

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

1 – 10 April 2008



Issue No.19/2007-08

*...dedicated to the agricultural community
... aimed at harmonizing agricultural activities with weather and climate*

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Highlights

- ❑ Dry conditions persisted during the dekad.
- ❑ Cumulative rainfall remains good.
- ❑ Warm conditions with scattered rain expected.

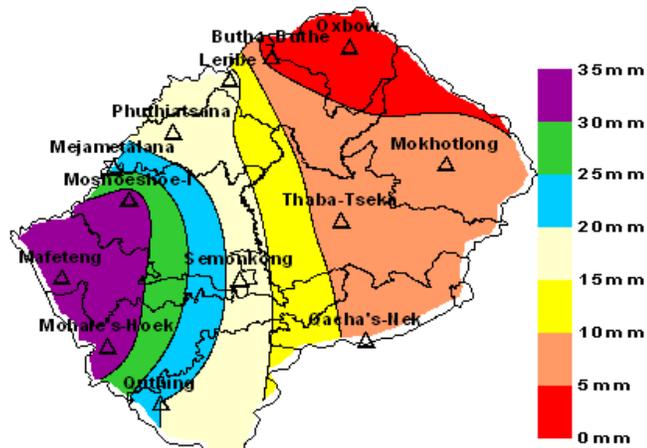
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WEATHER SUMMARY

The last dekad remained relatively moist because of the tropical moisture that continued to flow from the tropics into the subcontinent and over into our region. This moisture and the passage of some weak cold-fronts to the south of the sub-continent resulted in the drop of temperatures over major part of the dekad.

RAINFALL SITUATION



Map 1: April 2008, 1st Dekad Rainfall

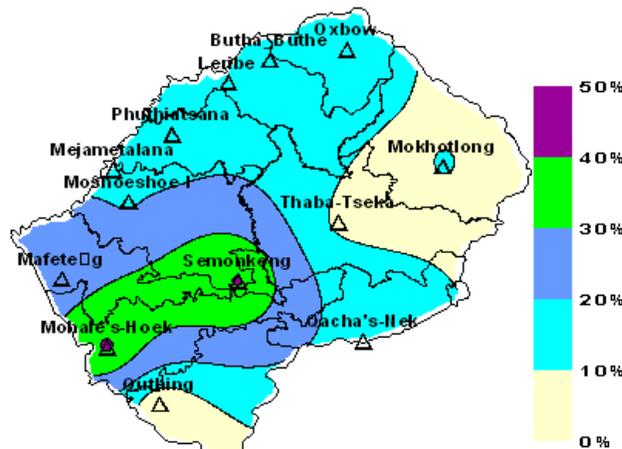
The rainfall during the first dekad of April 2008 was below normal at most places of the country. It was only in the southern lowlands where dekadal rainfall was above normal. The highest and lowest dekadal rainfall was 34mm and 2mm at Mohale's Hoek and Butha-Buthe respectively (see Map 1, Table 1 & Fig 1).

Temporal distribution was very poor during the dekad under review (see Table 1). That shows that the dekad was generally dry even though some places experienced above normal dekadal rainfall.

Cumulative Rainfall Percentage Departure from Normal since September 2007.

Rainfall performance has been erratic during the current calendar year. However, cumulative rainfall since the first dekad of September 2007 to the first dekad of April 2008 remains normal at

most places and above normal only at Mohale's Hoek and Semonkong (see Map 2, Table 1 & Fig 2). The region extending from Mohale's Hoek to Semonkong have consistently recorded good rains for the major part of the season and rainfall variability has been relatively low when compared to other parts of the country.



Map 2: Rainfall % Dep. from Normal (Sep 07-Apr 1st Dek 08)

TEMPERATURE

Mean temperatures during the dekad under review were below normal countrywide. The lowest and highest dekadal mean temperature deviations were -2.9°C and -0.3°C at Qacha's Nek and Quthing respectively.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITIONS

Maize and sorghum crop are at ripening stage. Their conditions range from fair to good. The low rainfall recorded is expected to be beneficial to cereal crops since they need low amounts of water at these stages.

DEKADAL OUTLOOK

11– 20 April 2008

There still a high likelihood of receiving isolated to scattered rain showers and thundershowers with temperatures remaining relatively cool in the coming dekad.

Table 1

Rainfall and Temperature Summaries												
		Rainfall (mm)						Temperature (°C)				
		1 - 10 April 2008			Total From Sept07 to 1st Dek April 08			1 - 10 April 2008				
STATION	ALT.	Actual	Normal	Rain			%Dept. from	Minimum	Maximum	Dekadal	Dekadal	
NAME	(M)	R/Fall	R/Fall	Days	Actual	Normal	Normal	Lowest(Day)	Highest (Day)	Mean	Normal	Deviation
Butha-Buthe	1770	2.0	28.8	1	837.1	741.5	13	2.5 (8)	24.8 (6)	15.1	15.8	-0.7
Leribe	1740	17.8	26.1	2	763.7	641.4	19	3.4 (8)	25.0 (4,5)	15.5	16	-0.5
Mafeteng	1610	32.8	25.7	1	721.3	588.1	23	2.5 (7)	25.5 (3)	15.2	16.6	-1.4
Maseru Airport	1530	23.5	23.7	4	707.8	591.6	20	5.3 (8)	25.3 (5)	16.0	16.9	-0.9
Mohale's hoek	1600	34.0	24.7	2	859.7	606.3	42	3.5 (7)	*	15.8	16.6	-0.8
Mokhotlong	2200	6.9	15.6	2	602.3	546.7	10	1.0 (8)	23.5 (3)	12.2	13.3	-1.1
Moshoeshoe I	1628	33.1	16.2	2	774.8	651.6	19	5.5 (7)	*	15.9	16.9	-1.0
Phuthiatsana	1750	15.0	28.5	1	741.3	657.6	13	4.6 (8)	*	16.5	16.9	-0.4
Qacha's Nek	1970	8.6	19.8	1	801.0	694.1	15	4.5 (8)	23.9 (5)	14.4	17.3	-2.9
Quthing	1740	19.9	27.6	3	685.6	673.5	2	2.4 (8)	25.5 (3)	15.9	16.2	-0.3
Semonkong	2458	18.2	20.5	2	786.4	557.5	41	-1.5 (8)	20.8 (4)	10.0	11.6	-1.6
ThabaTseka	2160	7.5	10.1	2	592.2	549.9	8	2.5 (8)	21.7 (3)	12.5	13.3	-0.8

