.) AT 09 GMT ON 28 MAY 1980

RIVER AREA	AREAL LAND USE		CHANGE DURING THE	
	ESTIMATED		WEEK ENDING 09 GMT ON	
	S.M.D.		28 MAY 1980	21 MAY 1980
	MM		MM	MM
Northumbrian	74.8		+ 3.5	+ 14.2
Yorkshire	90.3		+ 4.4	+ 21.9
Trent	84.8		+ 6.0	+ 15.1
Lincolnshire	94.4		+ 7.8	+ 21.4
Welland and Nene	79.7		+ 6.2	+ 16.6
Great Ouse	94.1		+ 6.9	+ 14.7
Norfolk and Suffolk	95.6		+ 6.3	+ 18.7
Essex	100.7		+ 7.3	+ 14.0
Lee Division	93.3		+ 7.9	+ 14.8
Thames Conservancy	93.4		+ 7.2	+ 14.9
London Area	94.6		+ 7.5	+ 13.6
Kent	91.9		+ 9.5	+ 16.8
Sussex	89.0		+ 8.9	+ 16.1
Hampshire	89.8		+ 8.5	+ 15.9
Isle of Wight	97.1		+ 6.8	+ 10.4
Upper Thames	92.7		+ 6.5	+ 12.7
Avon and Dorset	87.7		+ 8.6	+ 13.2
Devon	79.2		+ 7.5	+ 13.0
Cornwall	79.0		+ 14.3	+ 10.5
Somerset	84.6		+ 7.9	+ 13.7
Bristol Avon	91.0		+ 7.3	+ 12.3
Severn	91.3		+ 6.2	+ 15.6
Wye	87.3		+ 6.6	+ 12.2
Usk	86.3		+ 6.4	+ 11.6
Glamorgan	85.2		+ 5.9	+ 13.2
South West Wales	83.5		+ 9.9	+ 9.4
Gwynedd	85.8		+ 11.5	+ 7.0
Dee and Clwyd	87.4		+ 7.3	+ 9.6
Mersey and Weaver	73.2		+ 3.7	+ 11.4
Lancashire	86.9		+ 0.5	+ 10.7
Cumbria	81.7		+ 5.3	+ 7.8

N.B. Apart from normal changes these differences also reflect retrospective adjustments after receipt of additional data



