

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

21 – 30 April 2008



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*...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 normal.
- ❑ Rain and snowfall expected.

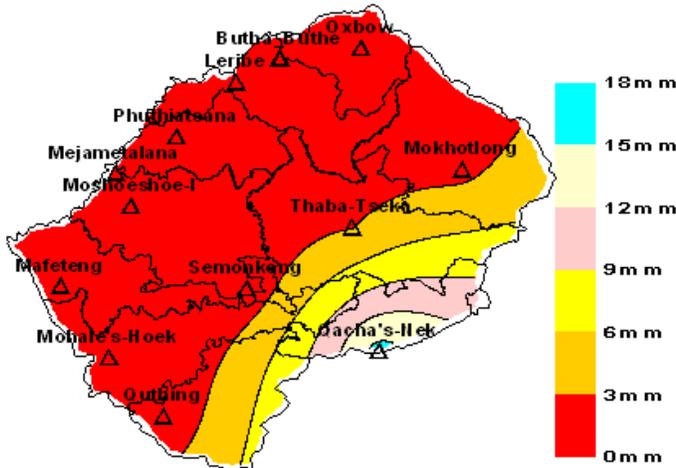
Lesotho Meteorological Services
Agrometeorological Section
P.O. Box 14515
Maseru 100, Lesotho

TEL: (+266) 22324374
FAX: (+266) 22325057/22350325
E-mail: agrometeorology@lesmet.org.ls
<http://www.lesmet.org.ls>

WEATHER SUMMARY

Snowfall in the highlands and isolated light rain were experienced on the first day of the dekad due to the frontal system that passed over the country. Thereafter light isolated rains were observed after the passage of the cold front mainly in the southeastern parts of the country due to an advection of low level moisture by the Indian Ocean Anticyclone.

RAINFALL SITUATION



Map 1: April 2008, 3rd Dekad Rainfall

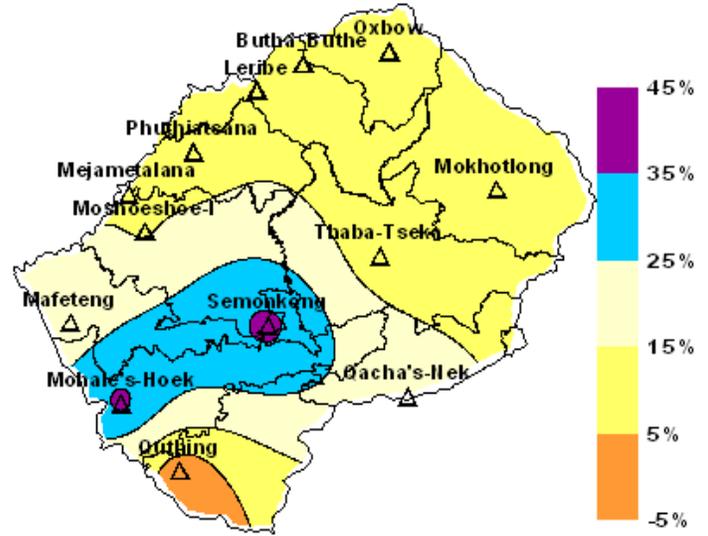
The last dekad of April was very dry. Most parts of the country did not record any rainfall during the dekad. The only significant dekadal rainfall was recorded at Qacha's Nek where about 16.1mm of rainfall was recorded (see Map 1, Table 1 & Fig 2).

There was light snowfall in the highlands recorded on the 21st April. The depth of the snow ranged from 3.5cm at Mokhotlong to 7.1cm at Thaba-Tseka. The snowfall was followed by very cold temperatures.

Cumulative Rainfall Percentage Departure from Normal since September 2007.