Fig.1

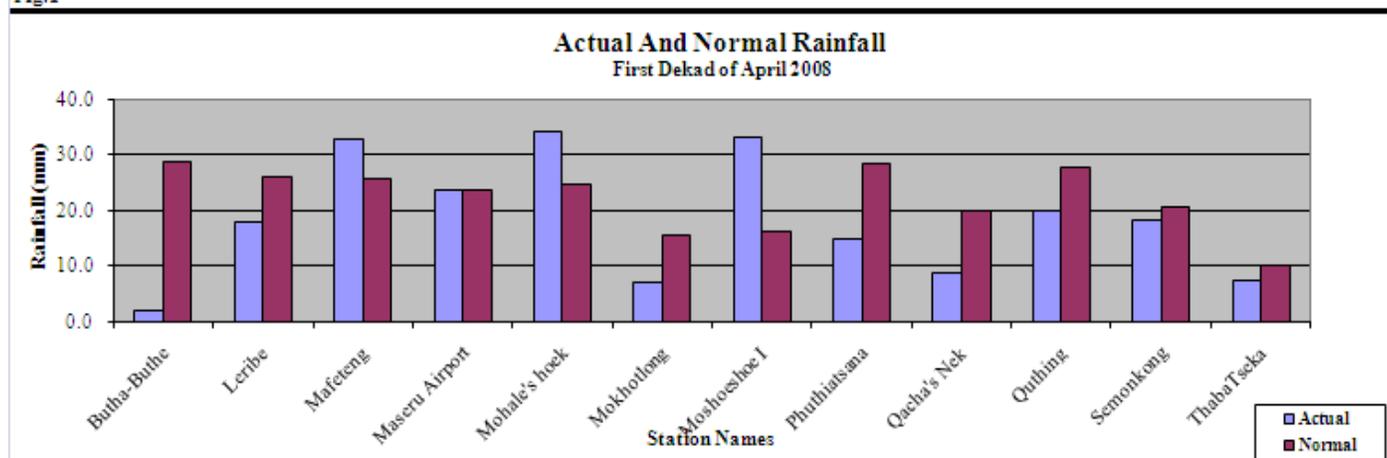
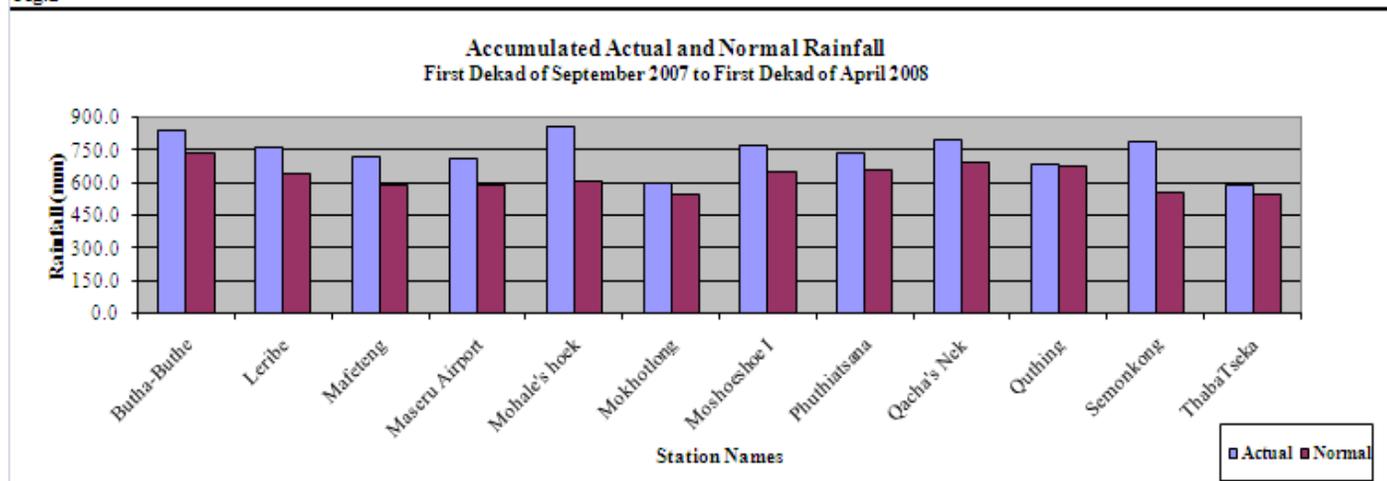


Fig.2



Glossary

Dekad : Ten day period

Normal: Average figure over a specific time period.

% Rainfall Departure from Normal: $(\text{Actual Rainfall} - \text{Normal Rainfall}) / \text{Normal Rainfall} \times 100$

NDVI: Normalized Difference Vegetation Index – simply implies how good or bad the vegetation is for the specific period.

This Bulletin is issued during the Summer Cropping Season (October – April).

And it is

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Comments and Contributions would be highly appreciated.