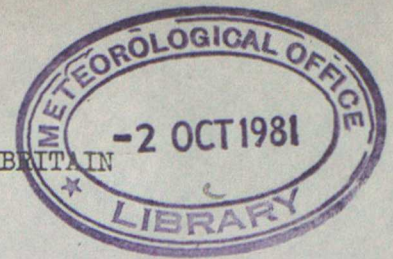


METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE

ESTIMATED SOIL MOISTURE DEFICIT OVER GREAT BRITAIN

AT 0900 ON 30 SEPTEMBER 1981



The unsettled, wet spell which began on 10 September, bringing to an end the rather dry summer (periods June - August as dry as that of 1981 occur only about once in 8 years over England and Wales), continued throughout the most recent fortnight. Rainfall was exceptionally heavy on 17th, 19th, 23rd and 25th-26th. In general, rainfall tended to be heaviest in hilly western districts but large amounts were recorded in lowland areas too on 19th, 25th (in England and Wales) and 26th (Scotland) and on 29th when 15 mm was exceeded in an area extending from southwest England to Lincolnshire. The 26th was by far the wettest day in Scotland in an index of daily rainfall which extends back to 1965. The periods 20th-22nd and 27th-28th were rather dry generally over most of southern Britain.

More than twice the average rainfall for the fortnight ending 29 September was recorded over most of Britain, exceptions being eastern coastal fringes of England, East Anglia, west Wales, southern Pennines and Hebrides. Values exceeded three times the average in the Weald, the Midlands from Shrewsbury to Lincoln and over much of Central Lowlands and Southern Uplands.

Notable features of the maps are the large areas now at capacity in Scotland, northwest England, Wales and southwest England compared with a fortnight ago. Values are still high in East Anglia, east Midlands, northeast England and along the Moray Firth.

Over all River Divisions of England and Wales and River Purification Board areas, there have been notable decreases in mean deficit for areal land use (i.e. soils are refilling rapidly) since the seasonal maxima at 9 September. Most remarkable decreases were for Sussex, Devon, Cornwall, Bristol Avon, Wye, Usk, South West Wales. **Nevertheless, mean** areal deficits are still above average for Northumbrian, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Great Ouse, Norfolk and Suffolk River Divisions and North East RPB.

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ESTIMATED SOIL MOISTURE DEFICIT (S.M.D.) AT 09 GMT ON 30 SEP 1981

River Area	Areal land use estimated S.M.D. mm	Change during the week ending 09 GMT on	
		30 Sep 81 mm	23 Sep 81 mm
Northumbrian	57.7	-20.6	-13.2
Yorkshire	57.2	-20.0	-13.4
Trent	47.1	-28.0	-15.7
Lincolnshire	88.7	-20.6	-10.0
Welland and Nene	75.3	-20.3	-12.4
Great Ouse	80.7	-15.0	-10.7
Norfolk and Suffolk	100.7	-8.9	-6.3
Essex	92.3	-12.7	-7.5
Lee Division	68.5	-17.0	-11.7
Thames Conservancy	52.2	-26.4	-19.1
London Area	52.3	-29.9	-16.3
Kent	59.8	-28.4	-16.1
Sussex	35.1	-36.3	-21.8
Hampshire	41.6	-35.6	-19.3
Isle of Wight	58.4	-26.3	-14.5
Upper Thames	45.8	-26.0	-25.9
Avon and Dorset	44.3	-30.0	-22.1
Devon	22.8	-15.7	-39.0
Cornwall	18.4	-19.2	-41.0
Somerset	41.6	-22.0	-26.6
Bristol Avon	42.7	-28.5	-25.6
Severn	39.9	-26.3	-23.9
Wye	22.8	-24.7	-41.7
Usk	7.6	-18.0	-41.8
Glamorgan	2.9	-14.9	-36.2
South West Wales	3.6	-14.0	-50.9
Gwynedd	15.9	-18.0	-24.3
Dee and Clwyd	28.3	-16.5	-19.0
Mersey and Weaver	24.1	-18.2	-17.6
Lancashire	1.6	-16.2	-14.4
Cumbria	5.1	-13.5	-26.2

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