Poor spatial and temporal distribution of rainfall at most places of the country have continued into the last dekad of April 2008. Rainfall percentage departure from normal is normal at most places and above normal in the region extending from Mohale's Hoek to Semonkong (see Map 2, Table 1 and Fig 3). Rainfall percentage departure from

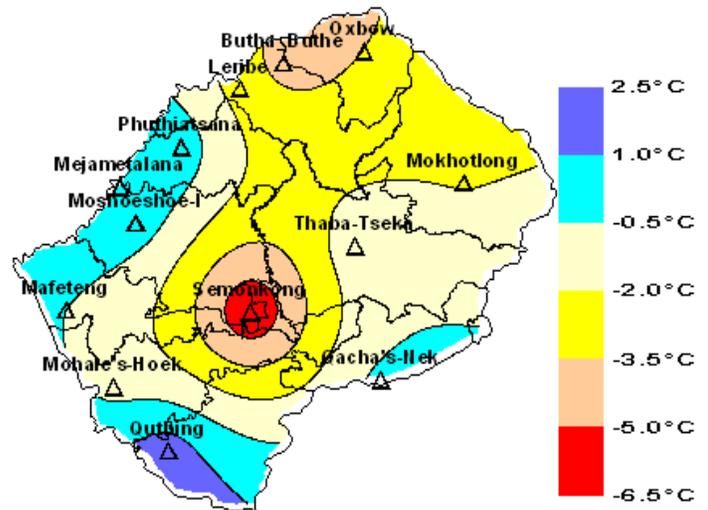
normal has decreased to a value below zero at Quthing. Rainfall percentage departure from normal has been steady since February at most places (see Fig 1). This shows that rainfall has been largely normal in autumn. However, there have been some dry spells at times



Map 2: Rainfall % Dep. from Normal (Sept 07 - Apr 08)

TEMPERATURE

Mean temperatures during the dekad under review continued to be below normal countrywide. There was widespread frost on the 21st as a result of very cold temperatures that came after snowfall. Map 3 and Table 1 show spatial variation of daily minimum temperatures during the last dekad of April 2008.



Map 3: Lowest minimum temperatures of the 3rd dekad of April 2008.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITIONS

Most maize and sorghum crops were ripened when frost came on the 22nd. But still there were some crops which were not fully matured and frost has caused serious damage to them.

DEKADAL OUTLOOK

1– 10 May 2008

Widespread rain and showers accompanied by snow in the highlands are anticipated in the first half of the dekad. Thereafter settled weather is expected with only partly cloudy conditions expected towards the end of the dekad.

