

Italy worried about summer drought

May 5 2007

A state of emergency has been issued in central and northern Italy as the country braces for the possibility of a drought.

Officials say the River Po is too low for this time of the year, despite torrential rains forecast to continue for the next three days, ANSA said Friday.

The government is calling for restrictions on water use for irrigation and power generation, which could lead to electricity shortages.

The Po, Italy's longest and most used river, feeds irrigation channels and industries on the Po Plain. ANSA said the river last month hit an unprecedented April low of 21.4 feet below sea level.

Lake Garda, the largest lake in Italy, is almost two feet below its normal level in some places, ANSA said.

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