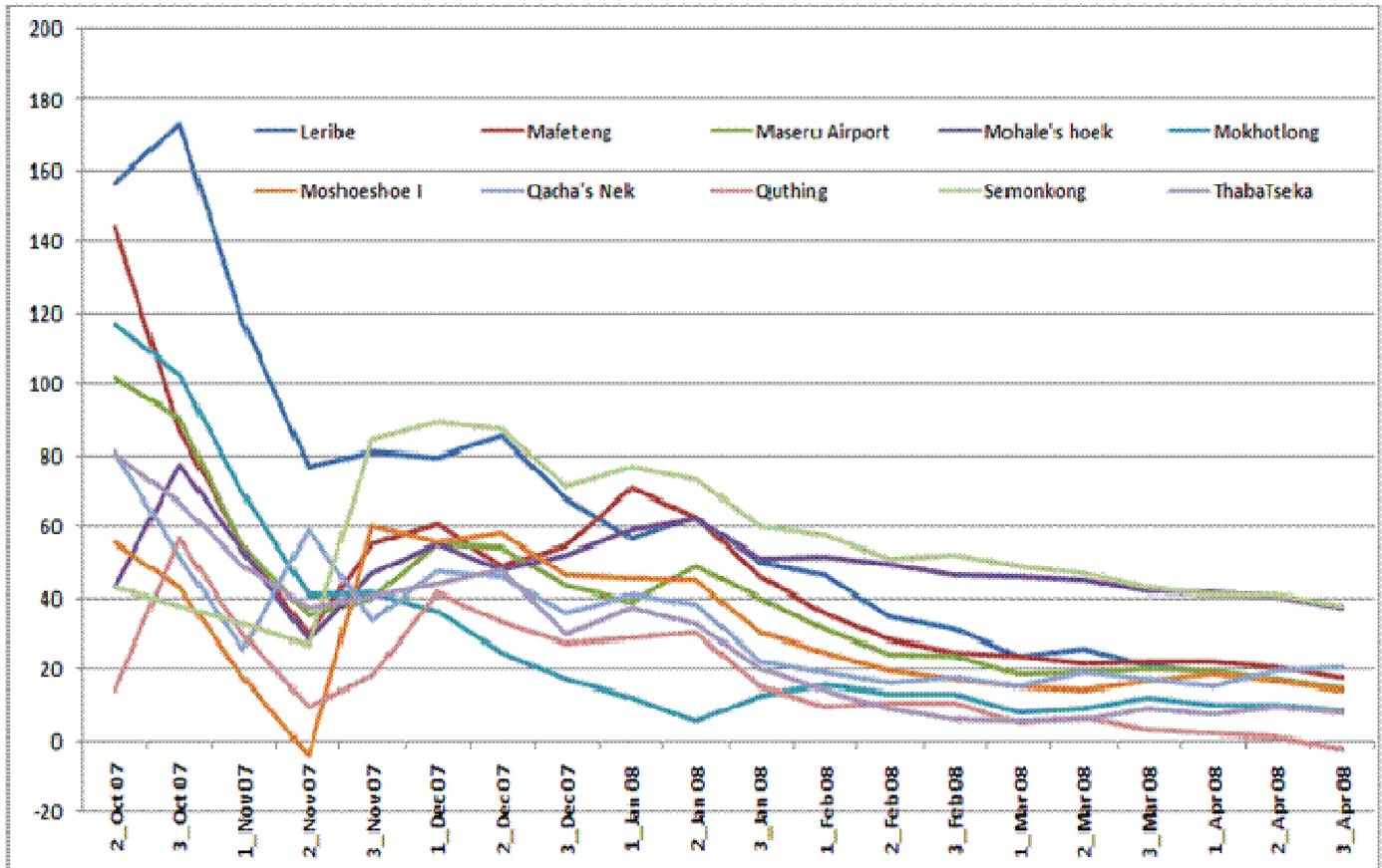


Fig 1. Rainfall Percentage Departure from Normal since second dekad of October 2007 to the last dekad of April 2008.

Table 1

Rainfall and Temperature Summaries												
		Rainfall (mm)						Temperature (°C)				
		21 - 30 April 2008			Total From Sept 07 to 3rd Dek April 08			21 - 30 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	0.0	28.8	1	842.1	777.6	8	-4(23)	22.6(27,28)	10.5	13.2	-2.7
Leribe	1740	0.0	26.1	2	770.2	674.7	14	-2.6(22)	23.6(27)	11.7	13.4	-1.7
Mafeteng	1610	0.0	25.7	1	739.1	627.1	18	-0.5(22)	23(28)	12.0	13.5	-1.5
Maseru Airport	1530	0.0	23.7	4	717.1	624.5	15	0.5(22,23)	24(28)	12.5	14.1	-1.6
Mohale's hoek	1600	0.0	24.7	2	887.6	644.7	38	-1(22)	23(28)	11.9	14	-2.1
Mokhotlong	2200	2.2	15.6	2	614.5	565.6	9	-2.1(23)	18.4(27)	8.4	10.7	-2.3
Moshoeshoe I	1628	0.0	16.2	2	780.5	683.6	14	0.4(22)	23.7(27)	12.4	14.2	-1.8
Phuthiatsana	1750	0.0	28.5	1	753.8	692.4	9	0.5(22)	23.4(27)	12.6	14.2	-1.6
Qacha's Nek	1970	16.1	19.8	1	863.8	715.3	21	-0.1(21)	21.3(25)	10.2	15.6	-5.4
Quthing	1740	0.0	27.6	3	704.2	719.9	-2	1.9(22)	22.2(27,28)	12.9	13.7	-0.8
Semonkong	2458	0.3	20.5	2	804.5	582.5	38	-6.5(22)	17.5(25)	6.8	8.9	-2.1
ThabaTseka	2160	2.9	10.1	2	617.3	571.4	8	-1(21,22)	17.6(27)	8.7	11	-2.3

Fig. 2

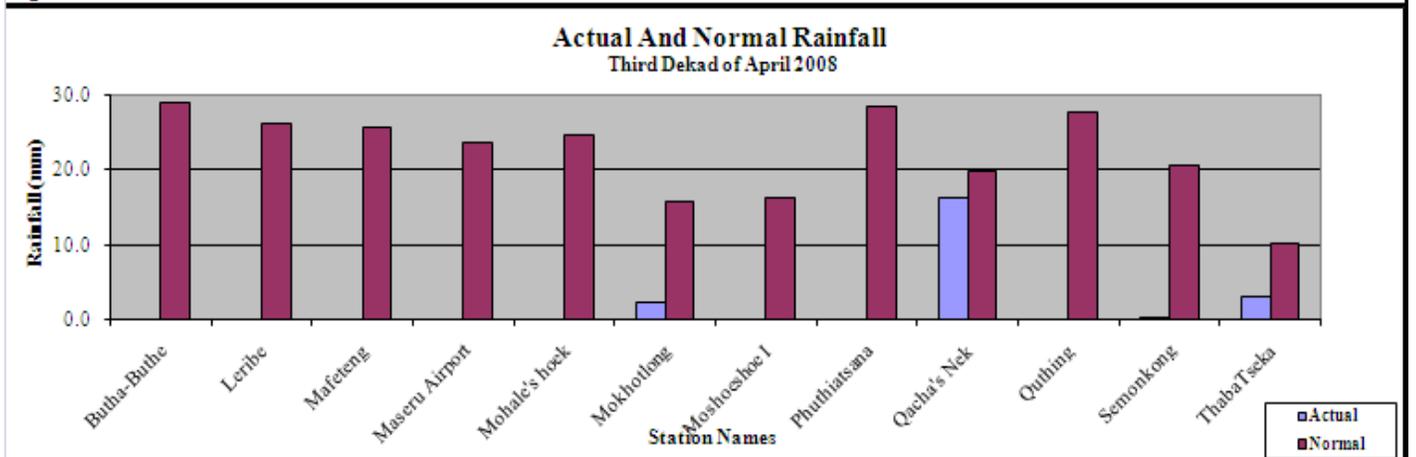
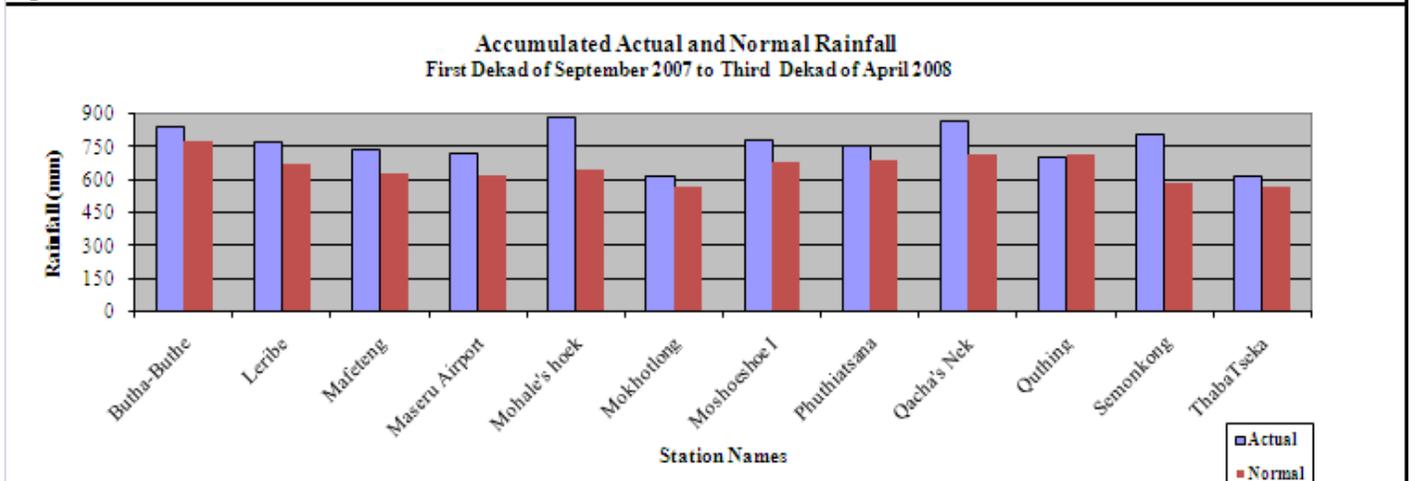


Fig. 3



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.

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And it is

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Comments and Contributions would be highly appreciated.